



OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

October 22, 2009

The Public Safety Committee of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on October 22, 2009 at 10:35 a.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

Dennis Kavanaugh, Chairman
Dina Higgins
Scott Somers

COMMITTEE ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

Christopher Brady
Alfred Smith
Trisha Sorensen

1. Items from citizens present.

There were no items from citizens present.

2. Hear a presentation and discuss the Police Department's performance measures.

Interim Police Chief Vicki Myers introduced Assistant Chief John Meza, who was present to provide information on performance measures. Chief Meza displayed a PowerPoint presentation (**see Attachment 1**) and noted that the utilization of performance measures enables the department to assess effectiveness and has also created a process improvement culture within the Police Department.

Chief Meza explained that comparisons of law enforcement agencies are difficult because each agency may utilize a different method to collect and classify data. He added that other challenges in making comparisons are fiscal and social issues in the community. Chief Meza outlined the typical municipal performance measures (see Page 3 of Attachment 1) and the performance measures utilized by the Mesa Police Department (see Page 4 of Attachment 1).

Committeemember Somers noted that the Police Department has improved flexibility and responsiveness by utilizing CompStat. He asked if the department was able to balance the calls per officer by shifting officers between districts.

Chief Meza responded by stating that the department conducts an annual resource allocation utilizing information from the computer database for the previous year, which calculates the number of officers required in each district. He advised that adjustments are made periodically during the year based on crime rates and call volumes. Chief Meza added that on a nightly basis, the Field Lieutenants make an assessment of the manpower available in the field and adjust coverage in the districts as needed.

In response to a series of questions from Committeemember Somers, Chief Meza advised that the national standard for police emergency response times is 6.2 minutes and the Mesa Police Department's average response time is 3.2 minutes. He stated that the definition of an "emergency" may vary in each city. Chief Meza added that response times are evaluated monthly through CompStat and quarterly through MesaStat. He explained that the category of "arrests per officer" is not a quota approach, but a tool to measure success when there is a focus on certain crimes in an area. Chief Meza said that the department monitors the data to ensure that a focus in one area does not merely shift the criminal activity to another area. He reported that although Part 1 crimes are down eleven percent and aggravated assaults are down eighteen percent, residential and commercial burglaries have increased.

Chief Meza outlined the performance measure reviews that are conducted by the department (see Page 5 of Attachment 1) on a daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly basis.

Responding to a question from Committeemember Higgins, Chief Meza advised that CompStat, the cutting edge model for performance evaluation, is the best system currently available. He noted that the next step may be for Valley agencies to jointly create concrete performance benchmarks.

In response to a question from Chairman Kavanaugh, City Manager Christopher Brady said that CompStat and MesaStat generate valuable information for the entire City. He added that a future investment in technology may also provide an element of predictability.

Chairman Kavanaugh thanked staff for the presentation.

3. Hear a presentation and discuss the Police Department's protocol for notifying schools of a lock-down.

Chairman Kavanaugh advised that a discussion of this issue was prompted by a recent incident at a charter school in downtown Mesa, which identified for the Police Department some areas of concern regarding private and charter schools in the Mesa area.

Commander Steve Stahl noted that no single source of information exists regarding private schools and charter schools. He advised that Lieutenant Lee Rankin, the sworn supervisor for the Communications section, would present an overview of the procedures that are now in place and the recommended changes.

Lieutenant Rankin displayed a PowerPoint presentation (**see Attachment 2**) to provide an overview of lock down procedures. He reported that the total of 219 schools (including daycare facilities) located in the City of Mesa does not include post-secondary schools. Lieutenant Rankin outlined many of the reasons for a lock down (see Page 2 of Attachment 2). He also provided data on the number of calls for service and the number of lock downs that occurred during the 2008/2009 school year (see Pages 2 and 3 of Attachment 2). Lieutenant Rankin explained that a lock down would be declared when a felony or a hazardous event has occurred in the proximity of a school.

In response to a question from Committeemember Higgins, Lieutenant Rankin advised that the responses to calls for service include responses by both patrol officers and School Resource Officers (SROs).

Responding to comments by Committeemember Somers, Lieutenant Rankin confirmed that a Public Safety officer (police officer or firefighter) of any rank can order a lock down and serve as the initial Incident Commander until other officials arrive on the scene. He advised that the protocol is governed by Police Emergency Operations Plan 120 – Incident Command System (see Page 4 of Attachment 2).

Lieutenant Rankin reviewed the procedural weaknesses in the current system and the proposed remedies (see Page 5 of Attachment 2). He said that an officer assigned to a new district may not be familiar with the locations of schools and daycare facilities. Lieutenant Rankin noted that updating the Computer-Aided Design (CAD) system would enable an Incident Commander to view and identify educational institutions within a geographical area and facilitate the department's ability to provide timely notifications to affected schools.

Deputy City Attorney Alfred Smith responded to comments regarding the possibility of the City collecting data at the time a school is licensed by advising that no City licensing requirement presently exists. He said that the State could be contacted to determine if a mechanism could be established that would notify the City regarding the presence of new schools and/or day care facilities.

Commander Stahl advised that staff is researching the possibility of obtaining the data when a school or daycare facility undergoes a fire inspection during the process to secure an occupancy permit. He noted that as changes occur with regard to location and contacts, maintaining current information would continue to be a problem.

Lieutenant Rankin advised that benefits of the proposed procedural changes include the following: no need to rely on an individual's knowledge of a specific area; an Incident Commander in a vehicle could view a computer display depicting the geographical area with symbols that indicate the location of schools and daycare facilities; and that improved information facilitates timely notifications to affected schools.

In response to questions from Committeemember Higgins regarding the necessity to lock down a college or university campus populated by adults, Lieutenant Rankin cited the example of the shootings at Virginia Tech. He advised that the Police Department and Mesa Community College work together to address these types of issues, and he added that post-secondary schools are notified of incidents in the area and administrators make the decision regarding a lock down of the campus. Lieutenant Rankin explained that many calls for service from elementary schools are related to Child Protective Services (CPS). He said that teachers and administrators have a duty to report bruises, injuries or other indicators that a problem exists in the home.

Chairman Kavanaugh expressed appreciation to staff for their efforts to identify areas of improvement that will make the community safer. He requested that staff update the Committee as needed.

Lieutenant Rankin responded to comments by Committeemember Higgins by advising that schools could contact the Police Department at the non-emergency number to update their information or to be placed on the notification list.

Chairman Kavanaugh thanked staff for the presentation.

4. Hear a presentation and discuss the status of the new Court Building.

Chairman Kavanaugh encouraged members of the Committee to tour the new Court Building, and he said that staff was present to provide an update on the status of the project.

Supervising Engineer Gordon Haws introduced Court Administrator Paul Thomas and City Engineer Beth Huning. Mr. Haws displayed a PowerPoint presentation (**see Attachment 3**) that provided information on the new Municipal Court Building. He reported that construction is scheduled for completion on January 21, 2010 and that staff is scheduled to move into the building in February of 2010.

Mr. Thomas continued the presentation by providing statistical data for fiscal year 2008/2009 (see Page 6 of Attachment 3).

Mr. Haws reviewed the project features (see Page 9 of Attachment 3), and he clarified that parking will be in the existing Pomeroy Garage. He provided an overview of the floor plans for the first, second and third floors (see Pages 11, 12, and 13 of Attachment 3).

Mr. Thomas advised that court functions generating the largest volume of public activity are concentrated on the first floor. He said that the National Center for State Courts was consulted in order to determine an efficient business model for the building, an example of which is the placement of arraignment courts on the second floor with staff located between the courtrooms to facilitate the efficient processing of paperwork in an adjacent area at the conclusion of the proceedings.

Responding to comments by Chairman Kavanaugh, Mr. Thomas confirmed that the court design provides for the required separation between the Prosecutor's Office and defense attorneys. He noted that the Prosecutor's Office has a separate wing on the second floor which is divided by elevators in the center of the building.

Mr. Haws added that the entrance to the Prosecutor's Office is equipped with a card reader access system. He reviewed the data on a chart titled "Comparison of Current & New Court Buildings" (see Page 14 of Attachment 3).

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that 83 people are currently employed by the Court; that the City Prosecutor's Office currently has 40 employees; and that the building is designed to accommodate 140 employees in the future.

Mr. Haws stated that construction costs were \$27.2 million and design costs were \$4.1 million for a total of \$31.3 million.

Responding to a question from Committeemember Somers, Ms. Huning reported that the new court building, which is funded by General Obligation Bonds approved by the voters in 2004,

had a budget of \$35 million. She advised that staff was directed to include space for two additional courtrooms for future use.

Committeemember Somers suggested that it may be more cost effective to build out the two additional courtrooms now rather than at a future date.

Ms. Huning advised that substantial costs would be incurred to build out the courtrooms at the present time, and she noted that the demand for the courtrooms does not presently exist.

Mr. Thomas confirmed that the number of filings is down approximately ten percent in the current year. He noted that police emphasis on certain areas affects the court's caseload to some extent, and he cited the example of an increased number of citizens obeying the traffic laws as they become aware of photo radar locations. Mr. Thomas said that settling cases at the first appearance (the arraignment) also saves resources and reduces the demand on the court system.

Chairman Kavanaugh thanked staff for the presentation, and he noted that the Committee looks forward to the opening of the court building in the spring.

5. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Public Safety Committee meeting adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Public Safety Committee meeting of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 22nd day of October 2009. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK

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Attachments (3)