

## SUMMARY OF MINUTES

### PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

5:30 P.M., MONDAY, AUGUST 13, 2007

COMMITTEE ROOM

ROOM 239, CITY HALL

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*MEMBERS PRESENT:* Council Member Vivian H. Burke, Chair  
Council Member Molly Leight, Vice Chair  
Council Member Nelson L. Malloy, Jr. (in at 5:31 p.m.)  
Council Member Wanda Merschel

*OTHERS PRESENT:* Council Member Joycelyn V. Johnson

Chair Burke called the meeting to order.

1. ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 42-122(f) OF THE CITY CODE RELATING TO 25 MILES PER HOUR SPEED LIMITS ON CITY STREETS – *Piccadilly Drive, Circle Drive and Ricks Drive.*

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

2. REPORT ON DOWNTOWN WINSTON-SALEM FIRE DISTRICT.

Mr. Greg Turner, Assistant City Manager/Public Works, gave a report on the Downtown Winston-Salem Fire District.

*(Council Member Malloy in at 5:31 p.m.)*

Chair Burke requested that a list of street names be provided as they were difficult to read on the map.

In response to Council Member Merschel's concern, Mr. Turner stated that staff would determine who was responsible for notifying authorities when an area is not in compliance.

Council Member Merschel suggested that staff balance the needs of public safety and the rehabilitation of existing structures. She further suggested that a list of needed changes be created and provided to the development community.

John Gist, Fire Chief, stated that Inspections staff is responsible for enforcing permits and fire codes.

Council Member Merschel suggested that staff assign an individual dedicated to the downtown area to review current fire codes and needs of the downtown area.

Chair Burke stated there are no extra funds dedicated to downtown, and to keep down the cost of rehabilitating current structures by using existing resources and expertise to open up any development opportunities. She further requested that this item be held in Public Safety Committee pending further research and information from staff.

3. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE WINSTON-SALEM POLICE DEPARTMENT TO ENTER INTO A JUSTICE STUDIES SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM WITH WINSTON-SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY. *[Item continued from the July Committee meeting.]*

Mr. Barry Rountree, Assistant Chief of Police, gave a report on the proposed scholarship program.

In response to Council Member Merschel's question, Mr. Rountree stated that the scholarship is paid upon acceptance from the student and should the student leave the program or have the scholarship revoked, the amount will have to be reimbursed to the Police Department by the student. Asst. Chief Rountree also stated that the Police Department discussed naming the scholarship for Mr. George Redd, Sr. and Ms. Lilian Bonner, retired officers of the Winston-Salem Police Department.

Chair Burke also suggested that the Police Department consider Chief Surratt for the naming of the scholarship.

Council Member Merschel suggested that former Chief Linda Davis also be considered for the naming of the scholarship.

In response to Chair Burke's inquiry, Mrs. Pat Norris, Chief of Police, commented that each of the officers mentioned had served at least 30 years with the Police Department.

Council Member Malloy proposed that each of the four names mentioned be combined and that the scholarship be named for all of them, similar to the Black-Phillips-Smith Building.

In response to Council Member Leight's question, Asst. Chief Rountree noted that the Justice Studies Degree Program was less than two years old, but was seeing a growing number of participants.

Chair Burke requested that the scholarship be named the Bonner-Redd-Surratt-Davis Scholarship.

Council Member Merschel made a motion to approve the resolution and the combined name scholarship. The motion was duly seconded by Council Member Malloy and unanimously carried.

Chair Burke requested that staff send an official letter to the family of these officers to inform them of the scholarship naming. She also requested adequate publicity of the scholarship program.

4. REPORT ON POLICE TRAFFIC STOPS. *[Item continued from the July Committee meeting.]*

Mr. Ronnie Abernathy, Assistant Chief of Police, gave a report on police traffic stops.

In response to Chair Burke's question, Asst. Chief Abernathy stated that in the six city, four year average comparison, there was no evidence of racial profiling. He further stated that census data was insufficient and Department of Motor Vehicles data was used instead to obtain a more accurate reading. Mr. Abernathy also stated that this type of research is costly and the Police Department could not afford to complete a report on Winston-Salem exclusively, but would welcome that opportunity if funding was provided.

In response to Council Member Merschel's concern, Chief Norris stated that staff would continue to work with the District Attorney's Office and others to address the issue of repeat offenders but a lack of resources does hinder that advancement.

Mr. Lee Garrity, City Manager, stated that there is a need for the state to fund criminal justice at the city level.

Council Member Leight commented that she believes racism is inappropriate and unacceptable and commended the Winston-Salem Police Department for their efforts to protect the citizens of the community and provide a safe environment.

Council Member Malloy noted that there is always room for improvement and expressed concern about the manner in which Police officers talk to citizens. In response to Council Member Malloy's question, Chief Norris said the Police Department will look into the fights that have occurred in Council Member Malloy's neighborhood on August 11 and previous dates to see why no one was arrested.

In response to Council Member Malloy's inquiry, Mr. Garrity stated that audio and video equipment will be installed in all police cruisers when funding becomes available.

Council Member Johnson commented that while racial profiling may be an issue, she is concerned with the overall attitude that police officers take with citizens.

5. UPDATE ON PYROTECHNICS AND FIREWORKS (REQUEST OF COUNCIL MEMBER BURKE). *[Item continued from the July Committee meeting.]*

Chief Norris gave an update on fireworks.

In response to Council Member Merschel's concern, Chief Norris stated that the future baseball stadium will be able to obtain permits for fireworks displays within the City limits.

Council Member Leight requested that staff review the wording of the pyrotechnics and fireworks section of the City Code for clarity and report back at the September Public Safety Committee Meeting.

Chair Burke suggested that Council Members and staff direct any questions or concerns to the City Attorney's office.

6. REPORT ON RECENT ACTIVITIES AT THE BP STATION ON LIBERTY STREET (REQUEST OF COUNCIL MEMBER BURKE).

Council Member Merschel suggested that staff review other locations owned by the same people to see if similar activities are occurring.

Council Member Johnson requested that staff also review the locations at Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and Waughtown, and Wheeler, between First and Third Streets, and further requested that the Family Fare Group be reviewed. She also mentioned that the hours of operation at these locations could be reduced.

Council Member Malloy asked for information on the new club opening at the former Black Velvet Lounge location, and assurance that adequate parking is provided. He also requested that the Great American Foods located on Patterson Avenue across from the Black-Phillips-Smith Building be reviewed.

Council Member Merschel also suggested that the location at First Street and Hawthorne Road be reviewed for similar issues.

Chair Burke expressed her concern of increased gang activity within the City. She further commented that there have been some concerns expressed by the youth and parents not wanting The Drop located at the fairgrounds and negative comments regarding the minority community.

Council Member Johnson stated that she had received very favorable comments regarding The Drop from youth and parents alike. She further stated that The Drop was not engineering purely for the minority youth community, but that is the population that participated.

Council Member Merschel noted that it was the recommendation of the City Council to move The Drop to a larger space that would accommodate the large group, rather than dealing with the small amount of problem youth that were identified.

ADJOURNMENT: 6:46 p.m.