

**CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
FIRE & POLICE COMMISSION MINUTES**

Thursday, **January 24, 2013** @ 4:00
Murphy Briefing Room
215 E. Figueroa St.

REGULAR MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:

Present: Commissioners: Lennon, Christensen, Torell, Rodriguez and Torres-Santos.

Staff Present: Chief Cam Sanchez, Captain Dave Whitham, Battalion Chief Jim Bryden, Police Technician Holly Perea and Secretary Barbara Sansone

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION: Lennon to approve minutes of **December 13, 2012** with the addition that Ahmed Shaqur was not present for his appeal of his taxi permit denial. Torell seconded.

VOTE: Unanimous voice vote.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Any member of the public may address the Fire & Police Commission for up to one minute on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Commission that is not scheduled for a public hearing before the Commission. The total time for this item is 10 minutes. If you wish to address the Commission under this item, please complete and deliver to the Commission Secretary before the meeting is convened, a "Request to Speak" form, including a description of the subject you wish to address.

1. Julio Ricon read a statement regarding his negative feelings on the Gang Injunction which is presently in the courts. Chair Jen Christensen asked Chief Sanchez if he wished to address Ricon's concerns. Chief Sanchez explained that there is typically no response to public comment. (Per the Brown Act, a limited response is permitted on an item that is not on the Agenda, however, there is to be no discussion, debate or action taken during public comment.) Chief Sanchez suggested Mr. Ricon call for an appointment. (Mr. Ricon will be meeting with Chief Sanchez on February 11th)

2. Michael DeRose, the owner of Cadiz introduced himself to the Commissioners and stated that he has applied for a Dance Permit.

4. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

No report from the Fire Liaison Subcommittee

No report from the Police Liaison Subcommittee

Tow Rotation Regulation Subcommittee is prepared to send the revised regulations to the City Attorney's Office for their review and comments.

5. OLD BUSINESS:

Commissioner Christensen said the Commission was expecting an email update on the Dispatch Relocation Project from Captain Torres. (I have sent a memo, via email, to the Commissioners from Lt. Molina regarding this project.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

Commissioner Torell stated that the proposed new tow rules would be discussed at the February meeting.

7. ANNUAL MEETING FOR TOW OPERATORS TO DISCUSS ISSUES CONCERNING THE TOW ROTATION

Captain Whitham took a roll call of the 7 companies on the City's Tow Rotation List. Representatives from 805 Roadside, Holzer's, Love's, Nieves, Smitty's and Thomas were present. Santa Barbara Towing did not have a representative present.

Commissioner Christensen stated that she sent an email to Captain Whitham regarding identifying any areas of concern with the Fire Department, Police Department or the tow companies. Commissioner Christensen wanted to confirm that all companies were in compliance with the basic requirements for tow operators. She also wanted to know if any of our companies had been dismissed from the CHP or the SBSO.

Captain Whitham stated that Commissioner Christensen had asked him to look into 3 areas: Any complaints that our agency had received; look at CHP and see whether any of our tow companies have been excluded from their rotation and also with the SBSO.

Captain Whitham stated that he checked with Traffic, Patrol Officers and Dispatch. Captain Whitham stated that there were no complaints with any of our tow companies. Complaints would range from attitude, type of service and most importantly timeliness. We like to see a company arrive to the scene in 20 to 30 minutes.

Captain Whitham checked with the CHP and they reported the only company that has been eliminated from their list is Santa Barbara Towing but they have not had any problems with the other tow companies.

Chief McElroy stated that the Fire Department had no issues with any of the tow companies.

Commissioner Christensen asked for input from the tow companies. Chuck Love of Love's Towing asked about the number of approved tow companies. He read from a vote on January 25, 2007 which set the number of tow companies at a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 6. He asked why, since this had been approved, a 7th tow company was allowed. The Commissioners stated that at a subsequent meeting the regulations were amended to add a maximum of 7 tow companies.

Commissioner Torell asked about each of the tow companies being required to have a large tow truck. Chuck Love stated that in his 51 years, there has never been a problem taking care of the larger motor homes and that all of the companies are capable of towing most of the larger vehicles. He said they all get along and there is not a problem to call on another company with a larger truck if it is needed. Commissioner Torell asked if anyone had a different perspective on this issue. Greg Voigt of Smitty's said that at one time there was an issue but the problem has balanced out. Commissioner Torell said that they were thinking of

making this mandatory, for tow operators to have a big truck but the tow operators said this is not necessary and would be a burden for them to spend \$200,000 on a truck that would rarely be used. Commissioner Rodriguez agreed. Commissioner Christensen said that the draft of the new Rules & Regulations would be discussed at the February meeting. Aaron Boucher of 805 Roadside stated that in other cities, not every tow company does heavy duty towing. Companies with the capacity to do heavy duty tows have the advantage of making more money.

Commissioner Christensen said she had an area of concern in light of the fact that this annual meeting is listed as mandatory for each of the operators to attend. She stated she was happy there were no complaints from either the Fire or Police Departments. Her concern is with Santa Barbara Towing and the fact that they did not attend the meeting. She understands that they have employees who are convicted felons, who were signing other people's names to forms to go undetected. She feels that the Police Department should remove them from our tow rotation list, especially since they have been removed from the CHP's rotation list.

Captain Whitham informed the Commissioners that Officer Jaycee Hunter has Santa Barbara Towing under investigation.

Commissioner Torell commended the tow operators for their performance and having no complaints from either the Fire or Police Departments.

Captain Whitham said that he realized that it has been a long road in revising the Rules and Regulations. He realized there are a few issues that need to be vetted out; however, he felt the majority of the additions are good additions to bring companies into compliance with current regulations.

8. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

Present: Battalion Chief Jim Bryden, Acting Deputy Fire Chief

- Chief McElroy is the Acting Fire Chief and was attending a meeting with the Finance Committee
- Very active month for the Fire Department; Auto Aid Fire in Montecito; Montecito conducted an AAR afterwards (After Action Report) and the City attended, lessons learned; unique fire; over 100 year old construction
- Fire at Montecito Motors; still under investigation
- Fire on TV Hill, Loma Alta; quick response, minor damage to a pool decking; several small fires in this area, all under investigation
- Handed out reports to Commissioners on response times; average response time 3.15 minutes; under goal of 4 minutes
- Second report handed out was on incident types, a statistical report
- Biggest issue lately was Chief DiMizio's retirement, he had a great send-off; Chief McElroy is the in-house candidate (it was later announced via email that Pat McElroy has been chosen as the new Fire Chief)
- 1 Retirement of a 34 year veteran
- Currently doing background checks on next recruit class; expecting 7 to 9 recruits; Academy is very expensive; \$250,000 to run Academy, hoping to do this every other year instead of every year; this class will be entirely laterals

9. POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Sanchez

- 7 cadets currently in the Academy; started with 8 but 1 was injured working in Property and will go to next Academy
- More testing in April
- 7 in Academy will graduate on April 5, 2013 in Camarillo; Chief encourages all to attend the graduation
- Burglaries have been the biggest issue in the last 3 to 6 months; over 50 last month, 1/3rd of these were "hot prowls" meaning victims were asleep while they were getting burglarized; this is a dangerous situation; several arrests have been made over the last week
- In-car video: All of the patrol cars will have cameras installed the week of February 4th
- Budget: No current information since the budget meeting is presently going on, however, the Police subcommittee – Commissioners Rodriguez and Santos-Torres, will be meeting with the Chief's Command Staff and the POA President to discuss budget issues (this meeting has taken place)
- No retirements in the near future; continuing to over-hire in anticipation of future retirements
- Commissioner Christensen asked about response times being up; Chief said response times are always a roll of the dice; there was recent burglary where the response time was less than 30 seconds; clearly we are under the 7 minutes and this is really good; Captain Whitham said that officers immediately respond to Priority 1 calls. Sometimes these calls are injury traffic collisions, which can end up being minor. These typically have longer response times which skew the overall response times.
- The Sheriff is going to put out a Countywide report on the effects of AB109; there is no evidence that AB109 is causing the increase in burglaries; the Chief said we have confirmed, within our City limits, that 17% of our recent arrests were AB109 subjects.
- The Chief said that early releases are being monitored by Parole and Probation with electronic devises

10. ADJORN: 4:51 PM