

Fresno Police Department Chief's Advisory Board Minutes

July 28th, 2011

- Present Kevin Assemi, Roz Clark, Judy Holm, Lynn Ikeda, Pamela Kallsen, Jesse McDonald Jr., Carol Mills, Jim Poptanich, Margarita Rocha, Kenneth Ryan, Bill Simon(Cathy Mitchell for Bill Simon), Enrique Reade.
- Absent Dough Broten, David Cowin, Paula Farris, Harry Gill, Blair Looney, Elias Loera, Rebecca Rangel, Luke Raughley, Don Weaver, Bob Willis.
- Guests Chief Jerry Dyer, Deputy Chief Keith Foster, Lt. Don Gross, Sergeant Jaime Rios, Sergeant Tim Tietjen.

Call to Order

The meeting, held in the City Hall Annex Room 210, was called to order at 5:32 pm.

Minutes

Minutes from May 26th, 2011, were approved without correction.

Opening Remarks

Chief Dyer – Announced he has retired, but will be interim Chief until the position is filled. He also discussed the problem of auto theft plaguing the City. Dyer introduced Sergeant Tim Tietjen of the CCATT Unit as the guest speaker.

Auto Theft

Chief Dyer – 1994 was the highest year of auto theft in the City of Fresno, over 13,000 cars stolen. 2009 was the lowest year, 2,348 cars stolen. City noticed a disturbing trend in numbers going up in 2010. Downsizing of the jail caused for prolific auto thieves being released on a regular basis, caused numbers to rise by 40%. In 2011 numbers continued to grow, at one time during this year the City was at 60% auto theft increase, amounted to twenty cars per day being stolen in the City of Fresno. Sgt. Tietjen and the Career Criminal Auto Theft Team (CCATT) began targeting prolific auto thieves, CCATT is comprised of one sergeant and seven officers. Spoke highly of Tietjen and his team and commended them for their efforts in the reduction of auto theft.

Tietjen – Commented that helping citizens in recovering their vehicles is very rewarding for all members of his team. Auto thieves are frequently violent criminals and are often involved in the sales of handguns and narcotics. CCATT investigates violent crimes that most car thieves are committing in the City in addition to stealing cars. One example is a woman who admitted stealing approximately 27 cars from a car lot using a fake identification. In addition to the car thefts, she was charged with various charges of I.D. theft. The arrest also led to the handgun and narcotics violations. Cases are easier to prosecute when the DA has all the evidence, which includes capturing video of auto thieves.

Reade – How old was this woman?

Tietjen – She was 28 years old. Bad guys are starting to understand that we mean business and we are coming after them from different directions. Work for a great Chief who supports the Unit and allows officers to think outside the box. We are seeing auto theft numbers come down and car thieves are not re-offending as much as they used to. Street level and long term criminal investigations are occurring simultaneously. Young gang members are stealing the cars and selling them to shop-chops. Car components are being sold on Craigslist and out of garages.

Clark – How fast do you think they are stealing these cars?

Tietjen – Real fast! It was found that some auto theft crews were stealing 7-10 cars per week. Gang members are being locked up on gang enhancements.

Reade – Chief, this what you are going to do after you're retired?

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Chief Dyer – “I’m opening up a jail.”

Clark – What percentage of the cars stolen have that element factor and what percentage is for joy riding or just to get somewhere?

Tietjen – Most car thieves now are gang members of some type and it’s all about business. Most cars are stolen to commit other crimes such as home burglaries or used for some type of financial gain.

Reade – Is this going on with motorcycles too?

Tietjen – We have a small motorcycle problem, but not a high percentage. Motorcycles are very easy to steal, but not a big problem yet.

Clark – Number one complaint in neighborhood watch meetings is auto theft.

Tietjen – Most prolific auto thief in the City will not come back because he will be arrested the minute he steps back in Fresno.

Reade – Do you have people that are not officers, but are helping with the auto theft problem?

Tietjen – All undercover officers are Fresno PD Officers, but we receive helpful tips from the Community all the time.

Chief Dyer – Most prolific car thief had 16 early jail releases. Department is working on arraignment beds with Madera so car thieves are kept for at least 48 hours and be arraigned before a judge.

Reade – Asked if Boot Camp facility can be used to house auto thieves.

Chief Dyer – Commented that Boot Camp would not be cost effective.

Clark – Can citizens who report car thieves remain anonymous?

Tietjen- Yes they can.

Chief Dyer – Goal is to have less than 9 cars stolen per day in the City. We are trying feverishly to get to that number. We are making progress and during a fourteen day period this year we were at the under 9 mark.

DC Farmer – Discuss preventative measures against auto theft.

Tietjen – Kill switches and car clubs work well to protect your vehicle against car thieves.

Ryan – Asked if local car thieves had any connection to organized crime.

Tietjen – There are some crews working with organized crime.

Reade – Are they catching stolen cars driving across the border?

Tietjen – They are catching some, but many get away due to cars not being reported in a timely manner. US border agents and the Mexican authorities are working together, but are not having a high impact.

Operation Reveal

Chief Dyer – Spoke about increase of prostitution in the City leading to launch of Operation Reveal. Prostitution is not victimless crime. Prostitution impacts our society, neighborhoods, and our families. There are also many other crimes associated with prostitution such as rape, assault, drugs and weapons offenses. Human trafficking is also prevalent and many young women are being exploited. Reserve officers are shadowing prostitutes in an effort to take away their business. Vice officers are also being utilized for undercover operations. Pimps are being targeted along with those individuals involved with human trafficking. A City Attorney is being assigned to prosecute the cases under a muni-code called, “Loitering for the Purpose of Prostitution.” A federal prosecutor will also be used to prosecute those cases needing federal attention.

Chief Dyer – Most important aspect is to reveal the identity of the “Jons.” Operation is designed to attack the prostitute, which is the supply, then we attack the “Jon”, which is the demand. City Attorney prosecuting the cases provides the city with control in prosecution. Another aspect is

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providing the offenders with the opportunity to understand the dangers. Program called "Prostitution Abatement Rehabilitation" allows offenders the opportunity to attend an eight hour class and understand the dangers associated with prostitution. Department is partnering with Marjoree Mason Center and EOC to be provide services to those individuals trapped in the life of prostitution. Offenders pay \$500 to attend "Prostitution Abatement Rehabilitation" class.

Holm – Asked about human trafficking, what happens to them?

Chief Dyer – They receive counseling at Marjoree Mason Center and BOC. They are provided with an avenue of escape. Other issue is massage parlors. Parlors are charging extra for sex and the activity has become quite a problem in the City. Channel 30 completed a two part series on these parlors which really exposed the problem. The media attention created an immediate impact and caused many parlors to obtain licensing.

CALEA Accreditation

Chief Dyer – Chief and other Department members are headed to Cincinnati for CALEA re-accreditation. The Department is being considered for accreditation with "Excellence." Chief will meet before the CALEA panel to address any concerns.

Chief Dyer Retirement

Chief Dyer – We cannot afford to lose momentum as an agency. We want to put together strategies to ensure our violent crime and auto theft numbers are down. There is also a need to restructure the Department due to vacancies, possible downsize of special units. We have identified top issues in the Department, now we are developing solutions and teams to address those issues. We are looking at responding once again to auto thefts and vehicle burglaries in our City.

Closing Remarks

None

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Next Meeting

September 22, 2011

Future Meetings (tentatively scheduled)

September 22, 2011

November 17, 2011