

Fresno Police Department Chief's Advisory Board Minutes

May 27, 2010

Present: Kamal Abu-Shamsieh, Roz Clark, Morgan Doizaki, Sharon Biswell (for Judy Holm), Lynn Ikeda, Elias Loera, Jesse McDonald Jr., Carol Mills, Jim Poptanich, Enrique Reade, Margarita Rocha, Bill Simon, Don Weaver, Bob Willis

Absent: Dee Berry, Doug Broten, David Cowin, Paula Farris, Harry Gill, Pamela Kallsen, Edward Moreno, Rebeca Rangel, Luke Raughley, Kenneth J Ryan,

Guests: Chief Jerry Dyer, Deputy Chief Patrick Farmer, Lt. Don Gross, Sgt. Mindy Casto, Ofc. John Hall, Ofc. Martin van Overbeek

Call to Order:

The meeting, held in the City Hall Annex Training Room, was called to order at 5:30 pm.

Minutes:

Minutes from March 25th were approved without correction.

Opening Remarks:

None

Agenda Items:

Gang Operation

Chief Dyer: Discussed a violent weekend five weeks prior where five people were shot and three people were killed. This prompted a gang operation with an average of 50+ officers per night focusing on gang related crimes. More than ½ of the arrests made were for felony violations and as a result, about 30 guns were taken off of the street. There was not a gang related homicide for the past 31 days until last night. Five hours later there was a retaliation shooting. For this reason, the gang operation will continue to try and suppress the violence until Operation Cease Fire gets fully operational. The focus continues to be on those members that are the most active, violent, and influential.

Started a community meeting last night on the West Side to get feedback and introduce the Cease Fire Operation so there will be no surprises when these individuals are targeted. Advised there will be another meeting on June 2nd at the Westside Church.

Loera: Mentioned the Black Mombas biker gang and their involvement of the prostitutes working Belmont Ave. This is of concern because his church is in the Belmont/Fourth area. Has the Department seen an increase in African American gangs activities in this area?

Chief Dyer: We have seen an increase in pimping & prostituting city-wide. It is believed that the homicide the night prior was related to pimping. There are undercover officers working this area because some of the prostitutes are young girls that are brought in from out of state.

Rocha: Advised that her agency (Centro La Familia) may be contacted for assistance with restraining orders for those victims affected by human trafficking and prostitution. She added that her agency has also seen an increase in domestic violence and child abuse cases and it is thought to be related to national economics and its effect on the family.

Chief Dyer: Some people that have been affected by the bad economy have resorted to other illegal occupations to make ends meet. Last week the Department conducted a domestic violence operation where a number of people were arrested. Crime Stoppers has also been working on an awareness campaign to highlight the affect it has on children as well. Additional information can be obtained from Lt David Newton of the Family Justice Bureau.

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Doizaki: Has Operation Cease Fire Started?

Chief Dyer: Researchers have begun analyzing data to identify the most active, violent, and influential members of these gangs. Community meetings have already started and the Department will start the call-in phase of the operation sometime in July. Yesterday, a county-wide partnership with State Parole was coordinated where 120 parole searches were conducted. Of those, 61 parolees were arrested, 28 of whom were gang members, and three of them were wearing GPS ankle monitors. Those arrested were loaded on a bus and taken straight to Wasco, bypassing the county jail. This avoided burdening our local criminal justice system with handling these offenders.

Loera: Will the Department be doing a 'Cash for Guns' campaign?

Chief Dyer: The Department has in the past and it was very successful. Cash was in the form of Target gift cards and they ran out of money in the first hour and a half. \$30,000 in sponsorship was used last time to purchase gift cards.

Loera: Will they do it again if you could find the sponsorship?

Chief Dyer: Yes, we would. The guns recovered are checked for ballistics and possible evidentiary value. The ones that aren't needed as evidence are cut up and destroyed unless there is some historical value to the firearm. Those are rendered inoperative and turned over to the Veterans Memorial Museum. Some agencies sell the guns to firearms dealers to make money but we will not.

Clark: Commented on the established gang tips line at 621-GANGS.

Budget Overview

Chief Dyer: Spoke on the forced reduction of services as a result of the budget shortfalls. Explained that over an 18 month period, the Department went from 77 cadets to zero and from 64 community service officers to 15. With these reductions, there is no one left to handle certain calls for service when officers need to respond to life threatening calls. This leaves the options of completing a telephonic report, e-reporting, or no one handling it at all. As a result, certain property crimes statistics are down, most likely due to the reporting of these crimes being down. The Department is looking at training Citizens On Patrol to respond to certain calls to take reports and collect evidence. Believes that crime prevention is one the keys to driving down crime rates.

Lt Gross: Spoke on CrimeView meetings and there function to disseminate current crime trend data from the most recent 28 day period, district by district. With this data, district commanders can identify hot spots and where to direct police resources within their district. The Department is researching the ability to push out this data to the community via the Internet and a neighborhood notification system. This system would have the ability to send out notifications of crime trends within your area via text message and email for those citizens that sign up for free.

Chief Dyer: The Department will be spending a lot of energy on prevention and awareness, and focusing on core areas within the city where a majority of crimes are occurring. Once identified, volunteer resources such as Citizens on Patrol and reserve officers, will be strategically placed within the core during the hours of the most criminal activity. We have seen success with the use of video policing cameras, and hope to expand that with volunteer resources.

We can no longer be all things to all people, and need to give back the responsibility to citizens for activities that are not a police function.

Potanich: Mayor has been pushing volunteerism. Can a list be provided to the Mayor's Office of needs and jobs where volunteers could be used within the Department without specialized training?

Lt Gross: There is almost nothing that can be done for the Police Department that does not require some form of specialized training. Additionally, persons would need a background check due to confidentiality and trust issues with the information available to volunteers.

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Chief Dyer: Department will begin utilizing volunteers in needed areas such as citation and data entry. A pilot training program has started using 12 of the 77 Citizen's on Patrol members. These members will be receiving training in report writing, handling vehicle burglaries/vandalisms, evidence collection, and interviewing techniques. This will require a minimum of 120 hours of training.

MacDonald: Will the Mayor allow you to tap the City's reserve funds to help with the budget?

Chief Dyer: The Mayor did allow for use of some of the reserve monies to be used for the early retirement incentive for about 30 employees. The monies will cover the incentive, any vacation time cash out, and 18 months of unemployment benefits.

Loera: Is there anything you can do to generate revenue?

Chief Dyer: Yes, the Department generates about \$3.8 million in vehicle impound fees, another \$800,000 in tow franchise fees, and \$1.8 million in citation revenue that goes straight to the City general fund. False alarm billings for businesses account for nearly \$400,000 in revenue and about \$650,000 in asset forfeiture is received annually.

Loera: Why don't you just raise your rates?

Chief Dyer: In order to raise any rates, an independent firm must come in and do an assessment of the costs involved. If the cost is more that what we currently charge, the fee can be adjusted. The fees can only be for actual costs incurred and the Department is not allowed to make a profit.

General discussion ensued about tow company fees, lien sales, and the pros/cons of the feasibility of the Department operating its own tow yard.

Mills: Is there information available on the new district lines for shifting from five districts to four?

Chief Dyer: This is still in progress, but there is an anticipated savings of up to \$1.2 million in facility, vehicle, and personnel costs with the shift from five to four districts. Gave an update on the new district station progress, and process of drawing the new district boundaries.

Poptanich: Commented on recent Skywatch ride-a-long.

Chief Dyer: Unfortunately with budget cuts, the Department will be losing the Chief Pilot and a mechanic.

ROUND TABLE:

Lt Gross: Polled the group regarding a change in dates for the next meeting. All agreed to shift the next meeting back one week to Thursday, August 5th to accommodate schedule conflicts.

Clark: How's the enforcement of pan handling on median island coming along?

Deputy Chief Farmer: Spoke on the progress.

Reade: Mentioned "Power Talk" radio talk show on KIRV 1510 AM on Mon/Wed/Fri from 5:30 to 7pm which he co-hosts with Gene G. Gonzales.

Closing Remarks:

None

Adjourn:

Meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Next Meeting:

***** Moved to August 5th, 2010