

Public Safety Task Force
Meeting Notes
12/21/2010

Present: Sgt. Jason Malloy (NPD); John Clark (The Whaler Motel); Don Rowley (retired); Jon Zagel (Newport High School); Chief Miranda;

Absent: Doug Hunt (Umpqua Bank); Jorge Hernandez (Centro de Ayuda); Gabrielle McEntee-Wilson (Mo's Restaurants);

The meeting was opened at 1615 hours by John Clark. He summarized the minutes from the previous meeting, focusing primarily on the Citizens Survey results. He noted that it appeared most citizens were concerned with traffic related issues, e.g., drivers failing to stop at stop signs, speeding through residential areas, and other unsafe driving violations. He further noted that there were no complaints or concerns regarding security issues in the community and no complaints towards NPD. Clark encouraged everyone to read the Feasibility Study.

Chief Miranda explained case studies were compared on consolidation of agencies. The most option suggested in the study was the coordination and consolidation of only certain services for each agency, to be determined upon the particular needs of each agency, such as the consolidation of Records, purchasing, filing, training, and identification services. Currently, NPD shares its Records Management System with LCSO. LCPD and Toledo are using a different RMS. John Clark noted the overall cost savings would be minimal for consolidation at this time.

Query: Do LCPD and Toledo have their own holding facilities? Malloy explained only LCPD has a holding facility; prisoners are either detained at LCPD until the next transport is conducted, or prisoners are immediately transported to the Lincoln County Jail, depending upon the circumstances of the crime and the availability of an officer to transport.

Clark noted past training opportunities and courses by LCSO at a Rotary Club presentation, asking if NPD has participated. Malloy affirmed we have participated and have also held training that has been offered to other agencies to participate. He noted it is very difficult to schedule training because of conflicting work schedules for many officers and deputies.

It was noted by Malloy that in the past NPD and other agencies have held joint testing for new officer candidates with LCSO, TPD, and LCPD. The problem with joint testing is that each agency seeks to hire the top candidates and competition sets in. Each agency has different requirements and needs in hiring a new officer. Even lateral transfer officers receive NPD-specific training.

Chief Miranda asked the Task Force members to brainstorm ideas of what is expected of NPD.

Clark stated his main concern is staffing, and NPD should not cut anyone from its department. He further stated he saw no waste of funds allocated and used by NPD.

Don Rowley reiterated the statement to make no cuts to the department staffing, and feels NPD is not understaffed at this time. He noted how often he sees officers in patrol in residential areas and appreciates the visible presence.

Malloy asked the Task Force if they know of any other services that can be provided to the community by NPD, and if so, the current budget must be considered.

Rowley acknowledged the parking enforcement duties contracted to TCB Security is a good resource for the department. He asked if our officers respond to alarms. Malloy explained how NPD does respond to alarms, whereas LCSO will soon have a 'verified alarm response' once it is confirmed that a deputy is needed. Further, LCSO has a 98% false alarm rate and their response time can be up to 45 minutes. NPD's response time is between one and two minutes in most instances. Chief Miranda noted NPD had 58 alarms in the past month, but some were immediately cancelled by Lincom.

Query: How much time does an officer spend on each alarm call? Miranda said an officer can be tied up on an alarm call for an average of 15 minutes. Malloy noted some of the alarms received come from vacation homes; most alarms are for businesses and are usually the result of user error, entering wrong codes, or not entering the codes quickly enough.

Query: Do the schools need anything more from NPD? Zagel answered no and stated the addition of NPD's drug canine unit has been great for the schools. Random unannounced searches are conducted each month. Searches are of the lockers and bags/backpacks. People are not searched. Malloy noted the agreement contract for the canine unit is with all Lincoln County schools, but is used more in Newport due to the proximity.

Query: How accurate has the canine been in detecting drugs? Malloy answered by saying the accuracy rate is very high, and the NPD canine unit is ranked statewide by other agencies as excellent. He said the canine doesn't miss anything drug-related, and has successfully located a marijuana leaf the size of a pencil lead in a large box. Zagel added that the canine has shown strong interest in a backpack belonging to a known drug user on three separate incidents, based on the odor of marijuana kept in the backpack in the past, even though drugs were not present at the time of the search. (It was suggested to the student that he get a new backpack.) Malloy added that while we do not currently have a School Resource Officer, the NPD canine is the greatest tool for drug abuse presently used in the schools.

Chief Miranda stated NPD does not have an SRO due to budget constraints. Our SRO position was cut in 2003. The position was approved in the budget two years ago, but

was cut again before an SRO could be hired. NPD is currently understaffed by one position in the Detective division.

Query: Will a new detective will be promoted from within or hired from outside? Chief Miranda said he will decide in time, and it depends upon the budget. Due to Lt. Teem's retirement, Malloy has been appointed Acting Lieutenant, and Ken Real is Acting Sergeant. Chief Miranda noted the open position will most likely be frozen until the new budget is determined. He also said there is a strong probability one other officer will be leaving NPD, creating two open positions.

Query: Does it take one year to train a new officer? Malloy stated the average is one year--a few months less if the new officer is a lateral transfer who is already DPSST certified.

Query: What does NPD need at this moment in time? Chief Miranda stated he would like to hire an SRO and a Traffic Officer. Malloy added NPD could use two SRO's; one for the elementary school and one for the high school.

Zagel noted the need to maintain two detectives is critical.

Query: Does NPD have any Spanish-speaking officers? We do not. However, some officers have received limited training, and can speak and understand very basic Spanish.

Chief Miranda asked the Task Force to consider suggesting funding sources to the City Council; possibly a law enforcement levy to support one to three positions. Rowley noted the current state of the economy isn't favorable to bringing a levy. He stated it would be good if the school budget could help fund an SRO position, but acknowledged the schools are operating on a minimal budget as it is.

Query: Which police department has a Traffic Officer? Malloy stated he visited Coos Bay PD where they had two Traffic Officers but are now down to one. Ideally, one TO would handle traffic control and the other TO would focus on traffic crimes.

Query: Which position does NPD consider to be more critical: the SRO or the Traffic Officer? Chief Miranda stated the SRO is the more critical position to fill. Malloy stated the SRO can also be utilized in patrol during the summer months when school is not in session and could be used as a Traffic Officer as well.

Query: Would the SRO spend all of the time at the school? Zagel noted that in the past the SRO had an office at the middle school and spent his work day at the school. Malloy stated the SRO would handle all incidents and crimes that are school related.

Chief Miranda noted negotiations will begin after the first of the year. Malloy stated we will need new vehicles soon, as the maintenance and wear and tear on our current vehicles is quite expensive. The Tahoes are more cost effective and are pursuit-rated.

Zagel suggested waiting until the whole Task Force committee members are present in January to discuss more about these issues and make recommendations. Chief Miranda said he would like to have a written recommendation and a report from the Task Force to present to City Council before the next budget talks begin.

Chief Miranda asked if everyone thought that another survey conducted of the citizens be conducted. The first survey was done six years ago. It could be sent out again in a water bill. The cost is minimal and the last time the return rate was 11%. He emphasized the value of the survey results. It was agreed that another survey would be good.

Chief Miranda noted the reason for moving the Task Force meetings from the NPD conference room to the City Hall conference room is that it is a public meeting, and should be made available for anyone to attend.

The meeting adjourned at 1655 hours.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 11, 2011 at 1600 hours.