

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION

March 13, 2012
11:30 AM
Fairbanks Police Department

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|--------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| PSC Members: | Peter Stern (Seat C - 2013) | Buzzy Chiu (Seat D - 2014) |
| | Frank Eagle (Seat E - 2012) | Robert Hall (FPD Representative) |
| | John Eberhart (Seat A - 2014) | Greg Taylor (FFD Representative) |
| | Bill Satterberg (Seat B - 2012) | |

Meeting Minutes

CALLED TO ORDER: 11:36 am

ATTENDANCE:

PSC Members: Peter Stern, John Eberhart, Bill Satterberg, Buzzy Chiu, and Robert Hall

PSC Members Absent: Frank Eagle and Greg Taylor

Others in attendance: Mayor Jerry Cleworth, Pat Cole, Stephanie Johnson and Kristi Merideth–FECC, Dave Burglin–CAO, Chief Laren Zager and Lt. Eric Jewkes–FPD; Chief Warren Cummings and Lisa Howard–FFD.

ADOPT AGENDA: Agenda adopted as published.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

MINUTES: The minutes of the February 14, 2012 meeting were approved without changes.

OLD BUSINESS:

Possible Code Changes to Infractions Lt. Eric Jewkes reported the first round of changes is in the hands of the City Council. The next round will include the more complex issues, such as 911 chronic nuisance calls, alarm fees, and drug paraphernalia.

Role of the Public Safety Commission A work session will be held with the City Council on Monday, March 19th at 5:30. Peter Stern has the historic documentation he compiled and distributed several months ago. It was decided that members should be able to present their view points, but Stern will take the lead. General discussion is summarized as follows:

- ~ Satterberg: Council should give the commission a role beyond just hearing reports. If it does not have the ability to deal with issues or investigate and make recommendations to the Council it really serves no purpose.
- ~ Stern: The commission was actively involved in the panhandling and resource officers in the schools in the past, but no one really has brought anything to the commission to work on.
- ~ Zager: The commission could be a great tool for community awareness, but it has limited presence in the community at this point.
- ~ Johnson: She believes the commission should provide guidance to the council where public safety in Fairbanks should go
- ~ Burglin: He is not clear on what the purpose or mission of the commission is.
- ~ Cummings: From his point of view as a department head, he views one of the roles of the PSC as being a sounding board. If an idea makes it through the review of the PSC and is supported to the Council, it usually is successful.

Public Safety Officer Pat Cole discussed the concept of a Public Safety Officer (combined Fire/EMS/Police duties) as a potential avenue to be explored to solve the understaffing of both the Fire and Police Departments. He indicated that this would be a gradual phase in, as new hires would be hired under this job description, and of course, any existing employees would be eligible to apply for one of these positions. Many details have to be investigated further, but these are the bullet points.

- ~ Would be sworn officers with additional training in fire & EMS. More training, higher pay.
- ~ Program not intended to cut positions/reduce cost, but to more effectively use current funding. There is a growing demand for service and no corresponding growth in revenue.
- ~ Equipping police vehicles with AED's and other EMS equipment could offer potential of better care when initial contact is Police.
- ~ The city has precedent for having multiple "trades" in one union – could be done with FFD&FPD
- ~ This type of system is in place successfully across the states. One example is Sunnyvale, CA

Comments:

- ~ Zager: Has visited Kalamazoo, Michigan and learned a lot about how to do this successfully. He admitted this was a much greater benefit to the Police Department and has the biggest impact on the Fire Department. PSO officers jobs are usually 90% police work and 10% fire. A PSO program has huge potential if it is organized and delivered right.
- ~ Satterberg: Troopers were traditionally trained as EMT's but aren't any longer. The Fairbanks Airport currently uses PSO's. Chief Zager interjected that the airport specializes in a single type of fire/trauma that would be insufficient for what Fairbanks needs, but their concept can be blended and transitioned.
- ~ Jewkes: Currently police cars carry 1st aid supplies & extinguishers but don't have the training or equipment to provide greater care while waiting for Fire to respond. He acknowledged that both sides sometimes have to wait for the other to arrive, depending on the circumstances.
- ~ Hall: Patrol officers should have medical training for those cases they are on scene first, regardless of whether the PSO program moves forward. Having officers with fire training, even if they can't fight the fire until the fire trucks arrive, is able to provide information to the incoming units. Chief Zager inputted that this is similar to the role that helicopters play in some departments, even though they cannot directly provide law enforcement action, they serve as trained eyes and are deemed to be extremely valuable by some departments.
- ~ Cummings: This idea has been explored across the nation, and in the 1970's there were 40+ departments, and now the number in the 20's. The majority of the successful programs are not transporting agencies. Providing Advanced EMS is significantly more than doing first aid from the back of the car. The nature of the two jobs is very different and many good medical personnel are not interested in being police officers.

REPORTS:

FECC Report – Director Stephanie Johnson reported that the 2nd review of the FNSB call taking agreement is going before City Council next week. According to the analysis, the borough is paying about the right amount for the share of dispatcher services their agencies receive. There continues to be statewide discussion about the fact that VOIP (phones via internet) are exempt from the 911 surcharge fees paid by landlines and cell phones. They will be losing the front desk clerk, and she is exploring making it a dispatcher position and rotating staff through who would like a break from 911 call taking.

FFD Report – Chief Cummings reviewed the fire and ambulance response stats. He also shared a compilation of the training needs/exercise planning regarding emergency preparedness being forwarded to the State for the Fairbanks area. The final Alaska Shield exercise report should be available next meeting. A firefighter/paramedic left Fairbanks for a job in another state, and a new recruit is going through training. There were 76 applicants for developing the new recruit firefighter

hiring list, which is done every other year. The next step will be a written exam April 1st, followed by a CPAT (Candidate Physical Abilities Test) in May/June. This hiring list will be in place until January of 2014, when the cycle starts over. Lastly, an off duty Fairbanks firefighter and his EMT girlfriend were directly involved in saving the life of a man who collapsed in cardiac arrest at Planet Fitness.

FPD Report – Chief Zager reported that the Police Department used to have a rigid rule that there would always be 4 people on shift. He had given his Shift Commanders the latitude to go below that minimum staffing in situations they deem appropriate. He does not know yet how well this is working out as it has only been in place since December. There is a risk involved as four officers is sometimes inadequate. The type and model of vehicles the police department should move toward as they purchase replacement vehicles is currently under review – looking for 4WD SUV type vehicles. Deal breakers are fuel efficiency (need to be 4 cylinder) and having enough warm storage space to carry necessary gear and equipment. Currently the Subaru Outback is being seriously considered as an option. Some officers have concerns about performance while others are also concerned about department image. Chief Zager said that nothing is set in stone yet. There was discussion regarding the Subaru currently in service with the department. The FPD stats were reviewed and the question regarding why so many motor vehicle thefts in June and December. Officer Hall was going to review the data to ensure it was accurate, and would report back next meeting.

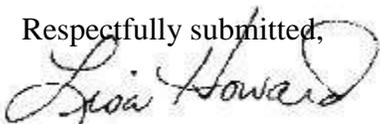
CLOSING COMMENTS:

Peter Stern will be mailing out his outline of his talking points for the council meeting next week.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: April 10, 2012 – Fairbanks Police Department [later moved to 4/17]

MEETING ADJOURNED at 12:41PM

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Howard, FFD