

Chairperson Eddie De La Cruz called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Committee members present were Manuel Gutierrez (arrived at 8:04 pm), Clara Beas-Fitzgerald, Hector Ramirez, Claudia Jimenez, Bryan Medelez, and Jesus Rome. City representatives present were Assistant City Manager Mark Morgan, Chief Edmiston, Officer Erica Sandoval, and Executive Assistant Lilly Alarcon-Strong. The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

### Minutes

Clara moved and Hector seconded to approve the minutes of the January meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Eddie announced the agenda would be amended to add the Police Department Presentation.

### New Business

#### Police Department Annual Review Presentation

Chief Edmiston stated there are 39 total Police Department (PD) employees, with 30 paid and 9 volunteers. 26 police officers to include: the chief, 2 captains, 4 sergeants, 4 corporals, 9 patrol officers, 3 detectives, 1 traffic officer, 1 school resource officer, 1 youth services officer; 1 communications manager, 1 evidence technician/secretary, 2 records clerks, 6 volunteer reserve officers, and 3 volunteer chaplains. Chief Edmiston stated continued education is very important to the PD, and believe the more educated the officer is, hopefully they will make smarter decisions while out on the street; of the paid employees, 4 have bachelor's degrees, 5 with associate's degrees. The City also pays for employees to continue their educations as long as they receive a C or better; because of this, the City has an additional 2 who are in pursuit of their master degrees, 1 for their bachelors degrees, and 2 for their associates degrees. Statistically, for police officers, the average age is 41 years old, with 12 years' experience, and have lived in the Hermiston (Umatilla County) area for 19 years with 7 or 23% of employees that are bilingual.

Chief Edmiston reviewed the 2015 Crime Report and stated officers are encouraged to be proactive; as a result, there is an increase in officer initiated activity from 2014-2015. With this increase of officer initiated activity, there has been an increase in traffic stops, citations issued, reports taken, and arrests. There is a 71% decline in Robbery and 29% decline in Burglary from last year. Auto theft is a continued problem in the area, as most of the time vehicles are stolen, the vehicles were left unlocked and/or with the keys readily accessible in the vehicle. HPD is trying to educate the public about locking vehicles, not leaving unattended vehicles running, and not leaving items in vehicles.

Chief Edmiston stated the PD always tries to make sure information goes out to the public as much as they can with press releases, social media, and neighborhood watch. The PD also has a great relationship with neighboring communities in order to pull resources together. One of the biggest challenges being faced is how best to deal with those who are in mental crisis. Many times, for whatever reason, many of these individuals are being dealt with by public agencies such as police departments, instead of being given the adequate care that they need. By April 1<sup>st</sup>, 65% of officers and 84% of patrol officers will be trained on how to better deal with people in mental crisis.

Chief Edmiston showed a brief video of a vehicle almost crashing into Officer Gutierrez while out on motor patrol, and asked that everyone be mindful, careful, and slow down while driving to avoid accidents.

Chief Edmiston stated body cameras were deployed April 17, 2015 and they have had great success with the cameras so far. Per the Oregon open records law, videos can be deleted after 180 days, HPD and Taser have added an additional 17 days to this amount for a total of 197 days before video are deleted. Criminal videos of

value will be kept, as well as contested traffic stops. Chief Edmiston stated only one person, the communications manager, can delete videos.

Chief Edmiston shared another video of officers who had to use force on a transient man in order to control him. While on the ground, the transient man began banging his head against the cement. Another officer arrived and placed his boot in-between the transient man's head and the ground and placed pressure on his head to the boot to prevent further injuries. A citizen who witnessed the event from afar was being encouraged to take the issue to the media as she perceived the use of force to be excessive. She instead, spoke with Chief Edmiston about what she had seen and what her concerns were. Chief Edmiston shared the entire video with her, after, the lady was apologetic that she had questioned the officers when in reality, the reason the officers had used force is because the transient man had head butted a plate glass window that she had not originally seen. There have been many other instances where body camera footage has been reviewed to investigate questions or complaints. Chief Edmiston stated body cameras are a great tool for officers and citizens to use to hold themselves accountable for their actions.

Maria Duron thanked Chief Edmiston and all of the PD staff for risking their lives for all of us to have a safer community, and the resources the PD puts into placing officers into schools, so early on, children can have a positive relationship with men and women in uniform.

Chief Edmiston stated the relationship the PD has with the School District is like no other, and they appreciate everything the School District does.

Eddie also thanked Chief Edmiston and all the officers for all of the work they do and the continued education they support for their officers.

(Manuel arrived 8:04 pm)

### **Commissioner Bill Elfering**

Commissioner Elfering thanked the Committee for having him and introduced his Campaign Chairman Mark Gomolski. Commissioner Elfering gave a presentation regarding what he stands for, what he does as a County Commissioner, what he has accomplished during his time as a County Commissioner, and how he would like to continue to improve the County as Commissioner, in the coming election.

Maria Duron suggested Commissioner Elfering do outreach to the Hispanic Community.

Commissioner Elfering agreed and stated the Hispanic Community is a part of this community as a whole, and he is very happy to do this on a more regular basis. He also reminded the Committee that he has been involved in the Hispanic Community and even judged the Horse Dancing at Cinco de Mayo.

### **Community Agricultural Workers and Employers Resource Fair**

Claudia invited the public and HAC members to participate in the Community Agricultural Workers and Employers Resource Fair on March 9<sup>th</sup> from 5:00pm to 7:00pm at the Community Center. Free child care and food will be provided.

### **Branding Committee Update UEC**

Jesus stated he and Claudia are participating in Hermiston's Branding Committee, and announced the Branding Committee is finishing up finalizing taglines and logs for Hermiston. Once they have narrowed it

down to two, the Committee will be releasing it to the public to have the final vote. The public can expect to see the survey in March.

(Jesus left the meeting 8:30 pm)

### **Closing Comments**

#### **Public**

Ryan Lehnert introduced himself and running mate Robert Guerrero who are running for Umatilla County Sherriff and Undersheriff. With permission from HAC, Ryan stated he would like to be placed on next month's agenda to be able to meet the Committee and ask for more insight and input regarding public safety in Umatilla County, and Ryan's future goals as Sheriff.

Eddie thanked Ryan and stated he will place him on March's agenda.

Natalie Contreras from Columbia Latino Cultural Alliance stated the Alliance has received funding from Oregon Community Foundation to help parents in the community learn additional skills, ie: computer classes, English, etc. The Alliance will be offering free computer classes at BMCC, those interested please contact the Alliance.

Maria Duron from UEC, stated UEC has a new General Manager, Robert Echenrode; UEC Boardman office is now open; and two high school students have received Scholarships to visit Washington DC, Katlin Bass from lone, and Lauren Santoyo from Hermiston.

#### **Committee**

Manuel handed out flyers for the Good Shepherd Community Health Foundation, who has scholarship opportunities for students who would like to continue their education in the medical field. Those interested please apply by February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Manuel reminded the public that Good Shepherd Community Health Foundation gives out scholarships every year.

Clara stated the Cinco de Mayo Committee is receiving contestant applications for Cinco de Mayo Court. Applicants can apply at the City Hall in Hermiston and must be between the ages of 16 and 18.

Clara stated she is very honored and privileged to have been asked to be a part of the Oregon Commissions for Women and is the only person representing Eastern Oregon.

Hector asked if there is anyone who would like to volunteer to translate at the High school for conferences next month, to please contact him.

#### **City Representatives**

Mark stated there will be street resurfacing on HWY 395, from Safeway to Umatilla. Night road work was approved from the City Council for this project.

#### **Next Scheduled Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting will be Monday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, at 7:00 pm.

**Meeting Adjourned at 8:50 pm**