

SUMMARY OF MINUTES

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

5:30 P.M., MONDAY, JUNE 8, 2009

COMMITTEE ROOM

ROOM 239, CITY HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Council Member Vivian H. Burke, Chair
Council Member Molly Leight, Vice Chair
Council Member Wanda Merschel

MEMBER 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 first consider the Consent Agenda and asked if any items needed to be removed for discussion. No items were removed for discussion. Council Member Leight made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was duly seconded by Council Member Merschel and carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

- C-1. ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 42-123(c) OF THE CITY CODE RELATING TO 45 MILES PER HOUR SPEED LIMITS - *New Rural Hall Road (SR 1712) from Oak Summit Road (SR 1686) to Mill Road (SR 1675).*
- C-2. ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 42-122 (f) OF THE CITY CODE RELATING TO 25 MILES PER HOUR SPEED LIMITS - *Crepe Myrtle Circle, Demetrias Drive, Powers Road, Lewey Lane, and Stonehenge Lane.*
- C-3. ORDINANCE REVOKING THE CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY OF CONCEPT-1 CONCIERGE, INC. FOR THE OPERATION OF THREE LIMOUSINES IN THE CITY OF WINSTON-SALEM.
- C-4. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF WINSTON-SALEM TO APPLY FOR A GRANT FROM THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FOR THE 2009 ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT FOR THE PURCHASE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT. [*\$130,530.*]
- C-5. APPROVAL OF PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE SUMMARY OF MINUTES - *May 11, 2009.*

GENERAL AGENDA

G-1. RESOLUTION NAMING THE PUBLIC SAFETY TRAINING AND SUPPORT CENTER AFTER ALEXANDER "AL" BEATY AND COMMEMORATING FORMER POLICE AND FIRE CHIEFS.

Mrs. Martha Wheelock, Assistant City Manager, stated that the policy for naming structures outlines that the proposed naming has to be sponsored by the Mayor or a member of the City Council. Council Member Burke has requested consideration for naming the Public Safety Training and Support Center for Mr. Al Beaty, who came to work for the City in 1978 and served as Assistant City Manager until his retirement in 1995. He also worked extensively with the Police and Fire Departments, as well as Emergency Management.

Chair Burke stated that she was pleased to have the opportunity to name the facility after Mr. Beaty, as he served as one of the few minority Assistant City Managers in the country at that time. She made a motion for approval of the naming. The motion was duly seconded by Council Member Leight.

Council Member Merschel requested a listing of publicly owned facilities that have been named for City officials, and noted that the City should only name those facilities that are owned outright. She also noted that the Bryce A. Stuart Municipal Building was named prior to its ownership by the City. She further noted that even though this action is well-intended and meant to honor an individual, staff should ensure that the recipient of the naming is not overwhelmed.

Mr. Lee Garrity, City Manager, stated that he spoke with Mr. Beaty, who was thrilled by the honor.

Council Member Johnson requested that staff seek ways to recognize everyday employees in a naming, to honor the work they do, day in and day out. She also questioned if Mr. Beaty was the first African-American Assistant City Manager.

Chair Burke stated that Mr. John P. Bond, III, was the first African-American Assistant City Manager but he did not serve as many years as Mr. Beaty. She suggested that a plaque could be placed at the facility to recognize Mr. Bond and others. She also stated that Mr. Beaty was the first African-American Assistant City Manager under Mr. Bill Stuart, former City Manager.

Council Member Johnson requested that thorough research of the history behind a naming be clear, and that staff seek ways to recognize everyday employees, such as first-responders and sanitation employees.

The motion for approval carried unanimously.

G-2. RESOLUTION APPROVING THE LOCKLAND AVENUE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION TRAFFIC CALMING PLAN. [*\$120,000.*]

Mr. Stan Polanis, Department of Transportation Director, stated that staff began working with the Lockland Avenue neighborhood in 2003 and is recommending approval of the plan and funding. He also stated that the neighborhood has held various public meetings and has been involved in the process. He further stated that project funding will come from the one-third motor vehicle tax.

Council Member Besse noted that this has been a long process, and that he was supportive of the evident need, due to the narrow street with high volume and speed. He also noted that the previous design showed only curb extensions and questioned if there would be a center island.

Mr. Polanis stated that there would be a center island and he would provide an updated design.

In response to Council Member Leight's question, Mr. Polanis stated that the traffic calming plan will run the length of Lockland Avenue from Academy Street to Link Road. He also stated that this area receives a higher volume of traffic as it serves as a direct connection to Silas Creek Parkway.

In response to Council Member Merschel's concern, Mr. Polanis noted that the area is in the public right-of-way and regular maintenance will be the City's responsibility.

Council Member Leight noted that when a traffic calming plan was completed on London Lane, there was increased concern as citizens ran into the traffic calming areas and damaged their cars.

Council Member Johnson requested to know if there will be a four-way stop sign placed at the intersection of Lockland Avenue and Queen Street.

Council Member Leight made a motion for approval. The motion was duly seconded by Council Member Merschel and carried unanimously.

G-3. REVIEW OF PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2009-2010 PUBLIC SAFETY BUDGET.

Mrs. Ann Jones, Budget/Evaluation Director, gave an overview of the Public Safety Budget.

Chair Burke requested that staff ensure any cuts to the public safety budget do not adversely affect citizens.

In response to Council Member Merschel's question, Mr. Scott Cunningham, Police Chief, stated that the Crime Scene Supervisor position had been open for four years, and in balancing the department, Winston-Salem Police Department (WSPD) staff will move forward with various enhancements, but there will be no impact on services or the Risk Management Associates (RMA) report. He also stated that the WSPD is taking steps suggested by the RMA and the position may be reclassified from supervisory to technical.

In response to Council Member Leight's question, Chief Cunningham noted that the gang intervention position was still open, and that there is one individual going through the final phase of the background check. He also noted that 11 previous applicants have not passed the background check, but staff anticipates filling the position by the end of the month to maintain grant funding.

In response to Council Member Besse's question, Chief Cunningham stated that the \$14,000 drop in Crime Prevention came from a variety of reductions within the department, such as ceremonies; however, there has been no actual reduction in crime prevention efforts.

Council Member Besse requested that the allocation be shifted to more accurately reflect where the

effort is being maintained and where the cost lies.

Chief Cunningham noted that discussions have already begun to realign responsibility codes.

Council Member Johnson requested to know the value of the District Attorney's Family Court.

Chief Cunningham stated that the Family Court has good diversionary programs and alternative systems in place to allow quicker court processes, but he will provide more detailed information.

Mr. Garrity noted that the School Resource Officer (SRO) contract with Forsyth County will be added to the WSPD budget. He noted that staff is developing a pilot program with the County, but the contractual review is not finished so it will come back to the Committee as an amendment in July or August. The contract will be fully funded by the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System (WS/FCS).

Chief Cunningham noted that the SRO contract will follow the calendar year and will then be reassessed to see if it should be extended or abandoned.

In response to Council Member Leight's question, Chief Cunningham stated that Northwest Middle, North Forsyth High, Wiley Middle and Reynolds High Schools will be involved in the pilot program.

In response to Chair Burke's question, Chief Cunningham stated that it is important for the City to be involved in the SRO program because it is appropriate and the potential is virtually unlimited. The main WSPD communication with students is on the street, and working in the schools will allow officers to gather information to build relationships and trust within the schools and neighborhoods.

Council Member Merschel questioned the security of the funding from WS/FCS. She also expressed her support of consolidating responsibilities once designated to the County.

Mr. Garrity noted that the Forsyth County Commissioners fund the contract rather than the State. He also noted that staff has asked the City Attorney to review any legalities around developing a multi-year contract with the County that would not be subject to yearly budget approval. He further noted that staff has met with County representatives to solidify that by the end of the year, jail intake will be administered by the County rather than the City.

In response to Council Member Johnson's question, Chief Cunningham noted that in areas where schools are not located, the WSPD is fostering relationships through its new deployment system and that staff is also researching the possibility of a police athletic league in conjunction with the local YMCA, YWCA and the Recreation and Parks Department.

Council Member Merschel noted that she received a call from a concerned citizen on Skylark and Transou Roads, regarding traffic cutting through to Yadkinville Road from Reagan High School. She questioned if there was a program in schools directed toward inexperienced drivers.

Chief Cunningham noted there is no such program, but there are patrol officers in that area each morning and afternoon.

Mr. Tony Farmer, Fire Chief, stated that the Fire Department is working on internal process improvements and expressed their appreciation of staff and community support. He also stated that there has been a small reorganization among administrative chiefs, to level out the number of assistant chiefs.

Council Member Leight stated that she was impressed by the Emergency Management staff at the last meeting she attended. She questioned if any disaster practices were in place for this year.

Mr. Melton Sadler, Emergency Management Director, stated that there are grants pending, and as funding arrives and is approved, more emergency exercises will be planned. In response to Council Member Johnson's question, Mr. Sadler stated that the last certification process was completed with elected officials several years ago, and another one is scheduled for the fall.

In response to Chair Burke's question, Mr. Sadler noted that citizens are notified of an emergency dependent upon the situation, which may be door to door, tone alerts or National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radio notifications. He also noted that Severe Weather Awareness Week is held annually, where each school participates in tornado drills.

Council Member Merschel noted that fewer homes have landline phones and requested to know if a backup notification system existed. She also requested that staff work with the reverse 911 system to obtain capability of alerting citizens with unlisted numbers.

Chief Cunningham noted that the commercial database is built upon published numbers and staff is working to enhance the accuracy of that database.

Council Member Leight questioned what percentage of the population possessed NOAA radios.

In response to Council Member Merschel's question, Mr. Sadler stated that with the incorporation of an all-digital television signal, those citizens with battery operated televisions (TV) may have difficulty receiving weather updates and warnings.

In response to Chair Burke's question, Mr. Garrity noted that up to 5% of the population will not be prepared for the all-digital TV conversion. He also noted that Marketing and Communications staff are developing additional information for City Link and WSPD employees to disseminate to citizens.

In response to Council Member Besse's question, Mr. Garrity stated that free digital converter boxes were available through a federally issued coupon.

Council Member Besse questioned if the number of persons receiving emergency information training was higher in FY 07-08 because the program started that year or if there was increased participation.

Mr. Sadler stated that the estimate for FY 08-09 was low and that there was some resistance to the training. He also stated that the program began in FY 06-07.

Council Member Besse requested to know the number of trainees each year, beginning FY 06-07, and clarification if it was a downward trend or if there was a specific factor related to the decrease.

Mr. Garrity noted that City staff members do not have to participate in training each year and it takes time to encourage outside agencies to participate.

G-4. REPORT ON CURFEWS.

Mrs. Wheelock presented information on the study of curfews.

Chair Burke noted it was important to know if the children were living in homes with one or two parents and their age.

Council Member Leight requested a copy of the survey and report regarding court decisions on curfews. She noted that she has received complaints from within the Konnoak Hills area regarding afternoon disturbances, which enforces the data Mrs. Wheelock presented. She questioned whether or not a parent can be charged when their child has committed an offense of if there was a clause of some sort pertinent to the First Amendment.

Ms. Lori Sykes, Public Safety Attorney, stated that the Department of Social Services (DSS) can be involved when a child commits an infraction and there is one attorney within DSS specifically devoted to child abuse and neglect cases.

Chief Cunningham noted that parents have the freedom to raise their children any way they see fit, and unless the child's behavior is deemed excessive, neglect is a possibility. He also noted that a parent may not have the capability to control their child. He further noted that it is logistically difficult to implement a curfew.

Chair Burke requested to know what locations possessed the majority of concern. She noted that there is a known issue along Cleveland Avenue and Liberty Street.

Council Member Johnson requested that the demographics be sorted down to four hour blocks between 2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. time slots to locate the concentration. She also requested the same breakdown between the hours of 3:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. She noted that the National League of Cities has a school toolkit that may provide some options for dealing with this issue.

Mrs. Wheelock stated that there are four hour blocks of time in which the data was recorded, but there are unlimited possibilities for extraction.

Mr. Ed McNeal, Marketing and Communications Director, stated that staff will communicate this information to the community through WSTV-13, the City's website and a citizen feedback line. He also stated that social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter may be utilized.

Mrs. Wheelock noted that there is some literature for staff to consult related to curfews and loitering.

Council Member Johnson requested that staff review the use of afterschool programs within recreation centers and public libraries. She suggested staff survey the community to get a better sense of how citizens feel and questioned if a live feed of emails, questions or concerns could be broadcast on the City's website.

Mr. McNeal stated that staff would review Council Member Johnson's requests and confirmed that there are capabilities for live broadcast on WSTV-13 and a hotline.

Council Member Leight questioned whether or not there was a seasonal pattern to the behaviors.

Ms. Marva Reid, 1434 North Cameron Avenue, President of the Northeast Neighborhood Association, stated that her neighborhood not only has children gathering on the street, they also have guns and assault rifles, are selling drugs and not going to school. She also stated that these are not children who would go to a library or a recreation facility, and their parents need to be held responsible. She further compared this activity to what she witnessed while living in Los Angeles for 10 years.

Ms. Mattie Young, 1001 East 15th Street, expressed concern that through these behaviors, an entire generation of children may be lost to violence. She noted that she has been fighting these concerns for over 20 years.

Chair Burke noted that the City has torn down blighted housing and constructed new homes, but the bigger problem is absentee landlords and carelessly screened tenants. She also noted that the Housing Authority of Winston-Salem (HAWS) stated that they lack funding to regulate these neighborhoods. She requested to know what programs exist within HAWS for regulation and how often they meet with residents. She also expressed concern that recreation facilities are underutilized.

Council Member Leight stated that she felt most children will not visit recreation facilities on their own accord and that there seems to be a link to problems within the WS/FCS on school property.

Ms. Reid stated that she felt a curfew for children 18 and younger, beginning at 10:00 p.m. may address some of the neighborhood's concerns and that parents should be responsible for their children after 10:00 p.m.

In response to Council Member Johnson's question, Ms. Young stated that she feels children 17 and younger are the ones causing the problems.

Council Member Johnson requested that staff review the role of Child Protective Services as it relates to community disturbances.

Chair Burke stated that there needs to be more discussion and input from the community. She requested that staff set up meetings with various neighborhood groups to obtain feedback.

Council Member Merschel noted that there was a community in San Francisco where youth disturbance issues were identified pertaining to a digital divide and lack of reading skills. A learning lab was incorporated as part of an afterschool program, which was tied to the punishment when a child broke curfew, and over time, it was noted that deviant behaviors previously exhibited, had changed.

Ms. Young expressed her thanks to staff for listening and helping neighborhoods to address this issue.

Council Member Besse requested examples of ordinances or programs targeted to loitering, gathering in the public right-of-way and joyriding.

ADDITIONAL ITEM

Council Member Merschel noted that there is an opportunity within the downtown Central Business District for a new business venture of horse-drawn carriages. It was found that the City Code restricts the current number of passengers and she requested that Council review and consider changing that number from five to ten passengers at tomorrow's Community Development/Housing/General Government Committee meeting.

Council Member Johnson noted that Natchez, Mississippi has a similar ordinance that could be used as a guideline.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:17 p.m.