

MINUTES - Community Advisory Committee

William Sam, Sr., Chairperson
Sandra Womack, Vice Chairperson
Meeting Date: August 21, 2014

Dwight Benoit
Tom LeTourneau
Alma Hodge
Ronald Bishop
Karl Duerr
Jon Reaud
Douglas Rathgeber

Dwaine Augustine
Gene Bush
Glen Johnson
Jesus Abrego
Irmalyn Thomas
Norris Batiste, III.

Call to order: A regular meeting of the Community Advisory Committee was held at **Beaumont Police Department Training Room**, 255 College Street, Beaumont, Texas on **August 21, 2014**. The meeting convened at **1:02 p.m.**

Members in attendance: Tom LeTourneau, Dwight Benoit, Douglas Rathgeber, Karl Duerr, Gene Bush, Alma Hodge, William Sam, Jesus Abrego, Jon Reaud and Sandra Womack.

Members not in attendance: Norris Batiste, Ronald Bishop, Glen Johnson, Irmalyn Thomas and Dwaine Augustine.

Police Department personnel in attendance: Captain Glenn Durst, Judi Rawls, Chief Wayne Jeffcoat, Captain Jim Clay, Chief James Singletary and Lt. Jason Plunkett.

Invocation: Douglas Rathgeber

Pledge of Allegiance

Moment of Silence

Mr. Duerr was wondering why in the Beaumont Enterprise, the Beaumont Police Department does not have a blog listed. He said that the other police departments have crime listed for their cities. Mr. Bush wanted to know what purpose it would serve for being in the paper. Mr. Duerr said that it would show the areas where most of the crime is occurring. Captain Durst said that you can go to our website and pull up calls and who was arrested.

Mr. Duerr mentioned an incident that happened a long time ago with a woman in his neighborhood that was wrongfully arrested and he wanted everyone to know that he is pro police and that the police department needs to be mindful and not arrest people without just cause.

Mr. Sam wanted to give a special thanks to Laurie Witterstaeter, Cindy Bloodsworth and Judi Rawls for all the things that we do for the Community Advisory Committee.

July Minutes: **Approved**

Chief Singletary said there was nothing major happening right now at the Police Department.

Mr. LeTourneau asked how the manpower is going. Chief Singletary said that we have 3 openings right now with a possibility of 5 by the end of the year with retirees. When he started at the police department, we were 10 to 12 officers short and now we are up to 260 total officers. He also said that we lost two minority officers to the refineries last week.

Mr. LeTourneau also brought up the issue on body cameras that can be worn to reduce officer complaints. Chief Singletary said that a lot of police departments are experimenting with the body cameras. There is also a lot to consider such as cost, storage of the video and the logistics and legalities of the video. He said that some of the body cameras are not positioned to effectively see what is going on if the person is off to the side and so a lot of audio is captured but not so much the video. He went on to mention that a lot of the officers here at the police department thought the video cameras in the vehicles were a horrible idea and now they see that it has helped officers. Captain Clay mentioned that in Ferguson that out of the 132 people that were arrested only 7 were from the community. So there is know to stand up for the community itself when that happens.

Mr. Duerr wanted everyone to know that tonight is the Citizens Police Academy. Also, he said that the committee has members that have attended this academy and wanted to know why they are not going to the Alumni meetings.

Mr. Duerr said that there are some good things that the Chief has brought to the police department, like Cindy Bloodsworth and the Cops N Kids programs and Trunk or treat. It makes the community feel good about the police department. Chief wants the committee to let the community know that the police are there for them.

Mr. Sam wanted to know if there is race relationship training for officers.

Mr. Rathgeber wanted to know how much of the community advisory is publicized.

Ms. Womack said that she used to get notices for Neighborhood meetings and if someone could forward the meeting schedule to the committee. Chief said that the neighborhood associations are always looking for speakers. Mr. Reaud suggested maybe running a story in the Examiner about our committee members and introduce ourselves to the community. He also suggested that the committee members could be on Live at 5 or a morning show. He said Mr. Sam and Ms. Womack are a great spokesman for our committee. Mr. Benoit said that we need to continue to be positive about what the committee is doing and the community sees us out there and knows who we are, we can give them positive news about the police department to make an impact on the community.

Ms. Womack said that Officer Torres and the Chief came out and spoke to her senior citizens.

New Business

Mr. Sam brought up attendance. He said that last month we had only 3 people attend and this month it is 10. Mr. Sam said that there is a need for what the committee does. He wants everyone that is not going to be able to attend that month's meeting to let someone know. Ms. Womack said that some of the committee members just do not let anyone know they are not going to be at the meetings.

Ms. Hodge said that most organizations that she is in, take off in July. Mr. LeTourneau mentioned the fact that we have discussed this before and thought that quarterly meetings would be a good idea. Judi Rawls said that the by laws does mention that you will meet monthly, but it can be changed. Ms. Womack said that we have also been missing December so we would need to add that in as well. Mr. Reaud said that several boards that he is on, shut down the entire summer and the executive board meets and goes over finances, etc. He also went on to say that an excused absence is an email. Mr. Bush said that we need to get with our City Council person that appointed us and get their approval first. Mr. Abrego wanted to make a motion to take July and December off for the year, but Mr. LeTourneau said that any motion we make now, will not be in effect until next year. A show of hands was taken, and 3 people opposed and 6 people wanted no change.

Chief Jeffcoat said that Ride a longs are an experience that you will not forget. He encouraged everyone to go on a ride a long. The request can be sent to him. Laurie Witterstaeter will send a PDF ride a long form out to the committee. Mr. Sam wanted the committee to know that we need to be going on ride a longs and making our self visible to the community.

Old Business

Goals for the Committee (Send your ideas to Sandra Womack before next meeting).

Chief Singletary is going to get Judge Gist to speak to the Committee next month.

Benediction: **Dwight Benoit**

Next Meeting: **Thursday, September 18, 2014 at 1:00 p.m.**
Location: Police Training Classroom

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at **2:22 p.m.**

Minutes Taken by: **Laurie Witterstaeter**
Administrative Assistant/Administration
Beaumont Police Department
255 College Street
Beaumont, Texas 77701

