

POLICE COMMITTEE MINUTES

December 18, 2000

The Police Committee of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on December 18, 2000 at 3:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

Dennis Kavanaugh, Chairman
Jim Davidson
Pat Pomeroy

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mike Whalen

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mike Hutchinson

(Items on the agenda were discussed out of order but for purposes of clarity will remain as listed on the agenda.)

1. Hear a report and consider recommendations concerning a Career Enhancement Program.

Police Chief Jan Strauss and Police Commander Dan Saban addressed the Committee relative to this agenda item. Chief Strauss informed the Committee that Commander Saban has been serving as a member of the Career Enhancement Program Committee for the past 14 months and will provide the Committee with an overview of this agenda item.

Commander Saban stated that approximately 18 months ago, the Department faced issues concerning the retention of sworn members and veteran employees. Commander Saban said he was directed to appoint a committee to develop and review options that are available and develop recommendations for the Committee to review. Chief Saban noted that the Career Enhancement program is intended to improve skills, enhance productivity, promote professional growth and job satisfaction and provide compensation for advanced training and for certain designated skills or combination of skills. Chief added that the Program is an alternative career path, which, as designed, will assist in retaining highly motivated and skilled police officers that will be an economic and professional asset to the City.

Chief Saban noted that the Career Enhancement Committee has developed a four-level phased program whereby monetary compensation is awarded based on the accumulation of point scores for the training, skills, and assignment of sworn officers below the rank of Sergeant or Master Police Officer who meet minimum entry qualifications. Chief Saban commented that pending Committee and Council approval, the program will be phased in over four years beginning July 1, 2001.

Chief Saban outlined a chart containing the proposed levels, point accumulations and compensation and added that points are subject to review and modification by the Committee.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the Committee is composed of approximately 25 sworn and civilian members of varying ranks, including membership from the Fraternal Order of Police and the NPA, the fact that the Career Enhancement Program (CEP) promotes growth and career enhancement for those veterans who desire to make being a police officer their lifetime career, the fact that the program allows them to receive additional pay based on

skill levels that they obtain throughout their career, the fact that the program provides mobility throughout the organization and an opportunity to increase officer's base salaries, the fact that there are approximately 800 sworn members and staff's proposal to implement the program over a four-year phase-in program, the fact that a Professional Enhancement Board has also been established which will look at this particular issue, staff's recommendation that senior level personnel be involved first and the fact that staff surveyed all of the veteran officers with nine years of service or more who would be eligible for the fourth level and discussed the anticipated fiscal impact of the proposal. (See Attachment.)

In response to a question from Committeemember Davidson, Chief Saban said that the Career Development Monitoring Program is more of a counseling, mentoring program that allows the employees to be coached and mentored into different areas of their growth. Chief Saban also expressed the opinion that the Department's transfer policy is a different mechanism and said that he does not believe this program will conflict with the transfer policy.

Additional discussion ensued relative to accumulating points when transferring to selected groups, criteria standards that have been established, the fact that the Department is experiencing difficulties in acquiring and retaining officers, the fact that approximately 50 officers a year leave the Department and many are at their 20-year mark, the importance of retaining those skilled individuals, training and physical fitness points, and the fact that similar programs are in effect in both Phoenix and Scottsdale.

Committeemember Davidson indicated his intention to pursue this matter further with Chief Saban.

Committeemember Pomeroy spoke in support of the Career Enhancement Program and said that it is an essential tool to both attract and retain skilled personnel. Committeemember Pomeroy commented that he too has additional questions regarding the actual program which he will address with staff and noted that if approved, officers who have a minimum of 65 points would qualify for a Level 4 effective July 1, 2001.

Chairman Kavanaugh expressed the opinion that the proposed program will assist in rewarding staff for training, assignments and skills that will ultimately benefit the Department and the community as a whole. Chairman Kavanaugh stressed the importance of retaining patrol officer functions and added that he believes the program has merit. Chairman Kavanaugh recommended that based on the fact that the members of the Committee have indicated that they have additional questions to be addressed, the Committee defer their recommendations to the Council pending further discussion.

City Manager Mike Hutchinson commented that staff has other Police Committee items that will be placed on the agenda of a January meeting and suggested that this item be placed on that agenda. Mr. Hutchinson said that this will provide staff and opportunity to meet with the members of the Committee and respond to their questions regarding this issue.

In response to a question from Committeemember Davidson, Mr. Hutchinson advised that funding for this program would come out of the General Fund.

Chairman Kavanaugh stated that action on this item will be deferred to the next Police Committee meeting to allow additional time for discussion. Chairman Kavanaugh added the opinion that the program is worthwhile and thanked staff for their efforts and input.

2. Hear and consider a recommendation concerning providing free reports to crime victims.

Chairman Kavanaugh stated that this agenda item was continued from the previous Police Committee meeting to provide staff sufficient time to perform additional research and prepare recommendations for consideration by the Committee regarding this issue. Chairman Kavanaugh explained that Mr. Chatham Kitz originally brought this matter to the attention of the Committee and noted that Mr. Kitz is present in the audience to respond to questions from staff and/or the members of the Committee.

Police Chief Jan Strauss, Records Administration Administrator Karen Wolf and Police Commander Gil Otanez addressed the Committee relative to this agenda item. Commander Otanez said that the Department was asked to research the policies that are currently in effect in surrounding communities regarding providing copies of reports to crime victims and said that Ms. Wolf performed the actual research and will provide an overview of her findings.

Ms. Wolf noted that she contacted eight other valley law enforcement agencies and learned that all the agencies had either just implemented a new policy similar to that in effect in the City of Phoenix Police Department (providing victims of violent crimes with free copies of the report) or are in the planning stage of submitting proposals similar to Phoenix's policy.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that a two-week study was initiated to determine who is actually requesting the copies of the reports, the fact that releasing public records is a significant task for the Police Department, the fact that the study indicated that 63% of the records requests were from victims of accidents wanting copies of the accident reports, a large number of requests were also generated by insurance company personnel and a smaller number came from other interested parties, including attorneys, report writing services that may be working for attorneys, and the fact that only 9.8% of the requestors were actual crime victims themselves.

Ms. Wolf recommended that based on the additional research, staff is recommending that victims of criminal incidents who request a copy of the report be provided one copy free of charge and added that the definition of victim as outlined in A.R.S. Title 13 be used, specifically, "a person against whom the criminal offense has been committed or if the person was killed or incapacitated, the person's spouse, parent, child or other lawful representative except if that person is in custody for the offense or is accused." Ms. Wolf stated that this amount will represent approximately 10% of the requests that are received by the Department on an annual basis and will result in an annual loss of revenue totaling approximately \$4,400.00.

Chairman Kavanaugh thanked Ms. Wolf for her input and stated the opinion that the Department's recommendation appears to be the easiest in terms of administration and the fairest in terms of the number of people (crime victims) who would benefit from the proposal.

In response to a question from Committeemember Pomeroy, Commander Otanez noted that staff's report is based on the results of two separate two-week studies and indicated his support for the conclusions that have been drawn.

It was moved by Committeemember Pomeroy to recommend to the Council that staff's recommendation that victims of criminal incidents who request copies of Police Reports be provided one copy free of charge, and that the definition of "victim" be the same as outlined in ARS Title 13, be approved.

Additional discussion ensued relative to the fact that staff is recommending that free reports be provided to all crime victims, and the fact that only one free copy will be provided each victim.

Committeemember Davidson commented that when he was first presented with the facts surrounding this issue, his initial response was to allow the Police Department to determine whether to charge for the reports and stated that the Department has historically handled sensitive matters in an appropriate, compassionate manner. Committee Davidson added that cities are being called upon more frequently to develop specific guidelines to ensure fairness and said that for this reason he will support the motion.

Committeemember Davidson seconded the motion.

Chairman Kavanaugh stated that two requests to speak have been submitted by Mr. Kitz and Mr. Don Levey and noted that public input/testimony is typically not part of the agenda at Committee meetings. Chairman Kavanaugh said that unless there are specific questions from the two gentlemen, he believes the Committee is ready to complete the vote on a recommendation to be submitted to the Council regarding this issue. There being no questions raised, Chairman Kavanaugh proceeded with the vote.

Chairman Kavanaugh declared the motion carried unanimously and thanked Mr. Kitz for bringing this issue to the attention of the Police Committee.

3. Hear an update on the departmental transfer policy.

Chief Strauss addressed the Committee regarding this agenda item and said that Commander Gil Otanez, who has Chaired the Transfer Committee since last November and Detective Steve Badger will provide an update on this issue.

Chief Otanez reported that the transfer policy was implemented in December and said that the purpose of the policy is to provide an objective, consistent process for transfers outside of the patrol assignment. Chief Otanez stated that the Patrol Assignment is dictated by a bid system, which is based on seniority, and said that this program has to do with movement outside of patrol.

Chief Otanez provided a brief overview of this proposal and noted that the transfer issue was first brought up at the Department's Strategic Planning Session in September 1999. Chief Otanez thanked former Assistant Police Chief Mike Whalen for his efforts in establishing a task force at that time which was Chaired by Commander Dave Golonka.

Discussion ensued relative to the makeup of the task force, the fact that the concept of the policy is transfers based on a point system, test results and feedback, the fact that the policy requires an objective process for transfers within divisions, the proposed policy and job announcement process, the fact that all applicants who pass the process are placed on an eligibility list and the rank order is determined by their points, the fact that a process has also been developed to petition the Chief to bypass a member on the list, the fact that the list is active for two years or until it has been exhausted, and the fact that the only persons who receive written explanations of why they weren't selected are those individuals who have been bypassed.

In response to a question from Committeemember Pomeroy, Chief Strauss stated that no grievance procedure is in place when it comes to transfers and said that people are encouraged to go back through the chain of command when they have questions or concerns.

Chief Strauss responded to questions from Committeemember Davidson and stated the opinion that movement within the organization is good and that the more opportunities the Department provides people to work in different areas of the Department, the better the entire Department becomes. Chief Strauss also emphasized the importance of providing equity and fairness to people in explaining exactly how the process works.

Additional discussion ensued relative to the fact that a member of the Personnel Department's staff reviewed the proposal and indicated support, and the fact that a Lieutenant assigned to Staff Resources is in charge of the job announcements for transfers and promotions.

Committeemember Davidson requested that staff pursue whether it would be advantageous to involve Personnel to a greater degree in the process and Mr. Hutchinson said that staff will act on this recommendation.

Chairman Kavanaugh commended Chief Strauss and staff on their efforts and noted that historically transfers have been the source of confusion and consternation. Chairman Kavanaugh added the opinion that the proposal represents an equitable, objective process and said he supports staff's recommendations. Chairman Kavanaugh said that based on the size and complexity of the Department and the issues it faces, that the Committee receive updates on the process six months and one year from now and then on an annual basis to keep the Police Committee members and the Council informed of the status of the program.

Chairman Kavanaugh thanked staff for their input.

4. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Police Committee meeting adjourned at 4:12 p.m.

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 18th day of December 2000. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this ____ day of _____ 2000

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

lgc

Attachment

CITY OF MESA POLICE DEPARTMENT INTEROFFICE M E M O

TO: Mike Hutchinson, City Manager
FROM: Commander Dan Saban, Police Department
SUBJECT: Career Enhancement Program Proposal
DATE: September 27, 2000

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Program Design:

The Career Enhancement Program is intended to improve skills, enhance productivity, promote professional growth and job satisfaction, and provide compensation for advanced training, and for certain designated skills or combination of skills. The Program is an alternative career path which, as designed, will assist in retaining highly motivated and skilled police officers that will be an economic and professional asset to the City of Mesa.

The Career Enhancement Committee has developed a four-level phased program whereby monetary compensation is awarded based on the accumulation of point scores for the training, skills, and assignment of sworn officers below the rank of Sergeant or Master Police Officer who meet minimum entry qualifications.

Pending approval, the program will be phased in over four years beginning on July 1, 2001.

Compensation:

Compensation for the successful completion of any level contained in this program shall be as follows:

<u>LEVEL</u>	<u>TOTAL POINTS</u>	<u>COMPENSATION</u>
I	15	\$20.00 per a period (bi-weekly)
II	30	\$40.00 per a period (bi-weekly)
III	45	\$60.00 per a period (bi-weekly)
IV	65	\$80.00 per a period (bi-weekly)

Computations were developed using a base salary rate of police officer step 45A. Points are subject to review and modification by the Professional Enhancement Committee.

Fiscal Impact:

To determine fiscal impact, surveys were sent out to candidates eligible for compensation at level four. Applying the same response rate to eligible candidates at the three other program levels, the following fiscal impact estimates were identified:

<u>Phase-in Date</u>	<u>Eligible Candidates</u>	<u>Total Annual Estimated Costs</u>
July 1, 2001	Officers eligible for Level 4, with at least 9 years of service may apply	\$ 131,040.00
July 1, 2002	Officers eligible for Levels 3 & 4 , with at least 7 years of service may apply (level 3 = \$205,920, level 4 = \$131,040	\$ 336,960.00
July 1, 2003	Officers eligible for Levels 2, 3, & 4, with at least five years of service may apply (level 2 = \$178,880, level 3 = \$205,920, level 4 = \$131,040	\$ 515,840.00
July 1, 2004	Officers eligible for all levels may apply (level 1 = \$108,680, level 2 = \$178,880, level 3 = \$205,920, level 4 = \$131,040)	\$ 624,520.00

The full program proposal includes an expanded description of the program design (admission to the program, compensation, etc.), a full listing of skills and assignments eligible for points, concluding with a discussion of policy issues and concurrence.