

May 1, 2007

To: Honorable Mayor Gayle McLaughlin
Members of the City Council

From: Meeting of the Public Safety and Public Services Standing Committee

SUBJECT: SUMMARY
Meeting of the Public Safety and Public Services Standing Committee
Thursday, April 5, 2007 at 10:34 a.m.

Present: Chair Marquez and Members Bates, Sandhu, and Thurmond

Absent: None

Discuss and appoint a chairperson to the Public Safety and Public Services Standing Committee.

- Corky Booze stated he would like to nominate Councilmember Bates as Chairperson to the Public Safety and Public Services Standing Committee.
- Chair Marquez stated he appreciated Mr. Booze's nomination, but it is a prerogative of the committee to make nominations and vote on it.
- Councilmember Thurmond stated any Committee member interested in being the Chair should be given an opportunity to speak before we take a vote.
- Councilmember Bates stated he would accept the position of Vice Chair. He also stated that there should be a policy stating that the officers are nominated and elected immediately after the Mayor has established the standing committee.
- A motion was made by Councilmember Bates, seconded by Councilmember Thurmond, to reappoint Councilmember Marquez as Chairperson to the Public Safety and Public Services Standing Committee. A substitute motion was made by Councilmember Thurmond, to hold the item over to the next Public Safety and Public Services Standing Committee Meeting.

OUTCOME:

On motion of Councilmember Bates, seconded by Councilmember Thurmond, reappointed Councilmember Marquez as Chairperson to the Public Safety and Public Services Standing Committee.

On motion of Councilmember Thurmond, seconded by Councilmember Sandhu, appointed Councilmember Bates as Vice Chairperson to the Public Safety and Public Services Standing Committee.

Discuss and consider directing staff to draft an ordinance that provides the City of Richmond the maximum legal authority to regulate the transportation and storage of hazardous substances in railcars in and through the City of Richmond.

- Janet Schneider, Administrative Chief, introduced Carlos Privat of the City Attorney's Office who gave an overview of the item. Vice Chair Bates stated we have no jurisdiction of this matter. The following individual spoke on this item: Naomi Williams.

OUTCOME:

On motion of Vice Chair Bates, seconded by Councilmember Thurmond, referred this item to the City Council, with the recommendation that no further action be taken.

Discuss and consider recommending that the City Council of the City of Richmond introduce an ordinance amending Section 9.20 by adding a section titled 9.20.200 to allow the County Code Enforcement Officers to enforce Richmond Municipal Codes regarding illegal trash dumping and accumulation in the incorporated area of North Richmond.

- Thomas Min, City Attorney's Office, gave an overview of the item. Vice Chair Bates stated that money has been accrued for clean up and provide cameras, etc., and now we are in the process of enforcing the order. The following individuals spoke on this item: Naomi Williams and Corky Booze. The budget has already been approved.
- Vice Chair Bates asked if the enforcement officers had the legal authority to issue tickets that would go to court or is it just through the appeal process. Thomas Min replied that it was an administrative process. Vice Chair Bates asked if the Code Enforcement Officers have Peace Officer Status. Thomas Min replied the City has Code Enforcement Officers, of which five are not Peace Officers, and one is a Peace Officer. The Peace Officer only deals with towing vehicles.

OUTCOME:

On motion of Councilmember Thurmond, seconded by Councilmember Sandhu recommend to the full City Council.

Discuss and receive a report on Nevin Park rehabilitation and temporary site fencing.

- Alan Wolken, Richmond Community Redevelopment Agency, gave an overview of this item. He reported that the final plans with design elements are being drawn up. Bids for the park improvements will go out late in May or early June 2007, with construction starting shortly after. Also included in the plans will be temporary construction fencing that would be implemented as part of the park improvements. The construction fencing will not be implemented until the final

- plans are approved. The parking lot off 4th St. will be fenced first, followed by the grass, south of the Richmond Museum, and then all grass areas south of the Nevin Center. The parking lot located off 6th Street will remain open to allow construction equipment. Mr. Wolken also reported that the Parks Commission and the Police Department have been involved in the process.
- John Gibbs, of WRT, gave a presentation on the design aspects of the park. He stated WRT started in July 2006, to gather feedback from residents regarding their thoughts of the park. WRT presented their concepts back to the community at the Iron Triangle Neighborhood Council in March 2007. Additional changes will be made and represented at the Iron Triangle Neighborhood Council in May 2007. Opening of the park is expected in July 2008 or earlier.
 - Corky Booze stated all people were not noticed. He stated there is not enough room for everything listed on the plans. He is very upset that trees are proposed to be removed.
 - Cheryl Maier asked that the planning process be clearer for those that visit and work in Nevin Center, to include an accurate timeline of fencing and construction.
 - Marilyn Harrison stated all citizens should be invited to the informational meetings.
 - Alan Wolken stated that they will do further outreach to those persons who use the park. Advertisements are currently on the website and also on the City Greensheet.
 - Vice Chair Bates stated that young people should have an area where they feel safe.
 - Councilmember Thurmond asked if the fencing can be phased. Alan Wolken replied yes, it will be included in the construction schedule. Vice Chair Bates asked what the anticipated costs were. Alan Wolken replied, close to \$1 million dollars of improvements. Vice Mayor Bates asked Alan Wolken to look into enclosing the basketball courts at a reasonable cost.
 - Tony Norris, Parks Superintendent, stated that the Pine trees are old and infected.

OUTCOME:

The Public Safety and Public Services Standing Committee accepted the report on the Nevin Park rehabilitation and temporary site fencing.

Discuss and consider recommending a process for conducting background investigations for prospective Police Commission members.

- Leslie Knight gave an overview of the item. The costs for the current process are zero dollars because the process is done internally.
- Vice Chair Bates stated he is not interested in spending a lot of money.
- Chief Magnus stated that the process could be improved by doing the check before appointment to the Police Commission. Clarification of what would disqualify one from being on the commission should be decided before the background check is done. Most elements would include criminal history and any active warrants.

- Corky Booze stated backgrounds are a waste of tax payers' time. (Chair Marquez left the meeting).
- Rob Ham stated that background checks are very invasive and if it is done for one commission it should be done for all others.
- Naomi Williams stated that the applicant form should indicate that a background check is required.
- Cochise Pott stated he is upset regarding the extensive background checks because they limit the quality of people that can serve on the boards. (Chair Marquez returned to the meeting).

OUTCOME:

On motion of Vice Chair Bates, seconded by Councilmember Sandhu, modified the application by adding a question regarding arrests for felonies and leaving the background check. Chair Marquez abstained.

Presentation regarding emergency notification procedures for the Mayor and City Council.

Kathy Gerk, Office of Emergency Services, gave an overview of the item. She stated there are different procedures for different disasters. City Council and the Mayor would be notified, during a law enforcement incident, by the watch commander or his designee. For fire or HASMAT incidents the fire chief or his designee would make notifications. Kathy stated the Office of Emergency Services is under review of all emergency plans. All Councilmember should have the latest version of the confidential list.

Discuss and Provide direction to staff regarding incidents of violence and crime at various senior housing complexes.

- Councilmember Thurmond stated that there have been several incidents of crimes committed in the Senior Housing Complexes.
- Tim Jones, Housing Authority Director, gave an overview of the item. The Housing Authority has the following three designated sites for seniors and disabled: Nevin Plaza, Hacienda Heights, and Friendship Manor. Two distinctly different populations residing in the same development. Some of the disabled have mental disabilities and required ongoing support of services. Nevin Plaza houses 77 seniors and 61 disabled, Hacienda Heights houses 59 seniors and 83 disabled, and Friendship Manor houses 33 seniors and 19 disabled. Approximately three years ago, funding cuts of the Public Housing Drug Elimination Grant Program, FEDA Funding, caused the elimination of positions such as the Resident Service Coordinator. The Resident Service Coordinator was responsible for ensuring the seniors and disabled had the proper services they needed. Security measures in place at Nevin Plaza and Hacienda Heights include video cameras, emergency pull cords in units, and on site security seven days a week from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. Mr. Jones reported that there is a police officer in the properties program, in which there are two police officers that actually live

in the Nevin Plaza. The challenges are the younger disabled population with the after hours activities and also non-resident pedestrian traffic. He stated as long as the seniors are merged with the disabled, the crimes will not stop. The Housing Advisory Commission requested follow up recommendations. Recommendations included aggressive lease enforcement, senior housing only, and increased security measures.

- Vice Chair Bates suggested ID badges be given to residents. Tim Jones stated that the issue was brought up to the Resident Council and they are in support of the idea. He also stated that a Resident Manager will be hired for Nevin in the future.
- Corky Booze stated that Mr. Jones needs to go because of his insensitivity to the people at the residents. Mr. Booze stated he has a tape proving that people are living on the Nevin Plaza site without paying rental fees. He stated there is no security and the facilities are not properly kept.
- Texanita Bluitt stated that she was not aware of the accusations made by Corky Booze. She commended the Housing Authority staff for their efforts in trying to change conditions in the housing units.
- Vice Chair Bates asked Tim Jones what type of security is used at the facilities.
- Tim Jones replied that currently DP Security Services is used for Nevin Plaza and Hacienda Heights.
- Vice Chair Bates asked Chief Magnus what his staff can do to supplement the security at the facilities.
- Chief Magnus replied that beat officers can go there and monitor.
- Councilmember Sandhu asked Mr. Booze if he was confronted by any guards during his visit.
- Mr. Booze stated he stopped to talk with the security guard on site.
- Councilmember Thurmond stated that the entire Housing Authority staff, Police, Security, Housing Commission, and City Council should hold a joint meeting to discuss protocol and issues.

OUTCOME:

On motion of Councilmember Thurmond, seconded by Vice Chair Bates, recommended a joint study session to be held with the Public Safety Committee, Housing Authority staff, and Housing Commission to discuss protocol and issues.

Discussion and Report regarding recent Police Department vehicle checkpoints.

- Chief Magnus gave an overview of the item. Chief Magnus stated that there have been three checkpoints conducted so far. The checkpoints have been successful, but have raised some concerns. The concerns include impounding of vehicles and notification to the public of the checkpoints. Chief Magnus reported that vehicles cannot be impounded or towed if the only charge is driving without a license.
- Vice Chair Bates stated that he supports the checkpoints in all areas of the City to eliminate the criminal activity. He asked the Chief for a report on the drugs, guns and vehicles that have been confiscated during these checkpoints.

- Chief Magnus replied that the Police Department plans to do a full cycle of the checkpoints and provide the Public Safety Committee with a comprehensive report.
- Sandhu asked that the comprehensive report include a study on Immigration Customs Enforcement. Chief Magnus replied that checkpoints are not set up for the purpose of Immigration Customs Enforcement.
- Corky Booze stated he supports checkpoints. The checkpoints in Richmond were run in a very professional manner.
- Cochise Potts stated everyone was treated fairly during the checkpoints.

OUTCOME:

The Public Safety Committee accepted the report from Chief Magnus.

Discuss and provide direction to staff regarding possible amendments to Ordinance No. 39-99 pertaining to the operation of taxicabs and other vehicles for hire within the City of Richmond.

- Councilmember Sandhu gave an overview of the item. He stated that all taxis drivers are operating on a temporary permit only. No one is operating on a permanent permit. The Taxi Ordinance needs to be look at and updated and enforced.
- Chair Marquez suggests that this responsibility be referred to the City Attorney to rework or reword the ordinance.
- Chief Magnus stated that all parties involved should hold a joint meeting to address the taxi cab issues as well as other issues that go beyond taxi cabs, i.e., weight/truck regulatory and false alarms.
- Corky Booze stated that the issue needs to be addressed immediately.

OUTCOME:

Vice Chair Bates and Councilmember Sandhu will work with Chief Magnus, the City Attorney, and Cab Drivers and report back to the Public Safety Committee with a recommendation to the full council at the next Public Safety Meeting.

Discuss and provide direction to staff regarding guidelines that determine what items are agendized for Public Safety/Public Services Standing Committee prior to City Council consideration.

- Vice Chair Bates gave an overview of the item. He stated the guidelines should remain the same.

OUTCOME:

The guidelines will remain the same.

OPEN FORUM

- Corky Booze stated his concern about the petty thefts throughout the City.
- Vice Chair Bates stated that the agenda be grouped to allow similar items and city staff to be heard and dismissed in a timely fashion.

Chair Marquez stated that the next Public Safety Committee meeting will be May 3, 2007, at 9:00 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:24 p.m.