

**NASHVILLE TOWN COUNCIL
SAFETY BOARD MEETING
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2009**

ATTENDANCE – Council members present – President Roger Kelso, Vice-President Robert Kirlin, Councilmember Dale Cassiday, Councilmember Charles B. King and Councilmember Arthur Omberg. Also in attendance –Town Marshal Jack Dorsett, Chief Deputy Marshal Stephanie Loerzel and Clerk-Treasurer Brenda Young.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

1) CALL TO ORDER by President Kelso at 7:30pm

2) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3) ROLL CALL – by Clerk-Treasurer Young

4) POLICE DEPARTMENT PLANNING

President Kelso clarified the meeting is a meeting of the Nashville Town Council acting as the Safety Board. He explained the that meeting purpose is to take comment from Council, staff and/or the public on ideas or concepts for improvements to the Police Department. President Kelso asked if Council had any opening comments.

Vice-President Kirlin advised he did not have any comments at this point but would like to hear from the public on how to make the police force better. Councilmember King agreed that he too would like to wait until later to comment.

Town Marshal Dorsett commented the way to make the police department better is to increase the pay. They have hired people; they go to the academy and then move on to another police department.

President Kelso then opened up the meeting for public comment. Matt Stark, principal of Brown County High School spoke and advised that the Nashville Police Department has been a great group to work with as far as being responsive, not only responding to criminal activity but they have been great to work with the kids to build positive relationships. Mr. Stark added that some of the officers have even worked security for some of the schools games and this too has helped to build rapport with the kids as well.

Councilmember Cassiday asked Mr. Stark if the school had any formal programs with the police force at this time. Mr. Stark advised there are no formal programs at this time but there have been grants over the years for things such as a police officers joining students for lunch. Councilmember Cassiday asked Mr. Stark or Town Marshal Dorsett to expound about “crack alley”.

Town Marshal Dorsett advised that he has not personally received a complaint of kids smoking crack or in possession of crack in the alley and he is in that alley every day, several times a day. He does know that some of the officers have received complaints of drug use in the alley.

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Officer Griggs believes the name "crack alley" comes from years past, but these days most of the students are gone from this area by 3:30pm. Mr. Stark advised he believes that this activity goes on in many different places on occasion but much less than ever before.

Vice-President Kirlin asked if the police department is still directing traffic when school gets let out. Mr. Stark advised only during heavy congested times. Town Marshal Dorsett reported they direct traffic at the school from September up until November about 85% of the time and the rest of the year not as much. Chief Deputy Marshal Loerzel noted there is usually only one officer on duty at that time and they have been asked to do a lot of things at the time the busses are leaving the school and it makes it difficult to be in all those places at once.

Vice-President Kirlin questioned Mr. Stark about hiring the school's own traffic directors. Mr. Stark reported the school corporation is already looking to cut positions and things already. One of the economical moves by the school system was to install a camera system throughout the buildings as opposed to an officer.

Town Marshal Dorsett commented that the police department is down two officers. The department has four full time officers and one part-time officer.

Resident David Martin spoke about noise from vehicles, primarily motorcycles.

Vice-President Kirlin noted that Town Marshal Dorsett believes the high turnover rate in the police department is due to the pay and asked if anyone in the audience had a comment about turnover in general. Resident Terry West asked for the letter he submitted to the Council be read aloud. Councilmember Omberg read the letter Mr. West had written. Councilmember Omberg then asked the police officers if there is a morale problem. Chief Deputy Marshal Loerzel and Officer Seastrom both answered yes. Discussion.

Councilmember Omberg asked about the officer's vests and if some are outdated. Town Marshal Dorsett commented that each officer gets a brand new vest when they join the force. He further noted that no one has said anything to him about vests not fitting. The only person that has said anything to him is Officer Griggs because he is on a diet and they would get him new uniforms when he gets down to his desired weight.

Vice-President Kirlin asked Town Marshal Dorsett if he is happy with the amount of foot patrol he is getting from the department. Town Marshal Dorsett answered no. This might be his fault because he is not out there with them 24 hours a day to make sure they are doing it. Town Marshal Dorsett commented that sometimes when the officers put down foot patrol on their logs they are not doing the foot patrol when they say they are. Vice-President Kirlin asked what Town Marshal Dorsett does about that situation. Town Marshal Dorsett explained he tells them about it and it has been brought up in meetings.

Chief Deputy Marshal Loerzel interjected that she feels like Town Marshal Dorsett is calling the officers liars and that is just not right. She believes it is disrespectful to the officers and to the Council for saying the officers are lying on their work logs. Town Marshal Dorsett said that he is sorry if he is being disrespectful to the officers but he has checked on them and noted some have not been doing the foot patrol.

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Chief Deputy Marshal Loerzel advised that the vest issues have been brought up several times. Two of the officers have vests that do not fit and three officers have vests over five years old. She advised the vests expire between three and five years and need to be replaced. She advised all the officers need new vests, their video equipment is not sufficient, they need new digital cameras, new portable tests. Councilmember King asked how much new vests cost. Chief Deputy Marshal Loerzel reported the vests similar to what they currently have are approximately \$1000.00 a piece. Councilmember Omberg commented if they found the money to buy two new vehicles two years ago, they can find money for vests and equipment but they need to know about the equipment. He further noted there will not be any retaliation for speaking up.

Chief Deputy Marshal Loerzel added as far as the vests, it states in their SOPs that night time officers are required to wear them and since they are required to wear them, those vests should fit. Discussion.

Vice-President Kirlin asked Town Marshal Dorsett on a scale of one to ten regarding the police department's equipment, where would he rate it. Town Marshal Dorsett reported their equipment is not very good and ranked the equipment at about a four. When questioned by the Council, some of the officers ranked the equipment even lower.

Councilmember King asked about the radios in the police cars. Town Marshal Dorsett advised the car radios are pretty good. As for the hand held radios, they could probably use some new ones.

Councilmember King asked about the radar equipment. Officer Seastrom noted he and another officer bought their own radar and the Marshal provided handhelds. Council asked why they purchased the equipment and Officer Seastrom noted they needed the equipment to do their jobs so they bought it. Town Marshal Dorsett noted the officers bought mobile radar units on-line with their own money. The department paid for the certification of the equipment.

Councilmember King asked about the quality of the video equipment. Town Marshal Dorsett believed the in-car videos to be in good shape. Tammy Fish of the Prosecutor's Office commented that the quality of the in-car videos is not good; the videos she receives from the department are of poor quality or no audio. Council asked how many in-car videos they need and if they had looked at filing for grants. Town Marshal Dorsett reported the only grant he has applied for in the last year is a school safety officer and they did not get that grant.

Council asked about firearms. Town Marshal Dorsett noted their weapons are good. Councilmember King remembered the weapons had been replaced about five or six years ago. Chief Deputy Marshal Loerzel advised they need new shotguns, one for each officer. President Kelso asked about training in general, how many hours do they need a year. Town Marshal Dorsett noted they need 24 hours of training a year. Chief Deputy Marshal Loerzel noted all the officers are up to date on training at this time.

Councilmember King asked about the status of the police cars. Reserve Officer Galm advised the radio in the reserve car does not work and he does not feel safe driving the reserve vehicle. He noted he was instructed by Chief Deputy Marshal Loerzel not to drive the reserve car anymore due to safety issues with the vehicle. Town Marshal Dorsett advised they do not have a reserve car that is useable, but they do have an extra vehicle the reserves may use.

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Business owner Christopher Dick commented that he owns four shops in town and the officers have been an enormous help. They make him feel safe and he has seen the officers on foot patrol and he appreciates them being available to him.

President Kelso asked if there was anything else equipment wise that they needed. Officer Seastrom commented that a uniform allowance would be nice. Town Marshal Dorsett advised that the officers used to get \$600 a year in a uniform allowance but since they were short on money that is one of the things that was cut out of the budget. Vice-President Kirlin asked what they can spend the drug money on. Town Marshal Dorsett said he could buy equipment and he believes they have a little over \$2,000.00 in this fund.

President Kelso commented that as far as the vehicle stuff, they should just ask for a memo for the next Council meeting as to what the cost of equipment would be, what they can fund locally and what they need to find other sources of funding. Chief Deputy Marshal Loerzel will find out if there are grants available for vests. President Kelso clarified the Council wants a memo from the police department by the next Council meeting on February 19, 2009 that basically outlines the equipment needs, best estimate of cost, what can be funded out of the current budget or current funds on hand and what needs to be funded outside of that. Council agreed that they need to get the vest issue taken care of fairly quickly. Town Marshal Dorsett explained that he did not know about Officer Seastrom's vest not fitting.

Vice-President Kirlin apologized to the public, he is an elected official sitting on the Safety Board and he was not aware the Police Department's equipment was rated at a four. To him public safety is number one in this community, but if they don't know the problems they can't fix them. Now that the Council knows the issues, they can fix them.

Mrs. Dorsett addressed the Council and noted that her husband has spent hours and hours trying to figure out how the officers can have a better living with all the budget cuts required. They cannot spend what is not in the budget. Councilmember Omberg advised they need to know what is needed by the department. Councilmember Cassidy commented they cannot fix the past but they can fix the future.

The Council was asked if the two open police department positions would be filled. President Kelso answered that this was up in the air at the moment. A question of how they could cover all shifts with only four full-time officers. Council agreed that was a good comment.

Officer Griggs would like to make more money. Officer Robinson spoke to the Council and noted this is his eleventh or twelfth year with the Town. He further noted that he and Town Marshal Dorsett have worked together for over thirty years, he considers him a friend but disagrees with him regarding foot patrol and he did not put anything on his log that was not the truth.

Officer Robinson noted on April 16th, 2009 he will begin his fortieth year in Law Enforcement. He explained all the things he and the other officers do and wished the Council would praise them a little bit every now and then. He believes they need to take their time in hiring another police officer so they get an officer to stay. Officer Robinson advised that people lead by example and when Town Marshal Dorsett starts taking a shift and works the same hours the other officers work he will get that respect. President Kelso noted if Officer Robinson came to the Council meetings a little more often, he would

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hear that they do say something nice about the Police Department. Council reiterated their door is always open for anyone to come to the meetings.

Chief Deputy Marshal Loerzel asked about replacing Officer Long's position or what would happen with the money budgeted for that position. President Kelso commented that they would probably not be any closer to that issue at this meeting since this meeting was more of an informational gathering meeting. Town Marshal Dorsett noted it takes about \$2,500 to equip one officer.

Vice-President Kirlin asked what the interview process is for the Police Department. Town Marshal Dorsett advised almost everyone on the department is involved in the process and they always ask the Council.

Brown County Sherriff's Deputy Chad Williams addressed the Council concerning night shift; asking if Town officers can come out and assist them without being reprimanded for going out of their area or above their mileage. Discussion. President Kelso clarified the Council did not want the Town officers going outside their area for non-emergency or non-requested calls.

Vice-President Kirlin asked about the mileage restriction. Officer Seastrom noted they are restricted to fifty miles per shift. Town Marshal Dorsett advised this was dictated by Council when they had the gas crunch. Officer Seastrom believes to do a proper patrol of all the subdivisions and alleys they would drive more than fifty miles in one shift. Discussion. Council suggested taking an average of miles for a month and separate out the extra out of town responses and let the Council know what those numbers are and they will help the department with this.

Chief Deputy Marshal Loerzel asked Clerk-Treasurer Young about Officer Robinson being able to cover shifts while Town Marshal Dorsett is on medical leave. Clerk-Treasurer Young reported she spoke with Charlie Pride of the State Board of Accounts to find out if Officer Robinson could work more hours than the part-time hours he is authorized to work. Mr. Pride informed her that they fall under the 171 hour, 28 day cycle that they have. Therefore it would not be a problem for Officer Robinson to work more hours as long as he stayed under 171 hours in a 28 day cycle. Councilmember Omberg asked Town Marshal Dorsett if he notified the Council that he is on a leave of absence. He answered that he told Clerk-Treasurer Young but did not give her a written note.

President Kelso asked if they have explored another part-time person to help during this time. Councilmember Omberg suggested they direct Clerk-Treasurer Young to allow a part-time officer to be hired as soon as possible that they can use to fill the gap for the next couple of weeks. The money would come from the money budgeted for the officer that has resigned. President Kelso commented that the Police Department is a professional staff and the Council expects the department to bring to the Council solutions to issues that they have. He is very proud of this Police Department but they need to bring problems and solutions to the Council so they can all work together.

Resident Billy Salmon spoke to the Council regarding problems with cars and trucks double parked in the area of 232 West Main Street. He has spoken with Town Marshal Dorsett and Town Administration several times about these vehicles. He advised that something must have changed since they have finally moved the vehicles.

Mr. Salmon noted he is the President of the Building Corporation of the Town Hall. There was a set of architectural plans for the building; the building was built according to those plans. Mr. Salmon

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commented that lattice work has been put up on the north side of the building, this was not on the plans. This area may be used as a smoking porch and he does not believe officers in uniform should be seen smoking. Councilmember Cassiday advised that the lattice work was requested by a member of the public. Mr. Salmon noted this was not brought before the Building Corporation and he feels it does not add any beauty to the structure.

Vice-President Kirlin asked if any of the trucks that were parked illegally received any tickets. Officer Griggs advised he tagged a dump truck three times total but it was moved within seventy-two hours therefore he doesn't have any legal authority to tow it. Discussion. Mr. Salmon also reported that this developer has not cleaned the snow off the sidewalks and he has mentioned this to Chief Administrator Carr.

Mr. Salmon added that marshals of any community have a position to look after their personnel. If they need whatever then he would think the marshal would want to do that. Mr. Dick commented as a member of this community that he feels that they are doing an injustice to ourselves by having the town's officers going around in poor equipment, being underpaid and overworked.

ADJOURNMENT

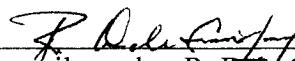
With no further comments from the audience Vice-President Kirlin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. President Kelso adjourned the meeting at 9:02pm.


Clerk-Treasurer Brenda Young

President Roger Kelso



Vice-President Robert Kirlin



Councilmember R. Dale Cassiday



Councilmember Charles B. King

Councilmember Arthur Omberg