

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

August 17, 2015 @ 3:00 PM

IN ATTENDANCE: Committee members: Chairman Graham Weaver, Becky Brown, and Scot Pitzer; Mayor William Troxell; Borough Manager Charles Gable; Police Chief Joe Dougherty; and Management Assistant Karen Mesher.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Michael Birkner, Borough Council President First Ward; Len Andrews, Borough Council Member Second Ward; Susan Naugle, Borough Council Member Third Ward; John Butterfield, Borough Council Member Third Ward; PFC Chris Folster, Gettysburg Police Department; Wesley K. Heyser, 226 North Stratton Street; and Jim Hale, representing the *Gettysburg Times*.

Approval of Minutes:

The Committee approved the July 20, 2015 minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Mr. Weaver announced that Adams County is spraying for mosquitos.

Mr. Heyser addressed the Committee expressing his support for the use of body cameras by the Gettysburg Borough Police Department. He had read some materials from the International Association of Police Chiefs and the Department of Justice, citing the psychological advantages from a public perspective regarding their use and their methods of implementation. He said that their use would protect both the Borough and the public, and create a more favorable interaction between the public and law enforcement.

REPORTS:

Acquisition of Body Cameras: Equipment Demonstration and Discussion of Implementation Issues

PFC Chris Folster of the Gettysburg Police Department gave a brief presentation on the acquisition of body cameras and their potential use for the Gettysburg Police Department. He researched and previewed cameras from two different vendors and described his experiences wearing them for the Committee. He stated that the Digital Ally body-worn camera provides exceptional video, clips onto the uniform with the DVR component placed in the officer's shirt pocket, and has one-button activation. He added that these cameras can link to eventual in-car cameras when the patrol car lights are activated, if the Borough is so equipped. He stated that the field of vision is equivalent to that of an officer's eyes without peripheral vision. He stated that from his experience, its usage reduces a suspect's aggressive behavior when they are told that they are on camera. He

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also noted that body-worn cameras reduce complaints against officers, supports evidence used in court, and reduces liability resulting from public interaction. He stated that the American Civil Liberties Union supports the use of body-worn cameras by law enforcement. He said that officers are required to tell people that they are being recorded as soon as it is practical.

PFC Folster stated that the expense is approximately \$1,000.00 per camera, and noted that there is a \$695.00 one-time software fee to manage them. He explained that two department personnel would be designated as administrators, who could only copy videos when requested. He explained that individual officers could only upload their video from an incident. He stated that if a video is not assigned as evidence after the initial recording, the video will be deleted after 30 days (on the 31st day) if it is not evidence in a criminal act for privacy and storage reasons. He said that it would only take 10 minutes to manage video at the end of a shift, an incident number would then be assigned to the video. Officers can view their videos, but they cannot delete or change them. He said that he had drafted the department's general order governing their use based on information from both the American Civil Liberties Union and the International Association of the Chiefs of Police.

Chief Dougherty said that the price of the cameras and their software were included in the price of a private donation. He also noted that the Pennsylvania Records Act documents an officer's activity, and dictates that the video must be maintained for only 30 days. He explained that video used as evidence in a criminal prosecution is property of the state. He said that an officer cannot audio/video tape anyone inside their own residence. He stated that the primary purpose of the body camera is evidence, and its use must be in line with the state's practice of evidence. He stated that criminal investigative material is not subject to the right-to-know act, and that attorneys would have to determine the viewing of any video.

Borough Manager Gable said that Council should approve their use because of future costs regarding redaction of videos released as a result of open records requests, and any future costs related to their use. Council member Naugle expressed concerns regarding such costs and possible replacement costs due to breakage during use. She suggested that the Borough Solicitor review the use of body-worn cameras because it is a relatively a new area of law. Council President Birkner agreed, and said that we should have good legal eyes on this policy in the Borough. PFC Folster said that the cameras would be covered under warranty, and that there would be no additional costs related to managing them. Chief Dougherty said that the department intended on getting six body cameras that would cover both shifts with extras. He stressed that the use of these cameras would improve the interaction and accountability with citizens, and encourage transparency while reducing officer liability.

Members of the Committee reached a consensus to recommend that the Gettysburg Police General Order governing the use of body-worn cameras be reviewed by the Borough Solicitor and placed on Council's agenda for their September 14th meeting.

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Enforcement of No 53' Trailers through the Center of Gettysburg

Chief Dougherty said that he had no report at this time. There will be a meeting on August 20th at 1 PM at Senator Alloway's office to discuss this issue.

Parking Changes on West Broadway

Increased parking on West Broadway between College Avenue and Constitution Avenue behind the Gettysburg College Dining Hall has prompted a review of the residential parking landscape. At the request of Gary Brautigam, Director of Dining Services at Gettysburg College, Ms. Mesher said that he had requested a review of the residential parking restrictions on West Broadway due to their decreased use by local residents and increased use by college staff and students. Council President Birkner learned that Dining Hall staff (approximately 20-30 people) must leave the building to move their car every two hours, and had questioned the need for residential parking in that block, encompassing approximately 35 spaces for three residential homes. There are two college lots nearby available for approximately 20 employees. Mr. Gable said that staff will collect more information from residents regarding this parking issue.

Response to the Request to Make Wall Alley a One-Way Alley

A citizen from Baltimore Street had requested that Wall Alley, located behind the Borough building, be made a one-way alley from Stratton Street to School House Alley for safety reasons. Mr. Dellett said that he had sent out letters to all of the stakeholders last week, and that the Gettysburg Area School District had not expressed an opinion either way.

Unfinished Business:

There was no unfinished business.

New Business:

There was no new business.

With no further business the Committee adjourned the meeting at 4:25 PM.

The next Public Safety Committee meeting will be held on Monday, September 14, 2015 at 3PM.

Approved by _____
Graham Weaver, Chairman

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