

SUMMARY OF MINUTES

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

5:30 P.M., MONDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2007

COMMITTEE ROOM

ROOM 239, CITY HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Council Member Vivian H. Burke, Chair (out at 6:08 p.m.)
Council Member Molly Leight, Vice Chair
Council Member Wanda Merschel

MEMBERS ABSENT: Council Member Nelson L. Malloy, Jr.

OTHERS PRESENT: Council Member Joycelyn V. Johnson

Chair Burke called the meeting to order. She recognized guests, Mr. Robert Vorsteg and Mr. Brian Monroe of Pepsi Bottling Company, who are members of Leadership Winston-Salem. She then stated that, without objection, the Committee would first consider the Consent Agenda.

Council Member Leight made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was duly seconded by Council Member Merschel and unanimously carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

- C- 1. ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 42-122(f) OF THE CITY CODE RELATING TO 25 MILES PER HOUR SPEED LIMITS - *Dillon Street*.
- C- 2. ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS 74-284, 289 AND 290 OF THE CITY CODE RELATING TO EXHIBITION SHOWS.

GENERAL AGENDA

- G- 1. ORDINANCES RENEWING THE CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY OF FIVE LIMOUSINE SERVICES AND ONE TAXI SERVICE IN THE CITY OF WINSTON-SALEM - *Ready Limousine, Top of the World Limousine, Fantasy Limousine, Inc., Black Tie Limousine, Barefoot Transportation, La Raza Taxi*.

Mr. Gregory M. Turner, Assistant City Manager/Public Works, presented a memo reflecting the current outstanding balances for various taxi and limousine services. He also suggested that Willard Cab Company be eligible for certificate renewal as they had paid their balance due.

Council Member Leight made a motion to approve the item. The motion was duly seconded by Council Member Merschel and carried unanimously.

G- 2. DENIAL OF RENEWAL OF APPLICATIONS FOR THREE TAXI SERVICES IN THE CITY OF WINSTON-SALEM - *Joe's Taxi, Inc., Lott's Taxi Service, Willard Cab Company.*

Mr. Turner explained that Joe's Taxi, Inc. had paid all but \$349 of their outstanding balance with the City.

Council Member Merschel made a motion to approve renewal of the certificates for Joe's Taxi, Inc. pending complete payment of their outstanding balance, prior to the first reading of the item. The motion was duly seconded by Council Member Leight and unanimously carried.

In response to Council Member Johnson's question, Mr. Craig Sheppard, City Revenue Collector, stated that the bulk of parking tickets accumulated by the various companies occurred at metered spaces and accrued the \$25 penalty. He also stated that the cars can be wheel-locked and require any outstanding balance of the account be paid prior to removing the lock, and remaining debt can be deducted from the various companies' state tax refund.

Mr. Turner stated that the certificate program has been an efficient mechanism ensuring that companies pay their debts.

In response to Council Member Merschel's question, Mr. Turner stated that Blue Bird Cab Company was notified of their debt via regular invoices from the Department of Transportation.

Mr. Sheppard noted that staff is motivating Blue Bird Cab Company to pay their debt, and some criminal prosecution of drivers may be pursued. He further noted that their debt will be collected within the next two months.

Mr. Turner commented that the permit for Blue Bird Cab Company expires in 2008 and it can be revoked before that expiration, if the Council decides to pursue that action. He further commented that revocation is not addressed in the current ordinance.

Council Member Merschel suggested that staff amend the City Code, setting a dollar amount, and when companies reach that amount of debt, they can be presented to Council for further action, regardless of permit length.

Council Member Johnson suggested that a percentage of the owed debt must be paid for the company to keep their operating status.

Mr. Taye Lott, 2801 Urban Street, stated that he has been in business for ten years and has never had a delayed payment to the City, and has a receipt to show that any debt was paid in full. He further stated that he spoke with the Revenue Division and was told that there was a zero balance on his account and believes that the denial of his application is based on prejudice. Mr. Lott also presented a copy of his criminal records history and indicated that he had never been asked for it in the past.

By consensus, the Committee agreed to have staff review the information and continue the item to the January Public Safety Committee meeting.

G- 3. REPORT ON VIOLENCE REDUCTION TRAINING FOR NIGHTCLUB OWNERS/MANAGERS/ENTERTAINMENT PROMOTERS.

Sergeant Tom Peterson of the Winston-Salem Police Department Downtown Bike Patrol conducted the Violence Reduction Training session on October 12, with 12 individuals in attendance.

In response to Council Member Leight's question, Sergeant Peterson stated that the reaction of the participants was that training was beneficial.

Mr. Mike Chamis, owner of the Silver Moon Saloon and Elliot's Revue, stated that the training was well-organized and well-conducted, but brief. He also stated that he was surprised at the low turnout for the training class. He noted that it was beneficial to have the statutes defined and clarified. Mr. Chamis indicated that he would be willing to participate in the class on a regular basis and would encourage his staff to attend as well. He further noted that he is still opposed to the ordinance in its current form.

In response to Council Member Johnson's question, Mr. Chamis stated that he would have liked to see more role-play in the class and situational scenarios. He also stated that he would like to see some guidelines identifying at what point law enforcement needs to be involved, because once law enforcement arrives, the situation may be under control.

Council Member Leight commented that she appreciated Mr. Chamis' input and does believe that role-playing would be beneficial as a part of the training. She expressed her concern at the low turnout, but noted that she is still in favor of the ordinance, because without the ordinance, there would be no point in having the class.

In response to Chair Burke's questions, Sergeant Peterson stated that he had hoped to see at least 25 people attend the class and out of fewer than 100 bar/nightclub establishments in the City, eight of those establishments took place in the class.

Mr. Lee Garrity, City Manager, stated that those in attendance did not represent the problem establishments that may have benefited more from the training.

Mr. Richard Emmett, 406 E. 4th Street, owner of The Garage, stated that the class was well-run and useful information was provided. He also added that some role-playing scenarios would have been beneficial as well as a handout of the information presented and any regulations that were addressed. He further stated that the date of the class was inconvenient for many as it was held on a Friday evening, which is a peak time for many of the involved businesses. Mr. Emmett commented that many of the establishments that serve food during the day and are considered a nightclub only at certain times, may not have deemed it necessary to attend the class. He also commented that an online component of the class would be convenient and that more establishments should be encouraged to participate.

Chair Burke requested that the next class be scheduled at a time that will be convenient for the bulk of the interested establishments to attend.

In response to Chair Burke's question, Assistant Police Chief Barry Rountree stated that those establishments whose food sales exceed their alcohol sales will not be governed by the proposed ordinance.

In response to Council Member Merschel's question, Sergeant Peterson stated that of the high call establishments, possibly two that attended would be considered a part of that group. He also stated that there are four or five problem establishments that did not participate in the class that would have benefited most from it.

Council Member Merschel requested that Sergeant Peterson incorporate the comments and questions that were presented for use at the next class, and that it be held at a time convenient for the establishments. She also requested that a report be presented after the next class is held to see what progress has been made.

Council Member Johnson requested that the online component of the class be documented by name and establishment so that those who participate can be easily identified.

G- 4. PRESENTATION BY THE CENTER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY.

Mr. Derwick Paige, Deputy City Manager, stated that Mr. Alvin Atkinson, Director, Center for Community Safety (CCS) would be making the presentation.

(Chair Burke out at 6:08 p.m.)

Mr. Atkinson presented information including the mission of the CCS, major funding providers, various program areas, economic impact, strategies, partnerships, and research. He noted that CCS serves as a community resource by partnering with various groups to facilitate community-based initiatives. He also outlined several community safety strategies, including the Winston-Salem Forsyth County Community Safety Partnership which provides research and analysis on violence-related issues and methods of response to those issues. He further presented statistics regarding criminal offenses in various portions of the City.

Council Member Merschel expressed her thanks to Mr. Atkinson and his staff for their hard work.

In response to Council Member Johnson's question, Mr. Atkinson stated that the presented information is published on the website and updated every six months. He also stated that the YWCA would be included on the list of partners.

Council Member Johnson requested that the Police Department work with the CCS to show the crime statistics by ward within the City. She also requested that Mr. Atkinson include white collar crime in his research and provide some comparative data. She further requested that suicide rate prevention and identification issues that may not be as prominent within the City be presented.

In response to Council Member Johnson's question, Mr. Atkinson noted that the East Ward is a part of the Northeast and Southeast areas of the City depicted in the report.

Council Member Johnson requested to know the statistics within the East Ward regarding crime. She also expressed her appreciation to all involved in helping reduce crime within the East Ward.

Mr. Atkinson stated that he would like to come back to the Public Safety Committee periodically and share any new or changing information.

In response to Council Member Johnson's inquiry, Mr. Atkinson noted that only one Forsyth County Commissioner is engaged in the CCS's efforts.

G- 5. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL TO THE GOVERNOR'S CRIME COMMISSION AND THE PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS COMMITTEE TO FUND A GANG PROJECT COORDINATOR.

Assistant Chief Rountree stated that to better coordinate gang strategies within the City and County, the Police Department is seeking approval to submit a grant proposal to the Governor's Crime Commission and Project Safe Neighborhoods to fund a Gang Project Coordinator position. He also stated that the Police Department will work with various agencies within the City and County to focus on gang prevention, intervention and suppression. Funding for this position is available and the position will be housed in the Police Department.

Council Member Merschel made a motion to approve the item. The motion was duly seconded by Council Member Leight and carried unanimously.

Council Member Johnson stated that the County Commissioners are also seeking funding for gang-related education in 18 schools outside of Winston-Salem's City limits. She requested to know the difference between that funding and the collaborative effort between the City and County on a similar initiative.

Assistant Police Chief Ronnie Abernethy stated that the County Commissioners are applying for funding to bring summer camp programs into schools via the School Resource Officer program within Forsyth County. In response to Council Member Johnson's question, he noted that he will report back to Council whether or not these summer camp programs will be available to kids within the City limits. He further noted that the program is open to sixth graders and that he will request a copy of the grant for clarity.

In response to Council Member Johnson's request, Mr. Paige stated that staff will bring an item to Council on signs depicting gang-related tattoos, markings and graffiti.

ADJOURNMENT: 6:41 p.m.