

## SUMMARY OF MINUTES

### PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

5:30 P.M., MONDAY, MARCH 17, 2008

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 Wanda Merschel

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

*OTHERS PRESENT:* Council Member Joycelyn V. Johnson

Chair Burke called the meeting to order and stated that, without objection, the Committee would now consider the Consent Agenda.

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

#### CONSENT AGENDA

- C-1. ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 42-122(e) OF THE CITY CODE RELATING TO THIRTY MILES PER HOUR SPEED LIMITS - *Bryans Place Road.*
- C-2. ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 42-97 OF THE CITY CODE RELATING TO WEIGHT LIMITATIONS ON THRU TRAFFIC ON CERTAIN CITY STREETS - *Lockland Avenue between Academy Street and Link Road.*
- C-3. CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS RELATING TO TRAFFIC CALMING PLANS:
  - a. RESOLUTION APPROVING THE COUNTRYSIDE DRIVE TRAFFIC CALMING PLAN FOR FUNDING AND CONSTRUCTION.
  - b. RESOLUTION APPROVING THE MILHAVEN ROAD NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION'S TRAFFIC CALMING PLAN FOR FUNDING AND CONSTRUCTION.
- C-4. PROPOSED MINIMUM TAXI ORDINANCE PROVISIONS.

- C-5. CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATION TO OPERATE A BILLIARD HALL AT 975 PETERS CREEK PARKWAY - *Application of Rory Scott Wheelock and Bryan Wheelock, DBA Tailgators Bar & Billards.*
- C-6. REVIEW AND RESULTS OF QUICK RESPONSE VEHICLE (QRV) PILOT PROGRAM.

#### GENERAL AGENDA

- G-1. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A LEASE AGREEMENT WITH DAVID G. SOUTHERN FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT'S SPECIAL ENFORCEMENT TEAM, GANG UNIT AND K-9 UNIT - *400 Northgate Park Drive. [Recommended by Finance Committee. Public Safety Committee voted to continue this item to its March meeting.]*

Mr. Kirk Bjorling, Real Estate Administrator, noted the Police Department units mentioned in this item are currently located in a facility on Marshall Street. The facility has a two-year lease agreement and is owned by Old Salem, Inc. Old Salem, Inc. has since sold the property and there is an interest in opening a museum at that location. Mr. Bjorling stated that the owners have requested the Police Department units move out early, even though the lease does not end until November 2008, and they will be compensated the difference in the lease rate between now and November in the amount of \$592 per month. He also stated that the proposed new location is on Northgate Park Drive and contains the same amount of square footage and parking as the current facility. He further stated there will be a lease agreement of three years.

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

Chair Burke noted that while it is not obvious that the Police Department units will be housed in the new location, individuals will have a way of finding out where they are. She expressed her disappointment that the approach to finding the new location was wrong, and it appears negotiations were entered into prior to consulting all of the appropriate parties.

- G-2. REPORT ON POLICE DEPARTMENT TOWING AND IMPOUND AUTHORITY.

Mrs. Patricia D. Norris, Chief of Police, stated that the Police Department tows and/or impounds unattended vehicles at various locations where they are causing a traffic hazard or obstructing traffic, as well as unattended vehicles that may be blocking a public right-of-way, or are parked in an area where they should not be.

In response to Council Member Leight's question, Chief Norris stated that if a private property owner has a vehicle towed off of his/her property that the City towing fee schedule does not apply. Any applicable fees will be between the towing company and the vehicle owner.

In response to Council Member Leight's inquiry, Mrs. Angela Carmon, City Attorney, stated that if the City requests for vehicles to be removed from a private property that are in violation of the City Code, then the City fees for towing will apply. If a private property owner requests vehicles to be removed, then any fees will be between the private property owner and the towing company.

In response to Chair Burke's question, Mrs. Carmon noted that private towing companies are not regulated by the City, therefore there is no set fee schedule for private towing companies. Pursuant to the request that a vehicle be towed by the Police Department, the towing company accepts the rates set forth in the code. She also noted that it is unknown if private towing companies "over-charge" for their services because any charges are negotiated between the private property owners and the towing companies.

In response to Council Member Leight's question, Mr. Lee Garrity, City Manager, stated that there is currently an agreement with the Wrecker Association and that same agreement will be used with any City-initiated tows, therefore, that information will be included if an ordinance is developed related to towing.

Council Member Leight requested an explanation of referenced code sections 42-253, 42-254, and 42-153(a)(2) regarding vehicles parked in violation of these sections.

#### C-4. PROPOSED MINIMUM TAXI ORDINANCE PROVISIONS.

Council Member Merschel stated that she had some questions and comments regarding this item which was voted on before she entered the meeting.

In regards to Item C-4, Council Members asked the following questions:

#### **Council Member Merschel**

- Can DWI charges/convictions legally be included in information regarding eligibility of an owner?
- Is there a way to address the continuity of a valid operator's license, if it has been revoked or suspended and the appropriate number of days have passed, so there is no lapse in information presented to Council.
- Set a due date or a certain time frame (maybe 30 days) that all dues must be paid to the City prior to the renewal, possibly before it is placed on the agenda so there is no confusion.
- As it is a City-issued permit, does the City have any liability if there is an incident with a certified owner/operator that would cause personal injury because the vehicle is unsafe, or the driver is at fault?

#### **Council Member Leight**

- Could records of all drivers be considered in the renewal? (May be difficult to track due to shifting population.)
- Expressed concern that the owner may not have a DWI, but several of the drivers may.
- It is not the City's place to be concerned with the appearance of the drivers, owner/operators, or car's appearance.

- How does the state statute refer to the regulation of taxis?

**Chair Burke**

- Requested that more information be provided on the appearance of the drivers, owner/operators and cars because it is an area of concern to many.
- Make sure that there is no violation of Civil Liberties.

**Council Member Johnson**

- How specific are the regulations regarding criminal convictions? Will no convictions be allowed or no convictions within three years as stated in the operational certificate?
- Expressed concern that some individuals may have converted themselves and paid their dues and are trying to maintain gainful employment.
- There is a concern regarding convictions and first-time applicants.

**G-3. REPORT ON PROSTITUTION INITIATIVE.**

Chief Norris stated that staff has worked on sting operations over the last year and that numerous arrests have been made regarding prostitution. She noted that staff has previously worked with District Attorney Tom Keith on this initiative and are now working with a newcomer to the District Attorney's staff. She also noted that this newcomer does not understand the need to follow up with the individuals once they have been taken to jail and there is a need to find a program for women to help them recover from addiction. Chief Norris noted that Dr. Liz Arnold, Professor of Psychiatry, Behavioral Medicine and Social Sciences at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center, and Monica Brown of the Downtown Health Plaza were in attendance as well to discuss the report.

In response to Chair Burke's question, Mr. Garrity stated that video cameras were removed from some locations because of concern from the District Attorney's office. He also stated that some of the individuals were currently in the John School and attorneys of some of the individuals had contacted staff.

Chief Norris noted there was some concern that even if an individual was not convicted, his picture was still being shown.

Chair Burke requested to know if any laws would be violated by keeping the cameras in place.

Mr. Garrity noted that the original arrests are public record, so there should not be a violation.

Captain Alonzo Thompson, Winston-Salem Police Department, stated that pole cameras were used to pan a particular area and that they are moved periodically to other areas of need. He also stated that the cameras can be relocated if an area of need is presented.

Chair Burke stated that the cameras were removed because former Police Chief Linda Davis was contacted and asked that they be removed.

Council Member Johnson stated that the caliber of people who were caught on the cameras may

have been capable of influencing the removal of the cameras.

Ms. Monica Brown, stated that the John School was modeled after a similar program in Buffalo, New York and that a curriculum was developed in 2002. She gave an overview of the John School and referenced an agenda of items that is covered in each class. She further stated that the purpose of the John School is to provide a comprehensive approach to eradicating prostitution. Ms. Brown noted that a Spanish version of the John School was created and also noted that many individuals volunteer their time to educate others on the dangers of prostitution. In response to Chair Burke's question, Ms. Brown stated that prostitutes can be found anywhere, but several have been located along Patterson Avenue, Broad Street, Ivy Avenue and Liberty Street.

Dr. Liz Arnold, stated that the program has been very effective to date and that the local John School is one of twenty programs in North America and referenced a similar model of the John School in San Francisco, California that has proven to be very effective. She also stated that there may not be a need to show all individuals participating on television and that a comprehensive treatment plan is the best option. She further stated that the Prostitution Initiative applied for a grant of \$2.2 million to be paid over five years and will know later this year if the grant has been awarded. In response to Council Member Merschel's question, Dr. Arnold stated that the grant funding will help a target population of adult women who have been arrested in the last three years for prostitution in Forsyth County.

In response to Chair Burke's question, Dr. Arnold stated that most individuals arrested for soliciting prostitutes are from diverse age, ethnic, and economic backgrounds. Dr. Arnold also stated that while the model presented is expensive, it is proven effective and offers a one-year treatment facility program to help end drug abuse.

Council Member Johnson requested that escort services be reviewed within the program, as well as street prostitutes.

Chief Norris stated that street prostitutes are the ones to reach as most of them are struggling with housing issues, sexually transmitted diseases and drug abuse.

In response to Council Member Merschel's request, Ms. Brown noted that various local community programs are assisting in the rehabilitation effort and she is uncertain of whether or not Forsyth Initiative in Residential Self Treatment (FIRST) was participating. Council Member Merschel requested specific information regarding FIRST. Ms. Brown also noted that information on participating groups can be provided.

#### ADDITIONAL ITEMS

Council Member Johnson requested a letter to all Council Members regarding Holland Homes behind Sunrise Towers and continued efforts in that area. She noted that this area was discussed at a previous Public Safety Committee meeting and some information presented by a resident may not have been factual, and it may not have been shared with all other residents involved.

Council Member Leight requested that WSTV-13 be utilized to educate and inform citizens of the recent rabid dog groups that have been located throughout the City.

Council Member Merschel expressed her thanks to Chief Norris and the Police Department on their continued initiatives to decrease drug abuse in the City.

Captain Thompson noted that Police Department staff is committed to the New Hope initiative and will continue to participate in undercover work to keep areas clear of criminal activity. He also complimented citizen's commitment to assisting the Police Department and City staff in their efforts.

In response to Council Member Johnson's question, he stated that he will review the situation at Sunrise Towers.

ADJOURNMENT: 6:35 p.m.