



MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES

October 1, 2014

Recorded by Nancy Rauhauser

The monthly NPAC Meeting began at 7:00 p.m. with Ruedi Risler presiding.

Topics covered:

1. Special Presentation Speaker: SPD Chief Kathleen O'Toole
 - a. The Chief thanked us for all the work we've done with the SPD, such as participating in the Find It, Fix It walks, the precinct picnics, and generally sharing concerns and ideas.
 - b. CSTAT meetings have been initiated to flexibly allocate resources. The team includes the SPD command staff, precinct commanders, and partners such as KC prosecutor and city attorney. It meets every two weeks to look at trends around the city and then allocates officers as needed.
 - c. Mayor Murray has recommended adding 100 new officers over the next few years. A scientific data-driven assessment will be done to determine how many officers are needed. Seattle is one of the safest large cities in the US. Boston has 1000 more officers, but also has more crime.
 - d. The Chief doesn't want to dictate from above, so the Neighborhood Policing Plans are important tools. Neighborhoods know what they need, and the Chief is impressed with the level of engagement she sees.
 - e. Chief O'Toole introduced Mike Wagers, whom she hired into a new civilian position, chief operating officer.
 - f. Saying she primarily came to listen, the Chief then asked for questions.
 - g. Q: Approach to enforcement of quality of life infractions? These issues are complicated. Homelessness is not a crime; dealing with it requires working with public and private services to help the people. Crisis intervention - officers are not mental health professionals, so the SPD needs to work collaboratively. Multiple strategies are needed, as well as collaboration with KC prosecutor and city attorney to come up with a sensible strategy. It's great that they are attending the CSTAT meetings so they can hear officer frustrations like when they arrest someone but then he/she doesn't get prosecuted. Chief wants to give officers clear guidance on quality of life infraction enforcement. Officers should be comfortable dealing with the issues and also know that arresting isn't always the answer. Officers need to know that the department will have their back. The mayor is also interested in tackling the issues head-on. The city is vibrant and growing, and he

doesn't want these problems to affect that.

- h. Q: Alternatives to jailing low-level offenders? The Chief is enthusiastic about substance abuse programs, literacy programs, etc. that help people turn their lives around. She advocates Prevention / Intervention / Enforcement. LEAD (Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion) is getting national attention. The issue is how to scale these fine programs for all who need them.
- i. Q: Homelessness and car camping? SPD is collaborating with the city attorney, mayor, prosecutor, etc. to develop a city-wide strategy.
- j. Q: Paperwork bogging down officers? The Department of Justice imposed administrative requirements following its investigation of SPD's use of force. This paperwork was time-consuming and took officers off the street. Last week the Chief came to an agreement with the monitor to reduce the "ouch reports". Now, if someone being arrested complains of tight handcuffs, for instance, the officer need only note it in the normal report if a supervisor observes there is no visual evidence of injury. Other reporting policies are also being reviewed.
- k. Q: 911 dispatch improvements? Request for dispatchers to give more information to callers, to reduce caller frustration. The Chief will take issues and suggestions back to Dick Reed, who oversees that department.
- l. Q: Improve non-emergency (625-5011) dispatch response? The Chief invites us to give her specific issues and she will take them to Dick Reed.
- m. Q: SPD visual image improvement (uniforms, cars, weapons)? Police need to be visible, but the Chief agrees SPD isn't military, prefers to think of it as police service, not police force, and doesn't want it to project a military image. New cars are dark blue, and new officer shirts will maybe be navy blue. The mayor doesn't like the black cars.
- n. Q: Memo from officer complaining of lack of North Precinct staff to investigate residential burglaries? Chief explained that it was from a frustrated officer and it contained much misinformation. The Chief talked to the officer, but didn't discipline. She apologized for the misinformation and assured us that the North Precinct does everything it can to investigate, and if it needs more resources, it asks for backfill from a centralized burglary unit.
- o. Q: Roving groups of teenagers assaulting people? It's probably a small number responsible for many crimes. Emphasis patrols are being used to get more SPD officers to hot spots. Then the teens move to another area. It will help to identify individuals and patterns. Captain Emerick spoke of groups of teens at Northgate Mall and the Park & Ride. Friday and Saturday nights an SPD team is working on this. He refers us to his September 25th NP Captain's Log post for safety tips: <http://www.seattle.gov/police/precincts/north/captainlog.htm>
- p. Q: More community outreach? NP Crime Prevention Coordinator Elizabeth Scott has a big backlog - she's booked for outreach meetings through March 2015. Captain Emerick responded that one type of outreach is what we're doing at NPAC with our focus teams working with SPD and city resources on specific problems, one at a time. The Chief said that James Manning has a community outreach team of six for our area. SPD will work on outreach, such as helping to

set up block watches.

- q. Q: Nightlife - needs more SPD presence for safety of citizens. The chief agreed that people need to feel safe when they are at clubs and restaurants and it's important for a vibrant city to provide that. One thing that can help is to be sure businesses are educated about the liquor laws. Another is to be sure that the laws are enforced. Visible police and undercover police are operating.
- r. Suggestion offered: have a version of the Citizen Police Academy for offenders and people hostile to the police. Chief liked the idea!
- s. Q: Are fencing operations being pursued? SPD recently shut down an operation. Some officers are working on pawn shops. Discussions on the issue are being had with the mayor to come up with more tools, such as inspections. The Major Crimes Task Force is working with pawn shop officers. Cell phones are a big issue.
- t. Q: Parking enforcement response? Complaint that it took 2 ½ weeks for a car being camped in to be tagged. Chief said leadership of the traffic unit has changed, and they are hiring a civilian manager for Parking Enforcement officers. It is acknowledged that there is room for improvement. Captain Emerick said we can call Dianne Newsom (Community Police Team) if we aren't getting response from Parking Enforcement.
- u. Q: Can parks get more rangers/security? Chief O'Toole says they would like to be able to patrol parks more. There have been discussions about putting park rangers under SPD supervision. SPD needs to work more effectively with the rangers. She hopes Parks Dept. gets funding to hire more rangers.
- v. Q: City Council members on hiring more police? Chief O'Toole and Mike Wagers met with Tim Burgess this week and he reassured him that he's not opposed to hiring more if there is assurance that the current staff is being used effectively. The aforementioned resource allocation study, being done in the next couple months, will be shown to the City Council. And there was recently a study done within the department to assess where all the staff is working (there is a lot of on-loan staffing and they wanted to be sure there weren't 'hidden bodies' that could be used more effectively.) They found only three people that could be partly redeployed. The Chief will fight for more resources if studies show they are needed.
- w. Q: More police resources, like a substation, for growing Ballard? The Chief will take the request into consideration. A problem with substations is that they need to be manned during business hours, which takes officers off the street. Captain Emerick said he is not in favor of substations except in places like malls; he'd rather have officers off working on the streets. North Precinct is going to adjust some sector boundaries to improve response time.
- x. Q: Can 911 response to prostitution calls be improved? Response time depends on what other calls have come in and availability of officers. Chief will get back to Dick Reed about prostitution calls. They are important.

2. Community Police Team: Dianne Newsom

- a. Bring socks for the sock drive next month!
 - b. Dianne introduced CPT Officer Mike Cruzan, whose area is Ballard.
3. New Business
- a. Operations Lt. Leslie Cordner is leaving the North Precinct to be Chief O'Toole's aide. She will continue to be on point for the new precinct police station project. We didn't learn of her leaving in time to order a cake, but we did present her with a card, thanked her for her service, and wished her well.
4. Next Month's Agenda
- a. November 5th's guest speaker is Ronald Ward, Assistant Monitor, Seattle Police Monitoring Team. He will provide handouts that we'll send with the agenda, so we'll have some background before he speaks.

Meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.