

Lakeview Crime Prevention District

Meeting

August 25, 2016

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Location: St Dominic Rectory Meeting Room

Martin Landrieu called the meeting to order at approximately 6:05 PM. Roll was called, in attendance were: Reid Raymond, Ann Leblanc, Joe Giarrusso, Joe Landry, Jeb Bruneau, Brian Anderson, Martin Landrieu, Freddy Yoder, Nancy Lytle, John Grillot, and Val Cupit. Also in attendance were Mr. Ralph J. Aucoin (an attorney with the same firm as board attorney Richard Bordelon, who is out of town), board accountant Larry Jacobi and LCPD Commander Sgt. Rene Benjamin. A quorum was established with 11 members present. Also present were approximately 19 members of the public.

**Approval of minutes:** Martin called for a motion to approve the minutes of the July meeting. The motion to approve the minutes of the July meeting was made by Nancy Lytle and seconded by Freddy Yoder. The motion passed with all in favor.

**Crime Prevention Report & Statistics:** The current Crime Prevention Report and accompanying PowerPoint presentation (both of which are attached) were presented and reviewed by Commander Rene Benjamin. In August there had been ten auto burglaries. Nine of those ten were cars that were unlocked. A suspect has been identified and arrest warrants have been issued. Most of that property has been recovered and returned to the victims. One auto theft was reported where the keys were left in the car. That vehicle was recovered and returned in excellent condition.

Martin thanked the members who were in attendance and opened the meeting up for questions.

**Financial Report**

Larry reviewed a situation that the board was scrutinizing with the board's budget. He explained that a recent invoice showed a 22% increase in the per hour costs to the city. Sgt. Benjamin, board attorney Richard Bordelon and Larry then met with the Police Department. They verified that the policemen are being paid the correct amount. Sgt. Benjamin then reviewed the payroll procedure of how the policemen check in for the patrols and the verification of the hours that they worked. He explained that LCPD pays the city for patrols at a rate of time and a half for patrols as per LCPD's contract with the city. The system of calculating the pay-back or bill-back system for costs such as LCPD patrols is a manual system. There is no interface between the city's payroll system and their bill-back system, it is purely manual and is done by accountants at NOPD. In reviewing that process, they found that there are discrepancies in it. Using this particular invoicing cycle, they found about a two-thousand-dollar discrepancy and it was worked out. There remains a \$442-dollar discrepancy between LCPD's numbers and that of the NOPD that has still not been reconciled and that they continue to work on. NOPD admits that because it is a manual process, that it requires scrutiny. Rate of pay was found to be the greatest

cause of the discrepancy. They are satisfied that they are close to justifying and making sure through audit that the amount that is being reimbursed to the city is the proper amount per the contract. Once all are verified, they will have the city sign off on it and it will be sent to the board attorney to verify that the calculation is per the contract. Larry projected that the board is faced with a budget shortfall that through the remainder of the year could be as much as one hundred thousand dollars if the board continues to use the number of hours that they are currently using. Larry reported that the rates for each patrolman varies based on a number of variances such as rank, and tenor. Martin stated that earlier in the year, because of a surplus, patrols were increased. Martin inquired if previous invoices from the city might have been not accurate. Larry explained that they could be, but only those created since the city started with ADP payroll system are being examined. Because of the discrepancies, no payments have been made since May 28<sup>th</sup>. The city has agreed to not press LCPD on the amounts due while the issue is being addressed and that the district is in good standing with the city.

Freddy requested that Larry resolve the validity of the increases prior to going into the new budget. Larry reviewed the process and confirmed that the current amounts are correct. Larry explained that the rate at which LCPD pays the city does not necessarily equate to what the officer is being paid for those same hours. Freddy pointed out that on some of the invoices the increase was actually **50%**, not 22% and Larry confirmed that he was correct. Freddy expressed that he had a problem with the LCPD paying time and a half every time that an officer is working for LCPD even when that officer is not being paid time and a half. It was explained that while LCPD is taking a hit on the rate, the city is taking the hit on payroll burden such as FICA and other payroll costs. It was explained that the district is 2 years into the ten-year contract with the city and that there were eight more years to go.

Martin stated that with the current set of calculations, the board would have to discuss and probably make some adjustments with respect to patrols to stay within budget. He pointed out that it is not uncommon to make adjustments to the amount of patrols to stay within budget and that the LCPD has a long precedent of doing so.

Larry reviewed the balance sheet (attached). He explained that the board would have to reduce approximately twenty thousand dollars in costs in order to stay within budget in order to maintain patrols at the current level, or to cut back patrols by eighty-two hours per cycle. Sgt. Benjamin explained that he tries to use newer officers because they are more energetic and because their per-hour cost is lower.

Martin asked that Freddy sit down with Richard Bordelon, the board treasurer and any other board members who would like to be included to meet and look at the contract and to make certain that LCPD is following the contract as it is written and to report back to the board at the next meeting. Larry suggested that Sgt. Benjamin be authorized by the board to schedule less patrol hours per cycle since there will not be enough fund patrols through the end of the year at the current rate.

John Grillot made a motion that Sgt. Benjamin be allowed to reduce shift hours by 130 hours per cycle for the remainder of the year at a rate that would leave a twenty-five-thousand-dollar surplus by January 1. There was no second on the motion. Ann made a motion to authorize Sgt. Benjamin to scale

back the hours in such a way that the LCPD would end the year with a twenty-five-thousand-dollar overage. John seconded the motion and a discussion was held. Brian expressed that he had a problem with the current motion because it eliminated any funding for crime cameras for the remainder of the year. He lamented that the LCPD lived and died by patrols and that he found that scary. ~~So that if~~ There are other opportunities to supplement NOPD patrols with other crime fighting measures; six months earlier the board went on a mad rush to increase patrols because residents cannot lock their doors at night, crime is going up and he speculated that there may actually be more crime than there was last year. He pointed out that they have increased patrols yet the crime rate is going up. He also pointed out that the result of those increased patrols was much quicker response times which he added mattered to him a lot. He stated that this proved that if we put all of our eggs into one basket and that if that basket gets a new accounting service, the board could put itself into an issue that is drastic. Brian stated that he would not go with the motion that Ann made, because he believed that the board should look at an option that put another thirty-five to forty thousand dollars in this year's budget to give the board the opportunity to look at other options than patrols. Ann asked exactly what does scaling back 80 hours in terms of number of officers. Based on comments by Sgt. Benjamin, she concluded that it would result in 3 cars instead of 5-6 cars. She added that this level of reduction gave her concern. Ann pointed out to Brian that it would only be a three-month delay on crime cameras. Larry suggested doing the hourly reductions based on a month to month basis so that it could be reviewed monthly. Ann amended her motion to include that it would be reviewed and adjusted on a month to month basis. John seconded the amendment. Freddy asked that Brian be allowed to continue to go forward with the camera program so as to continue the momentum that the camera committee has, because of the likeliness that those camera funds would not be spent until January anyway. Freddy expressed that he did not want to see a loss of momentum on the camera program and he did not want to see it start over at the beginning of the year.

Martin reviewed the motion on the floor and called for a vote on a motion that allowed Sgt. Benjamin to reduce patrols at a rate that would allow a surplus of twenty-five thousand dollars at the end of the year and that the reductions would be reviewed and adjusted on a monthly basis through the end of the year. The motion passed with 7 in favor and 4 opposed. Joe Giarrusso, Jeb Bruneau, Brian Anderson and Val Cupit were opposed, all others were in favor. Brian then made a motion that would provide fifteen thousand dollars of the twenty-five-thousand-dollar surplus that was just voted in would be used for a crime camera program that would begin as soon as possible. It was clarified by Martin that the thirty-five thousand that had been budgeted to crime cameras was no longer available for that purpose. Ann explained that the current motion would reduce the twenty-five-thousand-dollar surplus to ten thousand dollars. Larry reiterated that the thirty-five thousand dollars that Brian was authorized to spend on crime cameras is not there. Martin added that if thirty-five thousand dollars that the board does not have were to be spent that the board would be in big trouble. Ann expressed concern that ten-thousand was not enough cushion. Jeb and Brian were in favor of the motion, all other board members were opposed and Brian's motion failed.

## **Administrative Agenda**

Martin concluded the public interest portion of the agenda meeting and he commenced with the administrative portion of the agenda.

**By-Laws:** Martin explained that the new suggested bylaws had been sent out by email and that Reid had copies available for anyone at the meeting who wanted them. The intention was to read them online so that they could be reviewed in advance and voted on at the meeting. One suggestion was made by Val that when a letter was written to an appointing authority regarding absences of a board member, that the letter should come from the board instead of from the president. There were no objections to the suggestion and the change was made to the bylaws.

**LCPD Decals:** Martin announced that the LCPD car decals had been ordered and should be in the boards possession on September 10; the decals would be distributed in accordance with the discussion of the last meeting. Freddy inquired about the costs of the decals. Martin replied that it was under four thousand dollars at \$3,615.

Reid made a comment regarding the by-laws stating that he believed there should be a source of records for communication, the correct P.O. Box Office number, the correct phone numbers, somewhere that is reviewed regularly to make sure that the board is publishing the correct information. Reid and Martin agreed that it could be somewhere such as the website but that it does not need to be included in the by-laws. It was agreed to move that discussion to the next meeting. Martin apologized for the length of the meeting and he knew that it would be a rough meeting.

Brian asked for clarification from the board that he did not have authorization from the board to move forward with an RFP for a crime camera program. He pointed out that he did not feel that he had authorization from the board to proceed because the funding wasn't available. Martin agreed and explained he felt that Brian had gone forward on the board's original authorization and that the board had voted to reject all of the proposals because they were too expensive. Brian then came back with another concept that was discussed, but that new concept was not voted on to move forward. So Martin said he did not believe that the board had authorized the new camera concept. Freddy disagreed and felt that when the monies were allocated, that it was authorized and he felt that Brian could go forward as long as the expenditures occurred in 2017. Mr. Aucoin pointed out that the enabling legislation that created the LCPD stated that it should be *"to aid in crime prevention and to aid to the security of district residents by providing for an increase in the presence of law enforcement personnel in the district."* Martin clarified that Brian has the right to continue to develop the crime camera program, but not to spend money on it. At some point the board would have to authorize the expenditure.

Joe Giarrusso made a motion to authorize Brian Anderson to continue his efforts to proceed with a crime camera program as previously approved by the board. It was seconded by Reid. Ann asked that it be codified that the understanding is there that the funding is not there for the cameras. Martin restated for the record and for purposes of including it in the minutes that Brian could go forward with

the plans for the camera program but could not incur expenses until it was approved by the board. A vote was held and the motion passed with all in favor.

Martin called for a motion to adjourn. The motion to adjourn was made by Jeb, it was seconded by John and the meeting was adjourned.