

Public Safety Committee Meeting

November 21, 2011

Chairman Myers called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Present were Mayor Severson, Councilors Hardin, Davis and Springer. Staff members in attendance were City Manager Brookshier, City Attorney Luisi, Acting Police Chief Edmiston, Darryl Johnson, Karen Primmer, Kelly Parsons, Victor Gutierrez, Jimmy Allen, Bill Osborne, Travis Eynon, Chaplain Terry Cummings and Donna Moeller. News media present were Neill Woelk of the Hermiston Herald and Eric Olson of KOHU-KQFM.

Acting Chief Edmiston introduced the police officers that were in attendance as well as several spouses. After the introductions, he reported from his observation, the members of the Hermiston Police Department appear to be adjusting well to the numerous changes which have taken place over the course of the last couple months. He stated he has heard numerous positive comments from members about the direction of the department, the atmosphere around the department, and perhaps most importantly, the support everyone is feeling from one another and from City Hall.

City Manager Brookshier stated undersheriff Terry Rowan was asked to make a presentation to the committee regarding the jail bed availability; however, he had a conflict and wasn't able to make the meeting. Mr. Brookshier reported due to the current financial stability in the General Fund, re-entering into a contact with Umatilla County to rent a jail bed was possible. Judge Creasing has agreed to manage the jail bed through the Municipal Court. Judge Creasing addressed the committee via a phone call from St. Louis, he stated the court could easily manage the jail bed, monitor the length of stays, etc. Karen Primmer stated she felt reinstating the jail bed was a good move and felt that the Municipal Court would do a good job with the paperwork.

Acting Police Chief Edmiston reported at the November 2nd - Awards and Training Committee Meeting, the formation of a separate police department website was discussed. The website would help promote the Hermiston Police Department as well as the City as a whole. He stated a Department photograph is being planned for Spring, 2012. He briefly discussed the "Expectation Exercise" and gave the committee a copy of the responses. The Mediation Program that Ron Louie recommended to help improve inter-department communication skills was discussed; however, both Acting Chief Edmiston and City Manager Brookshier felt it wasn't a high priority at this time nor exactly the right tool for Hermiston. Jason stated he felt the Inter-Agency cooperation had improved, with the recent homicide a good example of that. He is continuing to attend the LEAA meetings and the department sent Officer Jons to a gang meeting in the Tri Cities on November 18. City Manager Brookshier asked if Officer Jons could attend the December meeting and make a report on the Tri Cities Gang meeting.

Hermiston Police Department Program/Project Updates:

Acting Chief Edmiston reported on the following department issues:

- Department Schedules for 2012: The officers and dispatchers have begun the bidding process for 2012 schedules. After the bid process is complete, the department is going to try a new concept by allowing officers/dispatchers to "shift trade" as agreed upon to benefit

family needs. Also, the Code Enforcement Officer Kelly Parsons is going to be reinstated as a sworn officer for Oregon. Officer Parsons needs very little training to be re-certified. He will continue with the code enforcement duties approximately 70% of the time with the remainder work 30% to assist patrol with calls for service. Jason recommended this change be implemented effective January 16, 2012.

- 2012 Goals and Objectives: as follows:

Customer Service: Provide police services consistent with the vision and values of our community based policing organization, and serve as ambassadors of the City of Hermiston. Place an emphasis on service delivery to our customers.

Establish Annual Goals: Establish and implement observable, measurable, targeted, and specific performance objectives for each work unit, which correspond to an employee's assignment and the goals of the department. (Employee evaluations will be associated to/with employee goals and completed annually, not tied to anniversary dates).

Approach to Crime: The department will utilize available intelligence and data, deploy its resources in a timely fashion, and ensure comprehensive follow-up to reported cases.

Address Traffic Issues: Provide for a structured approach in dealing with the traffic related issues experienced in the city by utilizing engineering, education, and enforcement strategies in dealing with these problems.

Crime Prevention: Continue with the participation by all members of the department in Neighborhood Watch efforts. Create and promote a Business Watch Program, utilizing technology to enhance communication and crime prevention efforts with the business community.

Gang Resistance Efforts: Implement strategies for the reduction and elimination of criminal gang activity and associated negative effects upon the community and school environment.

- Chaplain Update: Chaplain Terry Cummings is on board and has been utilized a couple times the last two weeks. A meeting has been scheduled for November 23 to visit with Pastor John Jeffries.

- Christmas Express: A voluntary work party was held at the Living Faith Church to organize the work area for the presents. Fiesta Foods was the low bidder for the food purchases and a calendar of events for volunteers to help was given to the committee. A cooperative effort between the department and local churches will determine the recipients.

- Tow Policy: The current tow policy is being reviewed by the police department.

- Property Detective: Effective December 1, 2011 Office Jimmy Allen will be reassigned as the Property Detective. Both Hermiston detective's have been invited to ride along with the Kennewick, WA Criminal Acquisition Team (CAT), which will be a good educational opportunity to help shape future plans for HPD detectives.

Mayor Severson asked how many reserve officers are currently working with the department. Acting Chief Edmiston stated there are currently nine reserve officers which will log 2,000+ hours this year helping the department.

John Kirwan asked why Dan Coulombe was still listed on the city website as the Chief of Police. Acting Chief Edmiston said he was aware of the posting, but he felt Dan was still the Chief of Police, on administrative leave, until April. Mr. Kirwan stated he thought with Hermiston's crime level that a jail bed was a good idea. He also stated with a population of 17,000 in Hermiston he felt Hermiston was adding a lot of county tax dollars; therefore, thought the county commissioners should take that into consideration in helping with jail space since crime is a "county wide" problem.

Councilor Hardin reported he was impressed with the electronic ticketing procedure which he observed during a police ride along last Saturday night.

City Manager thanked the officers and their spouses for coming to tonight's meeting.

Charles Kidder, 735 NW 7th Street, expressed concern about his property which connects to the City's newly acquired property behind the Butte. He said his three large dogs have been teased in the past by children playing at the Butte and he doesn't want to see a child bitten by his dogs or his dogs injured by debris being thrown into his yard. He stated the low fence and shrubs being proposed by the City as a buffer will not be sufficient to protect his property or the City's property. City Manager Brookshier asked what Mr. Kidder would like to see installed as a buffer between the properties. Mr. Kidder said he would like the City to consider installation of a 6 - 8 foot fence along the North and West boundaries of his property.

Mayor Severson thanked Acting Police Chief Edmiston for a job well done.

There was no other business, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.