



## **MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION**

**Held Monday, April 19, 1999, For the purpose of reviewing the public safety sections of the proposed budget.**

The meeting began at 8:15 p.m. It was held in the Council Room of the Municipal Building.

**PRESENT WERE:** Council members Edward V.J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts, Alan Turnbull and Mayor Judith F. Davis.

**STAFF PRESENT WERE:** Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager; David E. Moran, City Clerk; Bo Ferguson, Senior Management Analyst; Jeff Williams, City Treasurer; James Craze, Police Chief; Thomas Kemp, Mike Craddock and Dan O'Neil, Police Lieutenants; Jim Parker, Police Sergeant; John Rogers, Police Officer and FOP President

**ALSO PRESENT WERE:** Diane Oberg, News Review; Jay Remenick, Fire Department

Mr. Remenick began by noting his desire that the fire department needed a complete sprinkler system and up to date alarm system as part of the fire house renovation. He distributed an updated sheet outlining the need for an additional \$82,000 for this work and requested that Council fund the additional amount. Mr. Remenick stressed he did not want to piecemeal the project.

Mr. Putens asked if Mr. Remenick had contacted the County for funding. Mr. Remenick responded that the County did not have any funding.

Mr. Roberts asked about the refinishing floor project. Mr. Remenick responded that the floor was cracking, holds moisture and had suffered from oil seepage. The refinishing project would skim off a layer of concrete, spread a new layer and put on a finishing layer.

Mr. McLaughlin asked about the time schedule. Mr. Remenick responded that the project was on schedule. Mayor Davis asked about the ambulance. Mr. Remenick responded that the County had proposed taking 25% of the Section 508 money back for County funding, but there was still a commitment to fund the ambulance.

Mr. McLaughlin asked for authorization to contact Council Member Scott's office and request help. Council agreed that it was OK.

Chief Craze presented a statistical overview of crime in Greenbelt. He noted that crime was up 2.5%, largely due to auto theft and arrest rates are down. He provided a breakdown on crimes based on sections of the city.

Next, the Chief spoke about the department's accomplishments. He noted that 4 new officers were being hired due to grants. Chief Craze noted other grants that the department had received including grants for laptops and bullet proof vests.

Chief Craze stressed the success of the Crisis Intervention program, School Resource Officer Program, and Drop-In Program, Watch-It Car Program, and Citizens Police Academy.

Next, Chief Craze outlined the challenges for the upcoming year. He noted there had been vendor problems with Streetgard, the department's new computer software. He believed the city was 4 months behind. He also noted that the Maryland State Police had put a hold on access to their computer system due to security concerns. The Chief referenced a meeting with Stuart Sims, Secretary of Public Safety, and hoped this access problem would be resolved soon.

In response to concerns raised about lack of police visibility, Chief Craze reported that vacancies due to injuries, training and leave usage were a significant problem in the department and they had an affect on assignments. He noted the reestablishment of the street crimes unit. The Chief suggested a special overtime amount for bike patrols might increase their presence.

Mr. Roberts suggested a special rate of pay for bike patrol and that it be a full-time program. Chief Craze stated that this would cause a problem with other specialties.

Mr. Putens asked about off-duty responses. Chief Craze distributed a hand-out showing 698 responses, but noted that this was probably low because officers were not reporting responses. Next, Chief Craze discussed Roosevelt Center. He noted that officers were being asked to make more personal contact with businesses. He also suggested feeding the new Roosevelt Center security cameras into cable channel B-10.

Mr. Putens asked about other sites for video cameras. The Chief responded that maybe the overpass, but indicated that he would have check with his staff to determine the best locations.

Chief Craze noted that he explained that he had attended a meeting with Greenbriar and they had expressed an interest in a public/private partnership.

Several Greenbriar residents spoke. Ms. Angeline Butler believed a community based officer would be beneficial because he would know the community. Mr. Lawrence Noda noted the cost compared favorably with what Greenbriar was currently paying for a private security service.

Mr. Putens liked the program, but it bothered him that Greenbriar had to pay. He hoped the approach could be expanded to Windsor Green and Hunting Ridge. Mayor Davis also liked the program, but noted that the city would have to fund the position when the grant runs out.

Mr. Noda expressed concern that the officer could be pulled to other priority areas, and also about the officer's schedule. Mayor Davis asked about disadvantages. Chief Craze responded that this was policing for the communities that could afford it.

Mr. Roberts expressed concern about special arrangements in certain parts of the city. He also expressed concern that the residents already paid taxes. Mr. Noda noted that the community was already paying for private security. Mr. Putens responded that some smaller organizations could not afford the funding, but liked the idea of an officer that would get to know the community. Mr. Putens was bothered by the idea that residents had to pay additional monies.

Mr. Turnbull expressed concern about providing extra services to neighborhoods willing to pay for them. He wanted the community to hold the city accountable to provide adequate police service.

Sheldon Goldberg asked about how the program would work. Mr. McLaughlin indicated that COPS grants would cover about 50% of the total cost and the city/Greenbriar would have to come up with the other 50% for the first three years. Dorothy Pyles stated that the city didn't have enough officers.

Mr. Roberts wanted to make sure that this was a positive situation and wanted to make sure that the rest of the community would support it. He thought hard feelings might be generated. Ms. Butler stressed happiness with the current Police service. John Lynch believed it was in their community's best interest to have an officer that knows their community. Mr. Noda invited Mr. Roberts and Mr. Turnbull to the next Greenbriar Board meeting.

Mr. Turnbull stressed that the city not go down a path that makes people feel like they are not getting their fair share of the service. Arlene Speigelman stated that this was a pilot project that would get us closer to community policing.

Mayor Davis thanked the Greenbriar community for coming up with this idea.

Next, Chief Craze discussed looking at civilianization. He expressed a desire to study the concept and indicated he was not fully supportive of it.

Next, the Chief discussed consolidation with the County police. Mr. Putens and Ms. Davis expressed opposition to this idea. Mr. Roberts asked about how this would be paid for. Mr. Moran and Mr. Williams stated that it was likely the tax differential would be reduced.

Under Animal Control, Mr. Roberts asked if we could hire another person. Chief Craze noted that Public Works personnel were being paid overtime for picking up dead animals. Mr. McLaughlin stated that the County had been covering the city and city had not received complaints so far. Mr. Turnbull noted that he had been receiving complaints.

Mr. Putens asked about unfunded requests. Chief Craze presented the list of unmet needs.

The meeting ended at 11:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

David E. Moran, CMC  
City Clerk