



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Amended PUBLIC SAFETY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Tuesday, August 11, 2009

5:00 PM

Madison Police Department
211 South Carroll Street
Room GR-22 - Community Room

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Present: 7 -

Paul E. Skidmore; Bryon A. Eagon; Eli Judge; Tyrone W. Bell; Michael S. Scott; Chan M. Stroman and Joel Plant

Excused: 1 -

Bret M. Gundlach

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Bell, seconded by Eagon, to approve the minutes of July 14, 2009. The minutes were unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business at this meeting.

ITEMS REFERRED FROM COUNCIL

There was a motion made to take the agenda out of order. The minute keeper walked out of the room momentarily, but the chair confirmed that the motion was properly made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

1. [15503](#) Creating Section 34.34 of the Madison General Ordinances to enact a ban on the sale of novelty lighters.

Fire Marshal Ed Ruckriegel shared with the group an example of what a novelty lighter looks like. He said that fire service agencies throughout the country have data on the fire safety associated with lighters and matches and the data shows that there have been children killed and seriously injured from playing with matches and cigarette lighters. He said that locally there are about 55 fires a year caused by children playing with cigarette lighters. He said that there is a bill at the State level that would ban the sale of novelty lighters but that nothing has been done yet. He said that Fire Chief Amesqua contacted the Mayor about the idea of banning novelty lighters at retail establishments and with the Mayor's endorsement, the City Attorney's Office drafted ordinance language (Section 34.34). Police Chief Wray said that he supports the Fire Department's pro-active enforcement and public education efforts. Alder

Skidmore made a motion for referral and Eli Judge seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

PRESENTATIONS

2. [15615](#) Introduction of the new Dane County Public Safety Communications Center Director, Mr. John DeJung

John DeJung the new 911 Center Director shared an overview on 911 Center projects including: rebuilding the radio process, upgrading the computer aided dispatch software and process, and reinvigorating the outreach program which is essentially a phone tree that would triage non-emergency calls with various options. Mr. DeJung went into further detail starting with the radio system indicating that it has been in the process for a long time and that various police, fire, and emergency medical service agencies have expressed to the County that the current radio system isn't doing everything that they would like it to do. The expressed needs are for improved interoperability, radio coverage in certain areas, and modern features on the radio. Along with these requests he added that there is also a necessity to prepare for narrow banding of the radio system.

Mr. DeJung said that by the end of 2012 radio banding will be narrowed to half of the bandwidth and that radio frequencies will have to be used in an efficient way, which would require a number of upgrades but that part of the new system could account for some of those narrow band systems or requirements.

The expressed concerns with the current radio system and the narrow banding which is soon to come is what led the dispatch center to the exploration of a new radio system. After researching vendors the 911 Center Board's technical committee chose Motorola as the lead vendor and that it is in the process of negotiating a contract and the goal is to have it signed by October 1st. The next step would be to move into the implementation phase, which will take up to 18 months. He said that the viability of a new radio system depends on most or all of the police, fire, and EMS jurisdictions in the county need to participate as user agencies of the system and that cost sharing issues need to be addressed since the system costs about \$30 million to build. The County proposes to require all user agencies to buy their own radios, pay on-going costs of maintaining the system, support contracts with Motorola, and be willing to bear other costs that would need to be shared amongst the users. He said there are various committees reviewing just how this should happen, but that this is something that would need to be resolved by the October 1st contract signing. He said that if the vast majority of the eligible user agencies are not participating in the system, it will undermine the very goal of achieving interoperability.

The next item he talked about is the CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) system, which he said is an older system. He said that there are new features that could be added to a new system, but that even if no new features are desired, the existing system would still have to be replaced due to its age. He said the 911 Center is in the process of hiring a CAD consulting firm to help determine the breadth and scope of the new system and hope that by the 1st quarter of 2010 more detailed information will be available. Upon writing a request for proposal he indicated that the County would contact user agencies to

determine their desires of a new CAD system.

Alder Skidmore inquired about the status of contract negotiations with the City of Madison and the 911 Center. Mr. DeJung said his perception is that they are close to agreement on what is really a scope of services agreement rather than a contract. Alder Skidmore asked about the prospects of a 311 non-emergency function which Mr. DeJung implemented in his previous position in Minnesota. Mr. DeJung indicated that he is first working on public education and information technology options that would more efficiently route non-emergency requests for service.

Professor Scott inquired to what extent the 911 Center is capable of customizing dispatching protocols for each user agency. Mr. DeJung said that given there are 85 user agencies, they have a somewhat configurable computer aided dispatch system, but that with the CAD improvements that will be implemented in about 24 months, they will have an improved configurable system. Professor Scott also asked if anything could be done to enhance the expertise of call takers. Mr. DeJung feels that dispatch call takers will become more expert on police matters as they will be trained to understand why they are asking specific questions.

3. [15617](#) Introduction of new PSRC members

The group welcomed Chan Stroman to the Public Safety Review Committee as an alternate member.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. [15618](#) Madison Police Department retail theft policy

MPD Lieutenant Carl Strasburg and Sergeant Lori Chalecki shared problem-solving efforts with regard to the citywide effort on retail theft. Lt. Strasburg said the main thing that they heard from officers is that current police responses to retail theft are time consuming. He said that it has been 10 years since the MPD has updated its retail theft policy. In 2008 Madison Police responded to approximately 600 retail theft incidents where the value of the item was less than \$20.00. He further indicated that the City Attorney's Office said that approximately 1,510 citations were issued citywide for retail theft and that 803 were never paid. The City Attorney's Office does hold some of the tickets in abeyance and if the defendant complies with the terms of an agreement, the charge is not prosecuted. He said that there is little revenue generated for the City from retail theft fines and that charges do not ordinarily go to warrant but that there is the possibility of obtaining the money through a State intercept tax refund program. He further mentioned that on average an officer is spending an hour to an hour and a half on each retail theft incident and there are about 600 reports taken each year under the \$20.00 threshold. Sergeant Chalecki said that a lot of the stores already have a retail theft policy in place and don't call the police on thefts that are under \$25.00, but that there are some big retail stores that do request police. Lt. Strasburg shared the draft policies and procedures that MPD came up with on responding to retail thefts. Under the proposed new procedure, if the value of an item taken is under \$20.00, there would be other avenues for a retailer to pursue, but that police would not respond. If the suspect causes a disturbance, there are suspect

identification issues, or the suspect has previously been banned from the store and is trespassing, then police would respond. He said that while the response from the police would be altered, the MPD is not removing itself entirely from the retail theft problem, and that it continues to be prepared to provide crime prevention education and advice to retail establishments. Retail establishments will still have the authority to detain theft suspects, to self-report on the \$20.00 and under threshold, and to pursue civil recovery.

Bell made a motion to take the agenda item number 6 out of order. Judge seconded this motion. Unanimously approved.

5. [15620](#) Public Safety Review Committee mission and focus

Professor Scott shared his thoughts on the PSRC mission and focus. He said that the committee would, of course, take up all referred items from the Mayor and Common Council, but that he would like the PSRC to take the initiative on a few major issues that relate to public safety. He said that he would like to try to advance those ideas through discussion with PSRC members and perhaps by encouraging the Alders on the PSRC to advance the issues through legislative proposals to the Common Council. Eli Judge, as PSRC vice chair, concurred with what Scott said and added that he would like to increase the visibility of the committee to the community.

6. [15621](#) Alcohol regulation enforcement policies and practices

Eli Judge indicated that the agenda item on alcohol regulation enforcement policies and practices would be discussed as preliminary items at today's meeting. He said that he feels that there are many stakeholders, including students and residents in the Madison area who would like to participate in a discussion on this topic. Mr. Judge said that among the alcohol-related issues of special concern in the downtown and isthmus area are police compliance checks at downtown bars and whether police resources spent on alcohol regulation enforcement could be better devoted to other public safety problems in the neighborhood. Alder Eagon indicated that his biggest issue is the relationship between police and students and how this relationship can be made more constructive. He mentioned as an example that some young people hesitate to call for help from police because they are afraid of themselves getting in trouble for consuming alcohol illegally, and that this is a matter of concern. Professor Scott asked Katherine Plominski, the City of Madison Alcohol Policy Coordinator how alcohol issues get presented to incoming students at UW-Madison. She indicated that a representative from the UW-Madison Police Department talks to parents and students about best practices on alcohol safety and particularly conveys the message that with regard to alcohol-related emergencies, students can call the police without fear of negative repercussions for calling, even if they are under the influence of alcohol. She said that police might respond the day after to issue citations if necessary, but that at the time there will be no consequences to the caller so as to build an understanding with the police.

The committee members agreed to continue this discussion on alcohol at the September 8th PSRC meeting with others invited to share information on this topic and also for the Police and Fire Departments to share what their internal policies are on targeting enforcement. Chief Wray suggested Captain Schauf from the Central Police District to attend the meeting. He mentioned several

ideas to discuss including: alcohol and underage drinking, how the police department prioritizes its enforcement efforts at bars, how officer discretion is being used, what is reasonable and what is effective, and the overall police-community relationship issue.

7. [15622](#) Current and future capital expenditure proposals of the Police and Fire Departments

Joel Plant indicated that both the Police and Fire Departments have submitted their capital budget proposals to the Mayor and that the executive budget will come out in the first week of September. He said that he will distribute the executive budget to the Committee members in order to get a full review of the proposed 2010 capital budget for discussion during the September 8th PSRC meeting.

REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Standing sub-committee reports

8. [15625](#) 911 Center sub-committee

Alder Skidmore indicated that he had nothing to add at this time as he was able to ask questions of Mr. DeJung during his presentation.

9. [15626](#) Public Safety by Design sub-committee

Professor Scott indicated that there is nothing at this time with regard to the Public Safety by Design subcommittee, but that he did a little research and found out that some of the members listed previously on that Committee were no longer on the PSRC. He mentioned that there might be a need to invite Sergeant Dexheimer from the Madison Police Department who has expertise with CPTED.

FUTURE BUSINESS

Joel Plant encouraged and recommended that members of the PSRC take a ride or walk along downtown at bar time. He said that there are a number of options available to be able to go on a ride along either with a police officer or in a taxicab. He also mentioned a "pub crawl" during which the group would visit a number of licensed establishments downtown to observe the social environment and attendant public safety problems.

ADJOURNMENT

Eagon made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Plant seconded the motion. Unanimously approved to adjourn.