

BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE ON  
Citywide Neighborhood Committee  
Meeting Summary

July 12, 2016                      Conference Room A, City Hall  
Present:                              Cliff Lazenby, Cristy Cardoso, Marie Kelleher  
Also Present:                        Chief Mara, Rob Munson and Tim Cashman – PPD. Members of the public: see  
   attendance list.  
Absent:                                Kathy Burgeron (e), Larry Cataldo (e), Paul Mannle

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The meeting was called to order by the chairperson at 7:02.

Attendance was circulated.

Acceptance of the minutes of the May 3 meeting Motion to approve minutes made by Marie Keller seconded by Cristy Cardoso. Passed.

Current Business –

Chief David Mara

The Chief introduced himself and gave a brief background of his experience in Manchester. Community policing was the focus of his work there, they had success when they focused on the things all members of the community had in common. Everyone wants a safe community, education for their kids and employment. Their outreach efforts were successful, and included presentations from different departments in the community and a youth leadership academy. It took 7 years in Manchester to build public trust, transitioning into Portsmouth he has been trying to have the police department reach out to the already very civically involved community. Many officers are involved in community outreach, Friends in Action basketball and youth programs including Det. Rochelle Jones (community resource officer), Tim Cashman and Rob Munster school resource officers. Tim is the school resource officer and he works on internet safety and works with the JR High School. He will be working with us on NNO this year.

The opioid epidemic has been a big focus area for them. The police department hosted a movie with the school department called *Chasing the Dragon*. Chief Mara said that crime follows drug use. The police realize that there are 3 things they need to do, enforcement, treatment and recovery, and education. They are working on educating kids early. They do senior walks with our senior population. They will also be doing senior dinners at Feaster and Margeson Apartments. They are beefing up the downtown presence. They are engaging the public downtown not just enforcing. Kids and Cops is a program at the schools where they bring all of the resources out and educate the kids about the police force and show them early that the police are a resource for them to come to when they need something.

Regarding the national news about Police shootings Chief Mara likes to focus on the things that are happening in NH. There are great things going on in NH in regards to disproportional representations (minorities in the justice system) and they are bringing training into departments on how to effectively deal with minority youth and understand their perspective. They are also teaching kids to see things from the perspective of the police. Chief Mara is a strong believer in having the face of the department be representative of the community.

Is the Opioid epidemic getting better in Portsmouth? Chief: yes because now recovery services are available and money for treatment is available. I think there is less of a stigma now. Drug courts are working. Some of these people don't belong in jail, they belong in treatment. The hotels and being on 95 increases the transient population coming here.

Det. Cashman met with a Mom's group at the library. He spoke about Project Safety that educates parents on the internet and drugs. I wish all of the public could go not just parents. Chief: A lot of people blame the medical establishment for where we are now. The drugs that were developed just took off. NH was the last state to limit

prescription drugs, and it's a voluntary program. There is almost no penalty for over prescribing. John Delina the NH DEA head was at the Chasing the Dragon premier, he is willing to come present any time. Fentanyl is a huge problem, fentanyl is deadly on small amounts. When it is mixed with heroin the user does not know what they are getting.

Project Safety is in November this year to get to the 7<sup>th</sup> graders earlier.

Does Portsmouth PD offer community ride alongs? They are revamping the policy now. They will be doing them through different community groups.

In Manchester there were 6k arrests a year, 100K calls for service, and less than 50 complaints thanks to great training. Chief Mara is very happy with the selection process in Portsmouth. The officers go through many tests before they are hired. Police departments with problems don't have good training.

Would you ever offer citizen police academy at night? Chief: It is in the evenings now so you should sign up for the next one. Info is on the Police Department website.

Chief: Another program is PPDTV. Part of the issue is that people didn't know what they had. PPDTV profiles the officers and educates the public about our great officers. It's a work in progress. It just started there are three profiles up with more to come.

Where do Heroin sales happen? Chief: everywhere. Parking lots, hotels, you name it. It can be anywhere; dealers often stay in a hotel. Most of the drugs come from Mexico through Lawrence, Ma. Arrests are up but OD's are still happening. 95 is a drug pipeline.

Traffic speed enforcement, are the speed signs effective? Chief: Only enforcement works for habitual speeders. It's not sustainable to have constant enforcement but they can work on collecting data so they know when/where to target enforcement. For example, they did enforcement on Benfield after the last meeting and they set up recorders to track speed.

#### National Night Out

Forms were collected. NNO is on Tuesday Aug 2.

This is a great opportunity to meet neighbors.

Banners are available, there are only 5 new ones available. Please email Cliff if you are new and need one of them. FOSE asked if some of the police might come and sit down and eat with the elders.

NO RAIN DATE make plans to make due.

Don't know exactly how many officers they will have but that is being worked out.

What's worked well for other neighborhoods for spreading the word? Door to door flyers (not in mailboxes). Facebook. Nextdoor.com. Email lists. Ask your elderly neighbors to do a phone tree. Police will also be doing press releases.

Ask for donations from the businesses in your neighborhood. Coordinate with community groups in your neighborhood.

Use NNO website for sample flyers.

Feaster and Margeson are asking about explorer involvement. Police will find out about that.

Please email Cliff the forms if you didn't turn one in.

#### Misc/ Unfinished Business—

##### Ward 3 Forum Recap

Neighborhood outreach forum was June 8 it was successful, strong turnout, and good questions after the presentation from DPW. There are a number of things for follow-up. The steering committee will be working on the next event for a different ward in the fall. One of the issues that came up was Sound protection for

neighborhoods along the highway. We are looking to have city leadership advocate on our behalf at the state level so that barriers are added going forward. The legislative committee will discuss this on July 25<sup>th</sup>.

Anyone is welcome to come support this effort but the neighbors that are affected are especially encouraged to come. Aaron G said the state has admitted that there is no other place in the state with this much traffic without sound protection. The more supports the better. We are working to reestablish conversation with the new council.

#### Neighborhood reports

Any other specific neighborhood issues, we don't have time to go around the room: Aaron Garganta: Sherburne Civic Assoc Ward three meeting was great. One of the problems was the graffiti, haven't heard back about that. Want to ask the PD if they had an update before they ask DPW to clean it. PD will follow up and aks DPW to clean it.

Joe Plaia: Is there anything you want the police commission to work on?

Corinne Norris Cliff Road: Today the herald reported on crime in Greenland. I don't know if NNO is a good opportunity to educate the public about burglaries and locking cars and homes. Cliff: at the next ward forum we'd be happy to invite the police commission. Aaron Garganta: It would be great to get this bad press behind us so officers can focus on the good work they do. JP: The bad press will continue until the lawsuits are over, it is hard on the officers but I think most of the public knows that it is in the past and we have great officers in place. Chief: We have done a reorg and are working to be accredited it; will include public reports on the state of the department. JP: It is a much better department than a year ago and the officers are happier.

Creek neighborhood asked a about little free libraries. Cristy Cardoso will meet with them after adjournment to discuss how AH built one.

Motion to adjourn by Cristy Cardoso seconded by Marie Kelleher. Passed

Meeting adjourned 8:39