

Minutes from the Third-precinct Advisory Council (3-PAC) Meeting—January 25, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 P.M. by vice chair Kathie Carlson. Twenty-six people were present.

Introductions—Those present introduced themselves, mentioning their neighborhood or affiliation with the 3rd Precinct (3rd P.).

Treasurer's Report—Treasurer Janell Holmberg reported the balances in the accounts: \$1,535.11 in the savings account and \$50 in the checking account.

Secretary's Report—When hearty “Thanks” for contributions to the December officers’ holiday meal were communicated from Gwen McMahon (in absentia), we realized the name of volunteer Marian Streit was mistakenly not listed on page 4 of the minutes from the November 2009 3-PAC meeting. The contribution made by Marian, a generous, faithful volunteer to take time off from work to participate in the semi-annual meals for the officers, is greatly appreciated.

State of the Precinct—Inspector Lucy Gerold reported 3rd Precinct (3rd P.) year-end statistics for 2009 compared to 2008. Part 1 crimes (homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, auto theft, and arson) were down by 16%. (Part 1 crimes in the city decreased by 13%.) • Thefts and burglaries increased by 53% compared to 2008, with 351 during 2009; 229 in 2008. These are among the most preventable crimes. Often property is left in plain site in vehicles, homes, and garages in which windows and doors are unlocked.

Within the first eight days of 2010, four **homicides** occurred in the 3rd P., three at a Somali market in the Seward neighborhood. A “powerful, positive result” of these crimes was the “dramatic cooperation” between the East African community and the 3rd P. to solve the crimes, and an effort to build relationships between the two entities. Another “gratifying response” was that of the Seward community held a vigil of support when the market reopened. Two days after the triple homicide, an arrest was made for the homicide that occurred on 34th St. and Chicago Ave. Police had strong leads in that case.

In response to the question as to how the officers are dealing with the **betrayal** by former fellow cop Timothy Carson (who is suspected of committing multiple robberies), the Inspector responded that at first there was disbelief followed by sadness, then anger. Ultimately the officers worked it out by talking about it. Inspector Gerold personally apologized to several of the affected businesses at which a number of the victims were relatives of police officers. The Inspector concluded by stating that the behavior of Officer Carson is not an indication of a system-wide problem.

Officers for the Months of November and December

November 2009—Officer Mark Johnson, CRT. With the help of his fellow CRT and street officers, Officer Johnson was able to take four guns off the street during the month of November.

December 2009—Officer Matt Olson, CRT. “Officer Olson has been a member of the 3rd precinct community response team (CRT) since September of 2006. He is one of the most productive members and is a natural informal leader of the team. He is always willing to take on cases and aggressively pursues them till their conclusion. In 2009 he had 108 cases that led to 132 arrests. Officer Olson’s interest lies in narcotics work but he is always willing to work with his team on other issues in the precinct. • Officer Olson’s contacts in the Somali community have led him to be known as an expert on illegal drugs that are used in this community. He has developed several confidential informants that he deploys to assist in building cases against drug dealers in this community. • Over the last few months of 2009, the 3rd precinct was hit hard by street robberies. On his own, Officer Olson discussed this with his team and supervisors and developed a strategy to try to combat these robberies. This 3-pronged approach of using CRT included proactive police work (patrols, undercover work), reactive information gathering (search warrants, debriefings), and the debriefing of street people (prostitutes, drug users, dealers). This strategy has just started to be used by CRT and there has been some success. • Officers Olson’s initiative in both his regular day-to-day work and understanding the overall “big picture” of problems shows his dedication to the residents of Minneapolis, the MPD, and his fellow CRT and patrol officers of the 3rd precinct. —*Respectfully, 3rd Precinct Command Staff*”

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Officer of the Year 2009

Officer Chad Meyer. “Officer Meyer is a consistent top performer on the shift. His report-writing skills are outstanding and he is always professional with the public and his peers. His statistics for 2009 speak for his outstanding work ethic and professionalism: 25 Probable-cause Arrests, 20 Narcotics Arrests, 80 Traffic Arrests, 30 Domestic-related Arrests, 115 Curfew Arrests, 85 Warrant Arrests, 2 Stolen Vehicles, and 2 DWIs.

“Officer Meyer is very familiar with the criminals in his area and works hard to make sure the people who live in his area feel safer and that they can call the police and see that their concerns are being addressed. Officer Meyer has been praised by the city attorney’s office for his excellent reports that have been used in training other officers for compliance with the new Domestic Abuse Project protocols. His attention to details at the domestic crime scenes has also received praise.

“Officer Meyer was awarded the Medal of Valor for shooting in the arm a suspect who pointed a gun at officers following a foot pursuit. Officer Meyer also pursued and arrested many suspects in response to citizen calls, shot-spotter calls, and whom he observed fleeing an area of interest.”

Community Response Team Report—Sergeant Todd Sauvageau reported the following statistics for 2009:

495 controlled buys (a very labor-intensive effort in which drugs are suspected to be available), 102 search warrants (a lot of time and effort go into developing enough information to garner a warrant), 29 guns were recovered, approximately \$200,000 in cash was seized, 70 vehicles were seized, and numerous drugs were confiscated such as more than 1,000 total pounds of crack (rock) cocaine, powder cocaine, heroine, and methamphetamine. 1,161 pounds of marijuana were confiscated. There were 270 felony arrests, 160 gross misdemeanors, and 369 misdemeanor arrests.

Inspector Lucy Gerold added that a number of “johns” (prostitution customers) have been arrested; their photos will be posted on the city web site until the johns complete their probationary time. Officers report that they’re not seeing the same prostitutes with whom they’re familiar and that it’s also more difficult to find prostitutes. • Inspector Gerold said police officers try to find a balance when dealing with prostitution. There is a finite number of women engaged in prostitution whereas the number of johns is unlimited. It’s also easier to pursue the prostitute because it takes more time and effort to prove the john is guilty of illegal activity. • The 3rd Precinct is taking an immediate, mid-term, and long-term approach toward addressing prostitution, intending to have an impact on the whole system.

Regarding **search warrants**, they must be written in a manner that accurately describes what officers will be looking for, specifics that require officers to be intimately familiar with a situation. For example, if the search warrant describes the area of interest to be the size of a bread box, even though officers may find illegal materials in an area smaller than a bread box, those materials are not legally available to the officers. • It is the judge who determines what the officers can look for, the time of day or night for the search, whether the officers knock or don’t knock before entering a building, and the duration of the search. Officers call a SWAT team to assist if weapons or dangerous dogs are anticipated to be on the property. Information from confidential informants, such as whether an entrance may be barricaded, is extremely important to the success of the search and the safety of people involved.

CCP/SAFE Report—CPS Don Greeley, sector 1 (Phillips), and officers testified at a trial the morning of January 25 about a house on 14th Avenue where suspected prostitution, drug dealing, and regulatory infractions were thought to be present. The judge took the information under advisement.

CPS Karen Notsch, sector 2, noted there has been a 21% reduction of crime in her area in 2009 which she credits to strong block clubs, timely emails, and emailed “Tip of the Week” notices about crime prevention.

CPS Sue Roethele, sector 3, reported that she is proud of a number of her neighborhoods that have reduced burglaries by 50%, adding that 61% of burglaries are unforced. Also, the Salvation Army purchased in the Bossen area two formerly “problem properties” that are being renovated for use by veterans. • Sue and Inspector Gerold were scheduled to meet with Super America managers, a council member, & neighbors to address concerns about robberies, assaults, & litter.

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Questions and Comments

Kristine, a member of the security team at Abbott/Northwestern Hospital, reported that during the months of September through December, 22 **vehicle break-ins** occurred in the hospital campus ramps. Only two of the victims filed reports with the Minneapolis Police Department. Kristine and five investigators posted warning signs and left notes under vehicle windshield wipers advising people about the break-ins and stating that if property is visible through vehicle windows, it may be stolen. Kristine said the posting of signs and distribution of warning notes almost eliminated the problem. She continued by saying there appeared to be no pattern to the thefts and that Hennepin County Medical Center had encountered a similar problem.

Regarding proposed **budget cuts** to the city budget that threatened to eliminate the **positions of the crime prevention specialists** within the police department budget, 3-PAC received many responses to the letter we emailed to Mayor R. T Rybek, Chief Tim Dolan, and the 13 city council members. The most informative response (reprinted below) was received from ninth ward council member, Gary Schiff.

December 10, 2009

Thanks Sue, et al,

The CPS positions were saved last week in a series of motions during the budget negotiation process. The final budget was approved last Monday, with the community crime prevention program preserved.

Thank you for writing. The 15-year crime low that many of our neighborhoods currently enjoy wouldn't be possible without the hard work of our crime prevention specialists.

Sincerely,

Gary Schiff

City Council Member, Ward 9

Sergeant Sauvageau commented that the CPSs provide a “terrific amount” of information to police officers, and Maury added the CPSs are part of the effort of crime prevention, not a “sideline.” The CPSs said they were very touched by the response from the community to the proposed elimination of their positions.

Adjournment The meeting adjourned at 7:48 P.M. —Recorded by Sue Filbin, 3-PAC secretary.

Minutes from previous 3-PAC meetings are posted at this web site:

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/police/outreach/pac-schedule.asp>

If you're receiving these minutes via U.S. mail and via email, and if you'd prefer to save paper, postage, and time by receiving only an email version, please email a note to crime prevention specialist Karen Notsch at karen.notsch@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

If you'd prefer to not receive these minutes, please contact Karen Notsch: karen.notsch@ci.minneapolis.mn.us — Thank you.