

Lakeview Crime Prevention District Meeting

October 27, 2016

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Location: St Dominic Rectory Meeting Room

Martin Landrieu called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Roll was called. In attendance were: Ann Leblanc, Jeb Bruneau, Brian Anderson, Nancy Lytle, Martin Landrieu, Joe Giarrusso, and Val Cupit. Also in attendance were board accountant Larry Jacobi, and LCPD Commander Sgt. Rene Benjamin. A quorum was established with 7 board members present. Also present were several members of the community.

**Approval of minutes:** Martin called for a motion to approve the minutes of the September 22nd and the September 29<sup>th</sup> meetings. The motion to approve the minutes of those meetings was made by Joe Giarrusso and seconded by Nancy Lytle. The motion passed with all in favor.

**Financial Report:** Larry reviewed the balance sheet. He pointed out that the board was doing exceptionally well and right on course for the year end. He did a cash recap and pointed out the manual financial statement at the bottom of the balance sheet. About nine thousand dollars were collected thus far during the month of October. He reported that the board was tracking well within the adjustments that the board had established for the remainder of the year. Larry stated that even with zero collections projected for November and December, the board was on track to have a twenty-five-thousand-dollar surplus at the end of the year, even with spending twenty thousand dollars on the cameras. He estimated an additional fifteen to twenty thousand dollars in collections during that time. Because it had been received just before the meeting, the most recent bill from the city was not included in the current financials presented to the board. Martin pointed out for the record that board attorney Richard Bordelon had arrived at the meeting at this point.

Larry reported that an agreement had been made with the city where LCPD would only be billed for overtime hours that were worked by the officers. Martin pointed out to Larry that he felt that the decision as to how the billings for the patrols would be handled was not yet documented well enough yet. He asked for a letter be written to summarize the final the decision. It was agreed that a letter would be written by Larry and that it would be sent upon the approval of board attorney Richard Bordelon. Martin, Jeb and Freddy would also review the letter. This letter would be to confirm what had agreed to at their meeting. Martin pointed out that Sgt. Benjamin had the discretion to adjust patrols if he needed to make some adjustment before the end of the year without having to go before the board for approval of those adjustments.

Larry reviewed the amounts collected thus far as compared to the amount collected last year. Collections were up and he felt that the city was doing a better job with collections than they had in previous years. The documents that Larry presented to the board are attached to these minutes. Martin asked about Larry's comfort with the 2017 budget and he was. Martin also added that though he

intended to do so, he had not yet worked on a president's letter about the ten-dollar increase. Martin was hopeful that in 2017 that patrols could be increased a little bit, but that it is always a balancing act. Jeb reminded him of the technology fund. Brian reviewed how much each crime district of surrounding districts paid per parcel and that LCPD was the lowest.

**Crime Prevention Report & Statistics:** Sgt. Benjamin reviewed the attached crime statistics. There were reports of 6 auto burglaries, with three of them having no signs of forced entry. Sgt. Benjamin reported on an attempted carjacking on General Haig that occurred on 10/16 at approximately 8:55pm. The victim was followed home from the Winn Dixie on Carrollton. As the victim unloaded groceries, she was approached by two black males who snatched the keys and attempted to steal the vehicle. They were unable to start the car and fled towards Robert E. Lee in a small grey vehicle with tinted windows. As they fled, the victim and others reported that they heard gunfire. Sgt. Benjamin reported that the call was never dispatched over the radio by the dispatcher which is currently under investigation by NOPD communications. He reviewed the timeline of the incident: Approximately 8:55PM the incident occurred, 9:13PM, the victim called the 911 operator and reported the incident, the call was forwarded to dispatch by the 911 operator, but the call was never dispatched. The call was not dispatched prior to LCPD's arriving. Benjamin stated that at 9:17PM, LCPD officer Jules Martin was the first officer to arrive on the scene. Martin was patrolling his assigned zone when he came upon the incident after the perpetrators had fled the scene. The car was never dispatched over the radio to the incident by the dispatcher, which is under investigation. Sgt. Benjamin reported that a review of the recordings during that time indicate that because of a massive incident involving an 18-wheeler on the interstate, that the call center was inundated with calls and overwhelmed, but that is not a reason why they should not have dispatched that code 2 call.

Sgt. Benjamin then continued reviewing more crime stats including arrests and response times. He pointed out that Bryan Lagarde was correct in his assessment with regards to what he had pointed out at the last meeting regarding response times. He explained that from the moment that a victim calls the complaint operator the clock starts ticking with regards to response times. The holding time is the difference between the time the item is created and the operator starts recording information until the time that the item is dispatched. There were one hundred-thirty-five-forty calls responded to by LCPD this month in October. One minute-thirty-nine seconds is the average time it took the complaint operators to document the information and forward the item to the dispatcher. The en-route time is the difference between the time the officers are dispatched and the time he arrives on the scene. So far this month three minutes and thirty-six seconds is the average time it took the LCPD officers from the time it took to arrive on the scene after he was dispatched to the call. He ended his report by reviewing tips to make the neighborhood safer.

Jeb inquired about the uptick in crime for 2016 versus 2015 despite having had an increase in patrols. He commented that he was trying to determine if there was a point of diminishing return for patrols. It was pointed out that the increase in patrols had occurred in 2015. Nancy reiterated that patrols were now at the same level as they were last year before the increase in patrols was put in place. She also pointed out the large number of traffic stops and resident checks to emphasize that contrary to what many may believe, that when the patrols aren't responding to a call, that they are active with these

traffic stops and other activities and that they aren't just riding around. She added that if we cut back, that this would not be getting done.

In response to questions from Jeb regarding the dispatch situation on the General Haig incident, Sgt. Benjamin stated that more information would be forthcoming because of the investigation. Ann asked why it took 18 minutes to be called in. Benjamin stated that the victim was extremely distraught. Jeb stated that he had heard shots but did not think it was shots but that some of the videos that the neighbors have you could hear her scream. Gino Ascani stated that five or six people had said that they had people in the middle of the street with guns and that they called 911. Gino Ascani asked what is the possibility that LCPD have a combination dispatch-viewing center to take calls. Ann inquired about the reason why persons crimes were almost double of last year. Sgt. Benjamin and Ann ascertained that it was tied to the large number of unlocked cars with guns in them. He pointed out that handle pulling of unlocked cars was happening all around the region.

A member of the public inquired about how effective cameras have been with regards to arrest and convictions. Sgt. Benjamin responded that videos are very instrumental in gaining convictions. He acknowledged that he had secured several videos from Gino (Ascani). He further explained that the city has a program called SafeCamNOLA where citizens with cameras can register that they have cameras into a data base. They cannot access those cameras but they can contact homeowners who may have cameras when needed.

Bryan Lagarde of Project Nola presented data that he had collected regarding discrepancies in response time, challenging the accuracy on the response times that were being reported. He stated that the data that NOPD was providing to Rene and the board was not reality. Martin asked the source and Bryan explained that it came from the mayor's office. Bryan added that NOPD only gave Sgt. Benjamin data on calls that LCPD responded to. He cited some specific examples. Martin explained that the gap may be the difference between what is the response time of LCPD versus what is the response time in Lakeview, even if LCPD isn't available to respond because they are doing something else that they are supposed to be doing. Brian Anderson commented that perhaps a median, rather than an average, might be better to measure response times. He pointed out regarding the General Haig incident, that the dispatcher not only failed to dispatch the armed robbery, but that they also failed to dispatch the numerous calls of gunfire as well. Val explained that it is the new norm for duplicate item numbers to be issued for related calls. Martin thanked Bryan Lagarde for challenging the information that LCPD was providing and stated that the more information provided, the better. Bryan stated that calls were being downgraded. Martin asked Bryan to present the information, and to give the board the opportunity to study it and to respond at the next meeting. Sgt. Benjamin explained that code 2 calls are not being downgraded and that LCPD was a supplemental unit.

**Board Officer Nominations:** Martin announced that elections for board officers happen each January. He appointed Joe Giarrusso to oversee the nominating process. He asked that if board members had any suggestions, that they talk with Joe. Joe accepted. Ann asked that the slate be presented before the meeting where it is to be voted on. Martin suggested that the board have a public meeting in December to collect comments from the public. Val suggested that the board seek similar advice from other similar

boards. Martin asked board members to think about it and that they would discuss it at the next meeting. Richard clarified that though the agenda listed a nominating committee, that it was not actually a committee, but a single board member.

**Crime Camera Initiative Status Report:** Brian Anderson explained that his Crime Camera Committee had calculated the critical locations, such as entry points, in Lakeview for cameras and that it was 17 locations. A flyer was put together regarding this initiative to try and get volunteers to host cameras in those critical locations. He felt that this should provide video of every entry into the Lakeview Crime Prevention District. Once the hosts are decided and the cameras purchased, he explained that a bid would be put out for the installation of those cameras. Ann asked that Sgt. Benjamin be included in deciding the locations. Brian explained that there is no monitoring in this proposed system. He added that he anticipated that this video would eventually be stored at Project Nola. He stated that when an incident occurs, with his proposed system, the LCPD commander would have to go to the cameras and pull the chips from those cameras to download the video from them.

Martin noted for the record that because of a couple of board members leaving, that a quorum no longer existed and that the board could no longer make any decisions. Bryan Lagarde pointed out the benefits of Project NOLA that other camera programs do not offer. He added these benefits greatly helped detectives. He pointed out that his cameras would be a better option than what was being presented. Bryan stated that he felt that the Crime Camera Committee was going in the wrong direction. Nancy asked some stats of how many instances that there have been in Lakeview where ProjectNOLA video was involved.

Due to no quorum, there was no formal motion to adjourn. The board quorum ended at 7:25.