

Minutes from the Third-precinct Advisory Council (3-PAC) Meeting—April 26, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 P.M. by chairperson Gwen McMahon. Thirty-two 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: \$1,482.16 in the savings account and \$50 in the checking account. Janell will pursue why an invoice has not been received from Awards of America for the recognition awards that are paid for by 3-PAC and given to the officers of the month.

Crime prevention specialist, Don Greeley, noted that due to staffing and budget changes from the City of Minneapolis, there is no money for National Night Out (NNO) and Police Week. Funds would be used to purchase 1,000 junior police badges to give to kids at open houses in all precincts and to spend on items related to NNO. Don and others are also trying to produce a coloring book. Don asked if 3-PAC would be willing to donate \$200-\$300 toward these items. He would send invoices for purchases to 3-PAC. Gwen remarked that any money raised by 3-PAC from donations to the BBQ & holiday dinner for the officers is always spent on police-related functions. Gwen suggested 3-PAC donate \$300 to fund the activities described by Don; a citizen suggested a budget range of up to \$500. Kathie C. moved that up to \$500 in funding be made available to support activities related to the precinct open house and NNO. Marian S. seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

A Corcoran resident recommended that Don contact Susan Hensel Gallery to connect Don with artists who may be able to help create coloring sheets or books. Regarding Twins tickets, a separate committee used to approach the Minnesota Twins for free tickets. This year, the Twins aren't giving away tickets.

Gwen passed around a card from Carlyn Nielson that thanked 3-PAC for the annual Officers Appreciation Holiday Dinner. Gwen proposed setting the annual BBQ date as Thursday, August 19. Details will be discussed at the June 28th 3-PAC meeting. Also, elections for board positions will occur at the June meeting. The position of secretary is open.

State of the Precinct—Inspector Lucy Gerold reported that since last year at this time, there has been a 16% decrease in Part 1 (the most serious) crime. However, this year there is a 10% increase in overall crime that is being driven by property crimes, many unforced. Property crimes have increased by 44% since April 2009. The Inspector stated that the police department needs help from the community to address the situation. A number of people have been arrested and charged, and weekly burglary-prevention tips have been emailed. The biggest help from citizens is for them to call 911 when they see or hear suspicious activity. More block leaders have been trained, but people need to secure their property. Burglaries are happening further south in the precinct than previously. Items being stolen include laptops, flat-screen TVs, and taking property from vehicles such as coins and jewelry. Cell phones are taken, then dumped.

Investigators are checking APS (Automated Pawn System) all the time for increased activity at pawn shops. Although the department doesn't yet track property on Craig's List, what has been helpful is that the burglary victims sometimes recognize their property on Craig's List. "Prevention is the best offense on burglaries and theft from autos."

Incidents of rape are up 52%; 38 this year compared to 25 at this time last year. A large number involve acquaintances, drugs, and alcohol. Regarding gang-related activity, there is more mention in police reports of gang membership. Gang leaders are being released from prison including members of the Native Mob, Gangster Disciples, and some Latin Kings. Leaders are taking back their "territory." Some Somali gangs are also operating. Officers are working with GET (Gang Enforcement Team) citywide. There is a strong focus on this with a couple of great arrests last week; there were four arrests in two incidents, the result of "great police work." The Inspector is pleased with officers' focus on gang activity.

The precinct is focusing on officer productivity, especially traffic stops and suspicious activity. There is also a strong focus on problem properties. A couple of officers are dedicated to this in collaboration with the crime prevention specialists (CPSs) and Tom Arneson from the county attorney's office.

Continued on next page

Third-precinct Advisory Council (3-PAC) Meeting—April 26, 2010, Page 2 of 4

In addition to prevention, the community can make a difference in the outcome of a suspect's case by writing community impact statements. Two Phillips residents attended a recent sentencing, describing the impact on the community of the criminal's activity (drug dealing, prostitution, etc.). The criminal received a sentence of 50 months, the maximum sentence. CPSs often contact neighbors regarding completion of community impact statements. Citizens can also go to the Hennepin County web site that shows current, pending cases. The Inspector stated that a citizen doesn't have to be a victim of the specific crime; the citizen can offer information about the impact on the neighborhood. Statements also sometimes result in the criminal getting rehabilitative help.

Lt. Dean Christiansen moved to the training division with Lt. Wes Ostlund now heading the Community Response Team (CRT). Lt. Lee Edwards now heads Sector 2. Lt. Edwards comes from the University neighborhood in Detroit, MI. He started in the 3rd Precinct in 1990.

A citizen raised the question about the new law in Arizona related to immigration, asking about the kinds of infractions for which officers stop people. The Inspector responded that officers do not ask any questions related to the status of someone's citizenry; the police department wants to work with all victims in order to arrest perpetrators. During roll call, descriptions are provided of suspicious people. Underage curfew, carrying illegal materials, waiting at a bus stop but not boarding the bus, driving through an alley with headlights all out constitute behavior for which officers would stop someone. Police initiatives are similar to the former CODEFOR—addressing livability issues by stopping "little things" before they get bigger.

A citizen raised a question about gang members. The Inspector responded that identifying a gang member requires more than recognizing colors; patterns and suspicious behavior lead to more police attention. Graffiti is an indication of gang presence. Citizens should call 911 to report any suspicious behavior. Report suspected graffiti to 311. Better yet, take a photo and email the photo of graffiti to 311.

Officers of the Month commendations are on the last page of these notes.

Community Response Team Report—Lt. Wes Ostlund reported that prostitution-related john stings continue, with increased patrols in hot spots. CRT continues to pursue investigations short-term, middle-term, and long-term. Long-term investigations resulted in arrests last year of 30 suspects. Lt. Ostlund reminded those present of the length of time some of the cases require so suspects aren't alerted. Cases also take a long time in order to execute the process legally, have proof in place, to not reveal the ID of the informant, etc. Report writing is very important to a successful case. A city attorney is housed at each precinct to help write reports along with input from supervisors. Reports are especially important and are being used in domestic cases leading to arrests. CRT consists of two sergeants, 1 lieutenant, and 10 officers. • Through the end of March, confiscated materials included: 16 guns, 801 grams of marijuana, 157 grams of crack cocaine, and \$20,673 in cash.

Question: Is the amount of meth down from previously? Lt. Ostlund: use is still high. Crack is cheaper. Use is usually determined by whatever people can access affordably. Crack, meth, and marijuana are the top three substances right now. Meth stinks when it's cooked so most meth labs are no longer in urban areas.

CCP/SAFE Report—CPS Don Greeley, sector 1 (Phillips), reported they had a "major victory," mainly due to attorney Tom Arneson. A residence on 14th Avenue that has been a problem since 1989 due to auto repair, prostitution, etc., was closed due to a court ruling that also determined the residents are not allowed to use the property for a year. • The crime rate is dropping in Phillips, thus Don has spent most of this year on crime prevention. He's also focusing on training block club leaders and organizing block clubs.

Karen Notsch, Sector 2. An increase in burglaries is happening in her area. There is "lots of cooperation with neighbors." Karen's doing 4-6 home security checks per week and is working on business crimes with Lt. Edwards regarding security tips and updating crime-prevention procedures. Karen also worked a lot in Powderhorn and Bancroft neighborhoods with kids-on-kids crime. A car jacking at 39th and 10th led to a drive-by shooting.

Continued on next page

Third-precinct Advisory Council (3-PAC) Meeting—April 26, 2010, Page 3 of 4

A robbery by seven young people victimized several other young people. Neighbors are wondering why kids-on-kids crime is happening. Neighbors are pleased with the precinct response, but meetings are planned with county attorneys, judges, park directors, and others to make sure of follow-through with kids. • P.J. Benson, Hennepin county adult probation, has been a great partner addressing prostitution on 31st Street and Lake Street. A community meeting may lead to prostitutes getting rehab and jobs.

Lt. Arthur Knight, Sector 3 (crime prevention specialist, Sue Roethele, was not present), reported that he and Sue are working on addressing an increase in burglaries. Council member John Quincy is collaborating with the Salvation Army rehabilitation of two buildings for veterans' housing located near Bossen Terrace. The Salvation Army will hold an open house to attract new residents. Lt. Knight and Sue are working with landlords and Tom Arneson, problem-property specialist for the Hennepin County attorney's office, to get some rental licenses revoked. Also, offenders must cease offensive behavior or the property will be closed for a year.

Shun Tillman, Sector 4, has been working on burglaries and restorative justice, especially in Longfellow, Hiawatha, and Cooper neighbor-to-neighbor disputes. Shun continues to address incidents of larceny.

A citizen raised a question about panhandling near 53rd and Minnehaha that is happening during the day and night at Super America and Nokomis Market. Lt. Knight said they're working with Super America, posting "No Trespassing" signs. Solicitors cannot be standing in the middle of the street nor approaching people who are in their vehicle. A city ordinance allows panhandling but not aggressive panhandling. The city asked the state to post "No Trespassing" signs at interstate highway entrances and exits (which are on state property) but the state declined. Citizens should call 911 to report aggressive panhandling. Citizens should also not give people money; instead, give them information or report the incident to 911.

Adjournment The meeting adjourned at 8 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

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Thank you.*

Officers of the Month

January 2010

Officer Valerie Gologowski

“Officer Gologowski works as the 3rd precinct CODEFOR coordinator. Her information gathering and work on precinct issues is extremely valuable. In January, she gathered the end-of-year statistics and presented them to the command staff in an easily read format.

“Officer Gologowski is quick to recognize patterns of crime and alerts officers of the patterns. In late December and early January, there was a pattern of robberies occurring in the 3rd precinct. Officer Gologowski quickly developed several possible suspects. She works with probation personnel, crime prevention specialists, and other investigators to develop useful information that is passed on to street officers. Officer Gologowski’s work is extremely useful and quickly alerts the command staff and officers about emerging patterns and suspects. For her great work, Officer Gologowski is the January 2010 Officer of the Month.”

March 2010

Officer Jeff Pennaz

“Officer Pennaz is a diligent worker who is proactive and follows through on every detail. On March 3, 2010, Officer Pennaz responded to a burglary of dwelling call at approximately 12:30 A.M. Two or three men had entered a house with guns and put a blanket over the victim’s head while they searched her roommate’s room. As Officer Pennaz talked with the victim, his calm, reassuring manner may have motivated the victim to state that she believed her roommate had committed a bank robbery a few days earlier.

“Details obtained from the victim by Officer Pennaz enabled Lt. Fossum to work the case the following morning. With Officer Pennaz’ statement and extra work, the case was solved and some of the money was recovered. The roommate was charged with bank robbery and he revealed the identity of his accomplice.

“Officer Pennaz could have simply told the victim to call the FBI hotline with her information but he chose to go the extra mile, resulting in the case being solved. The following night, March 9, Officer Pennaz was on routine patrol when he interrupted a street robbery. He captured three robbers and booked them. These were the same suspects in an arson caper several weeks earlier. For his outstanding work and for the two incidents described above, Officer Pennaz is the Officer of the Month for March.”