

POLICE AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE
MINUTES

PALM, Ardmore Avenue, Ardmore, PA 19003
June 27, 2016
6:30 p.m.

The Police and Community Relations Committee meeting was held on Monday, June 27, 2016, at The PALM, Ardmore.

In attendance:

<u>Committee and Police Staff:</u> Superintendent Michael McGrath Captain Frank Thomas Officer Josephine Murray Christine Dixon-Anderson Rev. Carlos Bounds Rev. Albert Davis, Jr. Rose Johnson Tom McDaniel Maryam Phillips Robin Thomas Marie Thornton	<u>Members of the public in attendance:</u> Commissioner V. Scott Zelov Commissioner Brian Gordon Adrian Seltzer Art Levy Christine Vilardo Carl Watson Bobby Holland Bill Madway Roxanna Wright Crystal Blunt June Coleman
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Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Christine Dixon-Anderson. Christine went over what will be discussed on the Agenda. She welcomed Commissioner Zelov, President of the Police Committee. She also announced that Reverend Jeannette Gilbert's husband passed away.

Minutes of the May 27, 2016 Meeting

The minutes from the May 27, 2016 meeting were approved on motion by Reverend Bounds and seconded by Maryam Phillips. So moved.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent McGrath gave an update on the public version of the Police Duty Manual. He said that staff is going through the policies and taking out confidential information. When that is completed, it will go out on the Township Website after it is updated. The launch date is slated for early August.

RFP Proposals – Superintendent McGrath stated that the Consultant selection status was narrowed down to three: Major Ben’s Consulting Agency, Matrix and CPSN. The Committee is endorsing the proposal submitted by Major Ben's Consulting Agency for the following reasons:

- 1) Major Brooks seemed to understand the issues presented in the RFP, offering Review and Reconnect themes,
- 2) Major Brooks demonstrated understanding the pressure on police and the needs of the community,
- 3) Major Brooks has extensive law enforcement background and is also a minority, therefore he has understanding of both the police and our community; our committee was strongly in support of a firm with a minority representation on the consulting team,
- 4) He is locally based, and
- 5) His cost proposal is reasonable when compared to the other candidates for the work.

The PCRC also appointed Maryam Phillips to serve as its representative on the committee to interview the consulting firms. A question was asked as to how will the consultant know what the committee wants and Maryam Phillips stated that the committee typed all their feedback and have turned it over to the Township.

The Police Department has hired seven probationary police officers, who will be sworn in on Thursday, June 30th. Currently, the Police Department will still have five vacancies after this hiring. On Tuesday, May 31, 2016 the Police Department began accepting applications for the position of probationary police officer. This will continue through the summer. The written exam will be on September 17th. Notice of the examination will be heavily publicized, as always.

The Superintendent announced that they will be doing another “Coffee with A Cop” at McDonald’s in Ardmore on Saturday, July 23, 2016. He invited everyone to attend.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Bobby Holland asked what is the purpose of this Committee? He said he lives on Greenfield Avenue and is frustrated because cars park in No Parking or Standing zones and go to the businesses next to his house and very large car delivery trucks are parking in the residential section of the street. Superintendent McGrath said that the Police Department will investigate.

Roxanna Wright had several questions regarding the Duty Manual. She asked if citizens are able to read it now. Superintendent McGrath stated that the Department is going through it chronologically and it will be ready by early August. She asked how will people be informed that it is available and will there be instructions on what to do if you are stopped by a police officer. Superintendent McGrath stated the duty manual provides guidance to police department employees to deliver police services, not how the public should interact with police. He said that

there is already another publication, put together by the committee that addresses how citizens should interact with police. The brochure was printed several years ago and has been available in both print and on the Township website. Ms. Wright said that there are a lot of people who don't have computers or access to the internet and asked if copies can be made available at the libraries, churches, etc. and to make sure that the public be made aware that they are available throughout the community. Maryam Phillips stated that the brochure should be redistributed. Adrian Seltzer stated that the brochure should be available at the high schools and parents should be made aware that it is available. Superintendent McGrath said that the cost was prohibitive to provide to all high school students, but that additional printed copies will be made and once again publically advertised.

Ms. Wright also asked if an African-American person has a problem with the police, who do they go to? She said that some police departments have independent auditors. She also asked if there is a lawyer who one could go to. Superintendent McGrath said there are three options: 1- Contact any member of the Police and Community Relations Committee; 2-The Township Commissioners (there are 14 of them) and; 3-The Township Manager's Office. He also asked that the any person that has a question about the delivery of police services to contact either him or Captain Thomas at any time to report that there is a problem or ask for an explanation about a particular incident.

Bill Madway asked when the new Township's website will be available and will all of the information discussed tonight be on there. The Superintendent said minutes of the meeting are posted after they are approved. Mr. Madway stated that the information should also be made available through Facebook and other social media.

Christine Dixon-Anderson stated that once the consultant is chosen, they will determine which direction this committee will go. There is someone on this committee who will be taking part in the interview process.

Crystal Blunt asked how did the people on this committee get chosen? Maryam Phillips answered saying that years ago, the members of this committee volunteered their time and, most times, they come to every meeting and it is a huge commitment. She said that this committee, for the past two years, has been re-advertising that there is such a committee and there have been town hall meetings as well. Mrs. Blunt suggested having a young adult, perhaps from age 18-24 be on the committee because they have great ideas. June Coleman agreed with Mrs. Blunt. Reverend Davis stated that Linda Jackson is the connection between the young people and this committee since she knows and works with most of the young people in Ardmore. Officer Murray stated that the youth are allowed to come to the meetings. Ms. Wright stated that Hispanics and Asians should be a part of this committee as well. That way, everyone will feel comfortable relating their issues. It was reported that Reverend Cavanass is bi-lingual and she is available to help should any problems arise.

Bobby Holland stated that those who are on the committee should at least be involved in the community. Officer Murray stated that she does interact with the community daily. Reverend Davis stated that he talks to the young people every day. He also stated that the committee is waiting to see what role the Township wants this committee to take.

Commissioner Gordon stated that this committee used to be closed to the public for its meetings, but has opened to the public for about a year. Reverend Davis said to Commissioner Gordon that this committee was in place while he was chair of the Police Committee.

Roxanna Wright stated that her sister, Judge LaDoris Cordell, is helping Radnor Township with their duty manual. Superintendent McGrath stated that our duty manual will be very detailed and a person will be able to find whatever information they are looking for. Ms. Wright asked if copies of the manual will be available to people who don't have a computer.

Ms. Wright stated that her church, Central Baptist of Wayne, is doing a program called "Undoing Racism." Other townships are interested in the program and, hopefully, all the townships will support each other. They are having a meeting on July 10, 2016, at 1:00 p.m. at Central Baptist and she invited everyone to attend.

June Coleman thinks that the committee is doing a great job and she thanked Officer Murray for being the community liaison and for coming to the local churches.

Art Levy asked that this committee wants to accomplish and what does it feel that has already been accomplished. Maryam Phillips answered saying that, over the years, there has been a poor relationship between the community and the police department and both groups have been working to improve the relationship, that is why this group is critical. Christine Anderson stated that about half of the community will contact her if they have an issue. Mr. Levy asked what is this committee's goal? Christine answered that the goal is to build trust between the community and police. Superintendent McGrath asked what goals the community had and what information would be needed to show the community that goals are being achieved. There was no specific answer to that question.

Commissioner Gordon suggested that the committee conduct a survey on what the community feels they want and need and measure the results. Maryam Phillips reminded everyone that in a previous meeting we discussed community surveys to gauge progress in perceptions of the Police. She also suggested surveys are not a one and done thing. It is an ongoing process.

Adrian Seltzer stated that the Commissioners should take a diversity training course.

Commissioner Zelov stated the RFPs were made available to the public and posted on the Township website. He also said that it is important to do it right (in reference to the proposal to have a consultant assist in these various community issues).

Maryam Phillips said that Carl Watson is in the Federation of Civic Associations and maybe they could help disseminate information. Carl Watson said that the Federation has been trying to get Ardmore Progressive active in the federation. Maryam Phillips said that is not the same organization as the Police and Community Relations Committee.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Monday, July 25, 2016, at 6:30 p.m., at Bethel A.M.E., Bryn Mawr.

There being no further business, this public portion of the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Members of the PCRC met in executive session to discuss ongoing investigations in the area.

There being no further business, Rose Johnson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Tom McDaniel. So moved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.