

RICHMOND POLICE COMMISSION

Wednesday, January 8, 2013 – 7:00 p.m.
Employment & Training Building
330 – 25th Street
Conference Room 1

MINUTES

I CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, PLEDGE

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by **Chair Felix Hunziker**

ROLL CALL

Present:

Nemy Bautista
Scott Gillespie
Felix Hunziker
Alejandro Navarro
Bea Roberson
Glenn Stephenson
Eleanor Thompson
Yenny Velazquez

Absent: Therese Barquet

Vacancies: None

Administrative Staff:

Terry Simpson, Investigator – Absent
Malia Glover, Executive Secretary I – Present

Council Liaison: Jael Myrick, Council Liaison – Present

City Attorney's

Office Representative: Bruce Soublet, Assistant City Attorney – Present

II APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 4, 2013

Upon motion by **Commissioner Roberson** and second by **Commissioner Bautista**, the minutes for the regular meeting of December 4, 2013, were approved as written.

III POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICY REVIEW

A. Hear alternatives from RPD to towing of recovered vehicles to reduce unnecessary and expensive tow fees. (Chris Magnus or his representative)

Deputy Chief Brown said it's always been the case if they recover a reported stolen vehicle that is drivable and doesn't have any other reason to be impounded; they

make every attempt to contact the registered owner and/or the person who reported it stolen. If they aren't able to make contact, they will not leave it locked and parked in a public place because they are now liable for it and it could be vandalized, burglarized or restolen. He said they will continue with this practice.

Chair Hunziker said that Capt. French had expressed a willingness to explore whatever ways may be possible to leave the vehicle so that the owner could come and pick it up without it having to be impounded. He said the issue is to get a solid authorization from the registered owner so that RPD can turn possession back over to them remotely.

Asst. City Attorney Bruce Soublet said that from a risk management perspective, they would advise the police department not to do that unless they had written authorization from the owner that they would accept full responsibility and totally indemnify the city and hold them harmless from any damage that would occur to the vehicle. **Chair Hunziker** said that he had suggested at the last meeting that the registered owner could talk to dispatch and give them information to allow dispatch to ascertain that this is indeed the registered owner. **Mr. Soublet** said they must sign a waiver. They will not advise the police department to do anything different than what they are doing now.

D/C Brown said he doesn't think it is a good plan to leave it unattended, parked and unlocked in a public place. He added that whoever makes a stolen vehicle report has to sign the report verifying that the information is true. When the vehicle is released, they have to sign a similar form.

Commissioner Navarro asked if the vehicles could be towed to the RPD parking lot. **D/C Brown** said it was not practical and it would cause other problems.

Commissioner Navarro asked if the fee could be lowered when it comes time for a new contract. **Asst. City Attorney Soublet** said that option could be explored, but the tow companies' costs continue to rise also.

Commissioner Velazquez asked if there could be a box on the bottom of the form or report that can be checked where the owner gives consent for the car to be left for "x" number of hours so that they can come and pick it up. **D/C Brown** said that RPD is responsible for people and property that they come into contact with.

Commissioner Stephenson said he would not want a vehicle that had been stolen sitting in front of his house. The policy as it stands is reasonable.

Commissioner Roberson said she knows that RPD tries to find the owner of the stolen vehicles and will wait for the owner to come and pick it up. She asked how officers and the city will defend themselves if they leave the vehicle on the street, at the request of the owner, if something happens to the vehicle; if it gets hit or something is stolen out of it.

Chair Hunziker asked if it was possible to use **Commissioner Velazquez's** idea to have a box checked at the bottom of the form that releases RPD from responsibility. **D/C Brown** said that that was a legal question. He said cars are stolen all over the

bay area and wind up in Richmond. Cars are stolen from Richmond and wind up all over the bay area. **Chair Hunziker** said it would only apply to vehicles reported stolen at the Richmond Police Department. **D/C Brown** said the form that they use is the same form that every other department in the state uses. If it could be done, it would have to be done as a separate document.

Commissioner Navarro asked if they could include a discount when it is time to get a new contract. **D/C Brown** said it would have to be explored.

Commissioner Gillespie said that an indemnification is for a future event. He doesn't see why there could not be a form that says by signing this you understand we take no responsibility. The car can be restolen, broken into, vandalized, stripped, etc. If it's stolen in Richmond and recovered in Richmond then that may work.

Commissioner Thompson said that information could be sent to residents to sign a waiver in advance and have something on file that says if their vehicle is stolen they can have their car left where it is found.

Chair Hunziker said that the City Attorney and the police department need to put their heads together and create a waiver form and come back next month and report on it. **Mr. Soublet** said the commission needs to make recommendations to the chief of police and city manager, up the chain of command, and they will decide if they want to move forward with it.

Chair Hunziker asked for a motion. **Commissioner Velazquez** made a motion that the police department should further explore the possibility of reviewing the tow fees and having a waiver attached to the report or tow form indemnifying the city if a vehicle is recovered within city limits. It was seconded by **Commissioner Bautista**. The motion passed with the following vote: Ayes – 6; 1 – abstention.

IV REPORT OF CHIEF OF POLICE (Chris Magnus or his representative)

A. Report of recent activities, events, incidents, and related matters

D/C Brown handed out crime stats. He said in 2013 there was a continuation of a downward trend in crime but there was a noticeable spike in car break-ins. Property crimes like residential burglaries and vehicle thefts happen in pretty tremendous volume in Richmond. There has been a decrease in car thefts. They are continuing efforts to deal with gun violence. It's been a record low year for murders. The handout also includes an article from the Contra Costa Newspaper about crime in Richmond. They have been having a real problem with street robberies involving cell phones. They are trying to fine tune strategies moving into 2014. There has been some movement in officer assignments. Patrol officers are now on a 4-10 schedule. Police officer hiring is ongoing.

Commissioner Bautista thanked **D/C Brown**, the chief and the entire RPD for doing a good job in 2013. He said he had an appointment for a ride-along in an LPR vehicle. He showed his business card and he was asked to submit his ID. Then he was asked to fill out four pages of paperwork. He told them he was a police commissioner and shouldn't have to fill it out. Then he was asked for his driver's

license. He wants to know if the procedure has changed for commissioners to do ride-alongs. **Commissioner Velazquez** said she didn't have an appointment but she feels that showing her police commission ID should have been enough. **D/C Brown** apologized and said he will have to look into what happened. **Commissioner Bautista** said if the procedure has changed let them know.

Commissioner Roberson said some watch commanders have her sign the waiver and some don't. She said the procedure is changing for civilians to get inside.

Chair Hunziker asked **D/C Brown** to mail the new patrol schedule to the police commission. He asked what the annual trend as far as shots fired was in the city. **D/C Brown** said they got a report on the first 11 months of 2013 compared to 2012. He said it was significantly down. He said the two big gunfire days in the city are the 4th of July and New Year's Eve.

Chair Hunziker said there have been several meetings by the Assembly Select Committee on gun violence. He has urged them to look to Richmond as they are looking for solutions to gun violence. He wanted to know if Richmond could invite them to Richmond and show them what RPD and ONS are doing. **D/C Brown** said he could mention it to **Chief Magnus**.

B. Discuss foot patrols in city parks

Commissioner Stephenson asked what they do about foot patrols in city parks. **D/C Brown** said foot patrols in parks are an expectation of every beat officer.

Commissioner Navarro asked him to explain foot patrols in city parks. **D/C Brown** said every park is on a beat. They don't have a dedicated foot patrol assigned to parks in general but it is an expectation that the officers do perform foot patrols in the parks, as well as other selected areas on their beat.

Commissioner Navarro asked if it was possible to have an officer come to a park when there is an event going on to do car seat inspections. **D/C Brown** said to let them know in advance and they could arrange something.

Commissioner Stephenson asked who patrols out at the new Pt. Molate Park. **D/C Brown** said that RPD patrols there but they also have a security company that patrols there.

V **REPORT OF COUNCIL LIAISON JAEL MYRICK**

Councilmember Myrick reported that they had a special meeting last night regarding Doctor's Medical Center. They've been having financial problems and requested that Kaiser help them out. They have cash to make it until May. The city passed a resolution supporting the effort and to increase awareness and to impress upon Kaiser the importance of this matter. He said at the last meeting **Chair Hunziker** asked him to think about what he'd like to work on with the commission. He came up with the idea to try and figure out a way to get the community involved in getting shooters to stop shooting their guns on New Year's Eve and the 4th of July so that this will no longer be the default thing to do on those holidays. He said he wants to work with the police commission in engaging the community

and letting them know that it's not a safe thing to do. **Chair Hunziker** agreed that this was a good idea. **Commissioners Navarro** and **Bautista** volunteered to work on the committee with them. They will report back at the next meeting.

Commissioner Navarro asked about the project at Terminal 1. **Councilmember Myrick** said they entered into an exclusive negotiating deal with them. They're promising to accommodate everything that's being asked of them. It has the potential to bring in some significant revenue to the city and create some significant jobs. They still need to work out the details.

VI PUBLIC FORUM

Diego Garcia said that he was the vice chair for the Recreation and Parks Commission. He's been meeting with **Commissioner Navarro** to see what they can do about improving safety in the parks. He wants to explore strategies in working together with the Police Commission. He said the safety in the parks is very important to families and it's important for them to be in contact with the beat officers.

Commissioner Bautista asked if he's ever spoken to the Richmond Neighborhood Coordinating Council about this. **Mr. Garcia** said no.

Chair Hunziker said he would like to know more information about the scope of the problem.

Asst. City Attorney Bruce Soublet said that public forum is designed just to hear comments from the public speakers. It's not designed for a conversation between the commission and the speaker. He said the item could be agendaized for the next meeting.

VII POLICE COMMISSION CONTINUING EDUCATION

- A. Discussion of planned or proposed educational and training opportunities for members of the Police Commission

No discussion on this item.

- B. Discuss standard content for monthly reports from the Chief of Police

Chair Hunziker said he wanted to create a list of items that the police department would provide at every meeting, regardless of who will be giving the report, such as crime statistics, etc. He wanted the commissioners' feedback on what they would like the police department to provide at every meeting. **Asst. City Attorney Soublet** said that the commission could make suggestions to the police department but he doesn't think the police commission can dictate to them what they should tell the commission. He said the police department and the council liaison would most likely be in favor of providing the information but if you tell them they have to provide it, it may not happen. **Chair Hunziker** said he would like to see monthly crimes stats with yearly comparisons and a Shotspotter summary. **Asst. City Attorney Soublet** said they can't vote on this tonight because it only says discuss; there is no action item. It should say discussion and action.

- C. Discuss standard content for monthly reports from City Council liaison.

Chair Hunziker asked if the commissioners want to hear things that aren't related to the police commission in the reports or things that are only related to the police commission. **Commissioner Roberson** said there are not really any specific things discussed at the council meetings that are related to the police commission. If they want the liaison to continue coming, they will have to continue reporting on whatever they've done at the council meetings. **Commissioner Stephenson** said that the information the liaison provides isn't related to the police commission but it is informational and interesting to him. **Commissioner Velazquez** said she thinks that the liaison shouldn't come to the meetings unless they have information related to the police commission or the police department.

VIII POLICE COMMISSION OUTREACH

- A. Discussion of planned or proposed educational and training opportunities for members of the Police Commission.

Commissioner Velazquez said that she and **Commissioner Barquet** talked about getting in contact with UC Berkeley students to have them come up with a survey to give to middle and high school students in Richmond on how they feel about the police department and possibly strengthen the relationship between them and the police. She is willing to work on this. She suggested that they could possibly go to some of the soccer games and have a booth with information. **Chair Hunziker** said there will be discussion and action on this item on next month's agenda.

- B. Police Commission Facebook Page

Chair Hunziker asked **Asst. City Attorney Soublet** if the standards for all city departments regarding Facebook were still being worked on in the City Attorney's office. **Mr. Soublet** said as far as he knows, yes, they are still being worked on.

IX POLICE-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- A. Discussion of planned or proposed outreach projects to strengthen partnerships between the community and the Police Department.

Commissioner Stephenson said he will be going to the RNCC meeting on 1/13/14, to speak about the police commission in case anyone else wants to join him.

Commissioner Roberson said that the last few sessions of Coffee with a Cop were unsuccessful because not many people showed up. She suggested having it when there is an event taking place so that people will come and get information; but that might mean they would have to get a permit for food. **Commissioner Bautista** agreed with **Commissioner Roberson** because not many showed up when they had it near a church. **Commissioner Velazquez** suggested having them when there is a health fair or soccer games and sporting events. **Commissioner Navarro** suggested having it at a park and handing out sports bars and water. **Commissioner Stephenson** proposed an agenda item for next month to have everyone bring one suggestion on how to incorporate Coffee with a Cop. **Commissioner Roberson** said

that one thing that went over well with the kids was having a police car or motorcycle for the kids to look at. **Chair Hunziker** said they will table this for the next meeting.

X REPORTS BY:

- **CHAIRPERSON**
- **COMMISSIONERS**
- **STAFF**

Commissioner Roberson

- Attended Crime Prevention dinner
- Attended RNCC Holiday dinner
- Attended Council of Industries meeting
- Attended Ceasefire Call-In
- Worked on Toy Program
- Attended Santa Fe Hug-a-Bear dinner

Commissioner Bautista

- Attended Hercules Council Meeting, installation of new mayor
- Riding Along with LPR car
- Participated in various organizations' efforts in collecting clothing and goods for the Typhoon Haiyan victims
- Attended fund-raising event, pasta dinner for Typhoon Haiyan victims – Philippines, sponsored by various Filipino organizations.
- Attended DUI checkpoint at Hilltop area

Commissioner Navarro

- Attended DUI checkpoint

Commissioner Stephenson

- Attended Swearing In Ceremony
- Ride-along
- Attended RNCC meeting
- Attended DUI checkpoint
- Had neighborhood toy drive for Early Childhood Development

Commissioner Velazquez

- Ride-along in LPR car

Commissioner Stephenson would like to see the name of the commissioner on the items that they suggest on the agenda.

Staff

- **Chair Hunziker** read a status report from **Investigator Terry Simpson**. There are currently three active cases. He reminded everyone that they will be voting for chair and vice chair at the March police commission meeting.

XI ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Felix Hunziker, Chair