

POLICE COMMITTEE MINUTES

November 15, 1996

The Police Committee of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on November 15, 1996 at 7:00 a.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

Jim Stapley, Chairman
John Giles
Wayne Pomeroy

COMMITTEE ABSENT

None

COUNCIL PRESENT

Pat Gilbert

STAFF PRESENT

C.K. Luster
Cindy Barris
John Brewer
Richard Clore
Tanya Collins
Fred Conway
Debbie Driscoll
Lars Jarvie
Rich Kasper
Randy Lineberger
Bryan Raines

STAFF PRESENT (CONT.)

Tom Remes
Denise Samuel
Debbie Vickman
Mike Whalen
Others

Chairman Stapley introduced Committeemember Pomeroy and requested that Police Chief Lars Jarvie introduce staff present at the meeting.

Chairman Stapley thanked Chief Jarvie for the introductions.

1. Discuss and consider a request for an additional traffic motorcycle squad for the Police Department.

Chief Jarvie spoke concerning the need for additional personnel in the City's Police traffic unit and stated that an additional motorcycle squad is the highest unfunded priority for the Police Department at this time.

Assistant Police Chief Mike Whalen outlined a request to add a six-member motorcycle squad and a motorcycle sergeant to the traffic unit. Chief Whalen provided background information concerning the request, noting that the size of Mesa's motorcycle squad has remained unchanged since 1984, while the population has increased 57 percent from 218,207 residents to 344,255. Chief Whalen reviewed responsibilities of the traffic unit and provided statistics pertaining to the increased workload. Chief Whalen reported that the number of 1996 traffic fatalities to date

is equivalent to the total for all of 1995. Chief Whalen advised that the newly requested personnel will not be involved in DUI enforcement.

Police Lieutenant Rick Clore reiterated the City's continuing increase in population and demand for service. Lieutenant Clore delineated proactive enforcement measures instituted by the traffic unit and stated that additional personnel are needed to effectively address the needs of the community. Lieutenant Clore explained that due to a lack of personnel, when officers commit their time to one specific area, other areas are neglected. Lieutenant Clore informed the Committee that statistics reflect that traffic enforcement and crime statistics have a direct correlation.

Chief Jarvie re-emphasized that the additional motorcycle squad has been a priority of the Police Department for many years. Chief Jarvie indicated that the new photo radar will assist officers but will not resolve all traffic issues.

City Manager Charles Luster advised that contingency funds would be utilized to finance the request. Mr. Luster stated the opinion that an increase in motor officers is a top priority for the City.

In response to a question from Committeemember Giles, Chief Jarvie explained that the cost of \$263,300 would fund six motor officers and one sergeant for six months plus provide the initial funds to purchase eight motorcycles.

Discussion ensued concerning Master Police Office (MPO) investigations and the selection of personnel for the new motorcycle squad. Chief Whalen said that he is unsure at this time if officers from Patrol or from the current Academy class expected to complete the Field Training Officer (FTO) program in March 1997 will be temporarily transferred to work as motor officers until the new motor officers complete Academy training, commencing January 1997.

Vice Mayor Gilbert questioned why the request has been submitted at this time if personnel may not be available for another year and suggested the possibility of waiting until the next budget process. Vice Mayor Gilbert spoke regarding public perception and cautioned against linkage between this request and photo radar.

It was moved by Committeemember Pomeroy, seconded by Committeemember Giles, to recommend to Council authorization of an additional traffic motorcycle squad for the Police Department.

Carried unanimously.

2. Hear a report concerning improvements to the conditions in Pioneer Park.

Neighborhood and Community Assistance Coordinator Debbie Driscoll provided the Committee with a handout outlining changes underway relative to Pioneer Park.

Police Captain John Brewer stated that the park has been greatly improved and expressed appreciation to the Parks and Recreation Department for trimming the bushes/trees.

Captain Brewer indicated that crime statistics have reflected a downward trend during November. Captain Brewer said that police efforts will continue at the park.

In response to a question from Chairman Stapley, Ms. Driscoll advised that the Engineering Department is currently designing the plans for the rest room remodel and that the Community Development Department will apply for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for construction. Ms. Driscoll indicated that the remodeling project was originally proposed as a two-story building with an upstairs office but has been changed to a single-story facility.

Captain Brewer spoke concerning efforts to track individuals who once inhabited Pioneer Park, noting that many are presently incarcerated.

Ms. Driscoll informed the Committee that the Police Department has purchased mobile offices to assist in deterring crime in the City's parks.

3. Discuss and consider amending the City Code to prohibit solicitations of occupants of vehicles by persons standing upon any median or travel portion of any street.

Chief Jarvie informed the Committee that the transacting of business on medians created complaints from individuals and concerns from police officers.

Police Legal Advisor Richard Kasper provided the Committee with an overview of the legal parameters of prohibiting individuals to transact business on a median or travel portion of a street. Mr. Kasper outlined a proposed City Code amendment developed by staff that is similar to law adopted by the City of Phoenix, but with minor changes. Mr. Kasper explained that the proposal would not forbid individuals from soliciting from a sidewalk but would prohibit them from stepping into the roadway or onto a median. Mr. Kasper noted that this type of regulation has been tested and upheld by the courts.

In response to a question from Chairman Stapley, Mr. Luster indicated that an ordinance could be prepared for introduction at the November 18, 1996 Regular Council Meeting.

It was moved by Committeemember Pomeroy, seconded by Committeemember Giles, to recommend to Council that the City Code be amended to prohibit solicitations by persons standing upon any median or travel portion of any street.

Carried unanimously.

Vice Mayor Gilbert stated opposition to the proposed amendment and advised that he will not vote in favor of a motion by Council for approval.

4. Discuss and consider a proposed amendment to the City Code regulating practicing archery in City parks and City retention basins.

Chief Jarvie informed the Committee concerning an ongoing problem of individuals practicing archery in public parks or retention basins.

Police Sergeant Randy Lineberger explained that archery is currently not prohibited in parks but can be dangerous to patrons and individuals in the immediate vicinity. Sergeant Lineberger stated the opinion that it would be prudent to place a restriction on archery in public parks and retention basins.

Committeemember Giles expressed concern relative to increased government control but noted the potential hazards posed by this type of activity.

It was moved by Committeemember Giles, seconded by Committeemember Pomeroy, to recommend to Council that the City Code be amended to regulate the practice of archery in City parks and City retention basins.

Carried unanimously.

5. Adjournment.

It was moved by Committeemember Pomeroy, seconded by Committeemember Giles, that the Police Committee meeting adjourn at 7:34 a.m.

Carried unanimously.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Police Committee meeting of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 15th day of November, 1996. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 4th day of December 1996

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK