

POLICE COMMITTEE MINUTES

April 10, 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 April 10, 1996 at 4:05 p.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

Farrell Jensen, Chairman
Jerry Boyd
Pat Gilbert

COMMITTEE ABSENT

None

COUNCIL PRESENT

Jim Stapley

STAFF PRESENT

C.K. Luster
Lin Adams
David Ashe
Steve Baker
Richard Clore
Fred Conway
Linda Crocker
Marjorie Farago
Elva Fimbres
Mike Hutchinson
Lars Jarvie
Ron Krosting
Ernie Mason
Jan Nelson
Ruth Ann Norris
Ellen Pence
Sharon Seekins
Glenn Shough
Jan Strauss
John Szczepanski
Mike Whalen
Others

OTHERS PRESENT

Dan Nowicki
Marilyn Wennerstrom
Others

1. Discuss and consider a proposal for handicapped parking enforcement.

Police Chief Lars Jarvie advised that the Mesa Police Department's enforcement of handicapped parking violations has not met the needs of the handicapped community resulting in a decrease of citations issued.

Traffic Sergeant Glenn Shough provided an overview of a proposed volunteer enforcement program which would solicit assistance from the handicapped community in an effort to increase the enforcement of handicapped parking violations in the City.

Sergeant Shough advised that the proposed program would utilize four volunteers in Police Service, and added that the volunteers would be supervised by the day shift Traffic Unit Sergeant. Sergeant Shough advised that the volunteers would receive twenty hours of training provided by Crime Prevention Specialist Machel Frazier, and noted that the training would include briefings on legal issues, radio procedures, confrontation and communication, and Mesa Police Department (MPD) policies. Sergeant Shough stated that as a result of calls for service and additional demands, violations have become "reactive" rather than "proactive" and added that other cities which have faced similar situations implemented programs such as the one currently under discussion.

Sergeant Shough advised that Title 28 provides the MPD with the authority to implement a program utilizing volunteers to issue citations to violators. Sergeant Shough reported that the City of Scottsdale has implemented this program utilizing four volunteers and has increased violation issuance from 300 to 3,000 citations. Sergeant Shough added that the proposed program recommends that the volunteers utilize their own personal vehicles.

Discussion ensued relative to program costs which would amount to approximately \$5,000 to equip all four volunteers, the issuance of a 'soft uniforms', volunteer parking enforcement signs, police radios and additional mileage costs.

Committeemember Boyd expressed the opinion that six volunteers be trained consecutively as opposed to the recommended four in order to accommodate vacations and or other emergencies. Committeemember Boyd discussed the fact that attrition levels should be considered prior to implementation of the program.

Chairman Jensen complimented the Police Department on their efforts relative to this program.

It was moved by Committeemember Gilbert, seconded by Committeemember Boyd, to recommend to the Council that the proposal in concept for implementation of the handicapped parking enforcement program be approved.

Carried unanimously.

2. Review crime statistics.

Police Chief Lars Jarvie briefly outlined the contents of a 1996 crime statistics report and provided the Committee with specific data relative to person and property crimes, homicides, burglaries, alarm calls and vehicle theft incidents that occurred during the past year. Chief Jarvie noted that the Department's response time of 3.6 minutes for emergency calls remains unchanged.

Discussion ensued relative to arrests, citations, fatalities and departmental work loads.

In response to a request from Chairman Jensen, Crime Analysis Supervisor Jan Nelson stated that a breakdown of adult versus juvenile crimes will be provided to the Committee at a future meeting.

Chairman Jensen thanked staff for their input.

3. Discuss implementation of the photo radar program.

Police Chief Lars Jarvie expressed appreciation to the Committee for supporting the implementation of a pilot photo radar program in the City of Mesa. Chief Jarvie advised that staff has met with two highly knowledgeable professors from Arizona State University in an effort to solicit their input relative to photo radar technology and program implementation. Chief Jarvie stated the opinion that the expertise gained as a result of the requested input will benefit the photo radar program and provide the Committee with a clear understanding of the effectiveness of the proposal.

In response to a question from Chairman Jensen, Chief Jarvie provided time frame information for implementation of the photo radar program, and estimated that implementation of the program may require a total of at least six months.

Purchasing Administrator Sharon Seekins addressed the Committee relative to the bid proposal process and estimated that three months would be required for the development of the Requests for Proposals (RFP's).

Committeemember Boyd expressed the opinion that evaluation guidelines should be established as soon as possible.

4. Discuss and consider a proposed computer evidence tracking system for the Police Department.

Captain Steve Baker reported that the Police Department is requesting approval for the purchase of a laboratory information management system. Captain Baker outlined the advantages of acquiring the system which included the utilization of bar codes to allow officers, detectives, City Court personnel and prosecutors to access a variety of information on-line.

Captain Baker apologized to the Committee for the fact that information relative to this issue was not provided in advance of the meeting.

Captain Baker added that the proposed computer evidence tracking system will also assist the Department in achieving Crime Lab Certification and stressed the importance of achieving this goal.

Discussion ensued relative to evidence tracking system costs versus existing programs and the overall benefits of implementing the proposed program.

Purchasing Administrator Sharon Seekins reported that RFP's were distributed and that several companies participated in the analysis. Ms. Seekins added that a report will be forwarded to the Committee relative to purchase recommendations.

Chairman Jensen indicated that he would prefer to delay consideration of this agenda item pending receipt of additional information from staff. Chairman Jensen requested that this item be placed on the agenda of the Friday, April 12, 1996 Council Study Session for further consideration.

5. a. Truck enforcement program.

Police Officer John Szczepanski stated he has been involved in the truck enforcement program for seventeen years, and added that currently commercial vehicle regulations are being enforced utilizing two sets of scales. Officer Szczepanski reported that eight officers are certified to inspect commercial vehicles to identify violations contributing to accidents.

Officer Szczepanski stated that six out of seven vehicles are consistently designated 'out of service' due to violations, and added that historically, 75% to 90% of the vehicles inspected have severe violations and are 'parked' until repairs are completed.

Officer Szczepanski provided a brief report on inspection incidents throughout the City, and added that two days a month for the remainder of the year are scheduled for enforcement of commercial regulations.

Lieutenant Richard Clore noted that the extensive two-week training for inspectors is available once a year by the Arizona Department of Public Safety, and added that four or five inspectors have been lost due to attrition or retirement. Lieutenant Clore advised that the inspector unit is currently at eight staff members with a goal of fifteen inspectors.

Discussions ensued relative to warnings, citations and various violations. Officer Szczepanski stated that deficient brakes are the most frequent violations, and added that within the past four months 79 vehicle inspections have been conducted and 63 vehicles have been placed out of service.

Committeemember Boyd stressed the importance of employing additional staff to effectively manage the enforcement program.

In response to a question from Committeemember Gilbert, Officer Szczepanski responded that as a result of North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), an additional number of trucks from south of the border are anticipated. Officer Szczepanski added that the Department of Public Safety has received federal funds to assist in providing additional training for their personnel and efforts are concentrated near the southern border.

Chairman Jensen recommended that this issue be placed on the agenda of a future Police Committee meeting and requested that staff prepare recommendations for Committee consideration relative to resolving truck enforcement issues.

b. Review speed limits on various streets.

Traffic and Streets Director Ron Krosting distributed to the Committee a map outlining speed limits on arterial streets throughout the City. Mr. Krosting provided a brief synopsis of the process relative to speed limit adjustments and determinations.

Discussion ensued relative to initiating 'reasonable and prudent' speed limits, the possibility of implementing separate speeds for trucks, and the difference between warning/advisory and regulatory signs. Mr. Krosting stated that advisory signs are not legally enforceable.

Chairman Jensen stated that it is the consensus of the Committee that the Traffic Safety Committee research speed limit concerns expressed by citizens, and present their findings to the Police Committee.

6. Consider an Intergovernmental Agreement with Williams Gateway Airport Authority for police and security services at the airport.

Assistant Police Chief Mike Whalen discussed a proposed Intergovernmental Agreement to provide the Williams Gateway Airport Authority with the ability to contract with the City of Mesa Police Department for additional, non-standard services. Chief Whalen advised that the proposed services will include police and security guard functions.

Assistant Chief Whalen advised that the total cost to perform these services would be \$27,500 and discussed the terms and length of the proposed agreement.

It was moved by Committeemember Gilbert, seconded by Committeemember Boyd, to recommend to the Council, that the Intergovernmental Agreement with Williams Gateway Airport Authority for police and security services at the airport be approved.

Carried unanimously.

7. General Information.

City Manager Charles Luster advised that in response to two recent issues brought to the attention of the Council, 1) the number of police cars parked at the Police Central station, and 2) questions relative to the effective use of police officers' schedules, staff has prepared reports for the Committee.

Assistant Police Chief Fred Conway spoke relative to the statement made by Mr. Joe Guinn at the February 20, 1996 Regular Council Meeting regarding the number of police vehicles parked at the Central Police station.

Assistant Chief Conway advised that Mr. Guinn stated the opinion that there was an abundance of cars at that location and that the Police Department was requesting additional vehicles. Assistant Chief Conway reported that a vehicle count was conducted and provided the Committee with statistics relative to the findings.

Discussion ensued relative to vehicle maintenance, utilization of vehicles for special events and accommodating motorcycle and bike officers during inclement weather, the fact that a number of unmarked cars from other substations on business often parked at that location, and the fact that various support functions are located at the Central station.

Police Chief Lars Jarvie commented that there is a misconception that because there are so many vehicles in the parking lot, that Police Officers are inside instead of out in the community.

Chief Jarvie noted that staff is utilized based on an automated system and that the Department deploys enforcement based on the requirements determined by the system. Chief Jarvie stressed the importance of maintaining a sufficient number of vehicles in order to support swing and graveyard shifts, and added that scheduling is proportional.

Chief Jarvie indicated his willingness to meet with Mr. Guinn and discuss this issue.

Committeemember Boyd expressed the opinion that a letter should be forwarded to Mr. Guinn encouraging him to visit Police Central and meet with staff to address his concerns.

Assistant Police Chief Mike Whalen addressed the Committee relative the second general information issue, the effective utilization of Police Officers' schedules. Chief Whalen distributed the March 1996 monthly statistics/chart displaying the levels of patrol time spent Citywide.

Assistant Chief Whalen advised that 65% of Police Officers' time is spent responding to calls for service as opposed to the 25% perceived, and added that 12% of the time is proactive. Chief Whalen added that 23% is administrative time encompassing court, sick, vacation, briefing and report-writing time.

Chairman Jensen stated the opinion that efforts have been encouraged by the Council and this Committee to decrease the administrative time spent by Police Officers, including the approval of laptop computers, and added that the Police Department has worked hard and success has been achieved as a result of this effort.

In response to a question from Committeemember Boyd, Chief Jarvie responded that 1996 will be an intense year for attrition due to retirements and terminations, and added that medical retirements have been substantial in the last six months.

In response to a question from Chairman Jensen relative to community policing, Chief Jarvie discussed Police Department goals and added that the six-year program now in force to recruit new officers is in its third year.

Police Committee Meeting
April 10, 1996
Page 7

8. Adjournment.

It was moved by Committeemember Gilbert, seconded by Committeemember Boyd, that the Police Committee meeting adjourn at 6:40 p.m.

Carried unanimously.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Police Committee of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 10th day of April, 1996. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 15th day of April 1996

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK