

MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2019 IN THE COUNCIL ROOM AT THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING.

The meeting began at 9:37 am.

Members present were: Rick Ransom, Dea Zugby, Dan Hamlin, Jamie Krauk, Ray Raysor, Sherry Burks, Kevin Hammett and David Moran, Staff Liaison. Also present was Lisa Lake (advisory group applicant) and Bill Orleans. Elizabeth Gaines participated in part of the meeting via telephone.

Welcome & Introductions

Jamie welcomed everyone. Sherry read the Community Pledge.

Approval of Minutes

Ray moved approval of the minutes from December 13, 2018 and Sherry seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Dan moved approval of the minutes from January 10, 2019 and Ray seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

There was discussion of the upcoming Black History Month event on February 17. Ray commended Dr. Lois Rosado for her work on planning this event.

Community Feedback

Lisa introduced herself to CRAB and indicated she hoped to serve on CRAB. She noted there are two Greenbelt's old Greenbelt and other areas of town like Franklin Park.

Bill stated there are areas where Greenbelt falls short. He relayed a discussion at a work session with Greenway Center on panhandling at the Center. Bill did not believe the Police should remove a panhandler just for being a nuisance. He hoped CRAB might talk about this issue at some point.

Reverend Ray announced a Black History Month event on February 23 at his church.

Rick wanted to discuss the panhandling issue raised by Bill as well as the homeless woman (Tabitha) who had occupied a bench near the Municipal Building at a future CRAB meeting.

Referral on Petition re: Police Use of Military Equipment

Jamie provided background on the referral. CRAB discussed how to proceed on the petition. Elizabeth (the petitioner) was contacted by phone to participate in the meeting.

Jamie asked Elizabeth to summarize her request and tell CRAB what success would look like/what she would like the City to do.

Elizabeth stated the petition was from October, 2017. She indicated that the petition was to not accept equipment from the military. Elizabeth stated the police are not the military. She believed that police are dependent on cooperation with the community.

Elizabeth expressed concern about the seeing this equipment in the parade. She expressed concern about camouflaged-style uniforms sometimes worn by Police. Elizabeth wanted to see an emphasis on community oriented policing and Police not being the enemy. She stated the military equipment was off-putting to citizens.

Ray asked Elizabeth to share her desired outcome. Elizabeth responded that the City would not accept or buy equipment that is meant for war. She didn't want use of this equipment to be acceptable or normalized. She also didn't want militaristic dress worn by Greenbelt police officers.

Lisa asked about Veteran's groups in parades or Boy Scout activities where people were dressed in military-style uniforms. Elizabeth responded this was fine.

Bill stated that Greenbelt should not be in the habit of accepting military equipment. He agreed with Elizabeth's concerns.

Jamie summarized several themes including community as the enemy and citizen fear. She thanked Elizabeth for presenting the petition.

Rick noted that Chief Bowers attended a prior CRAB meeting where the Chief indicated that Ferguson Police lost control when they brought out military equipment.

Ray asked about the process for acquiring this equipment.

Jamie referenced the list of questions she had drafted that CRAB needed to ask the Police.

Ray indicated that it was good to have the Citizen Rescue Vehicle during the recent shooting at Franklin Park.

Rick agreed it might be good to have such equipment, but not in the parade [Labor Day].

Lisa asked how the City educates residents about the resources it has available.

Jamie noted there are four elements to militarization: material, uniform, cultural and operational.

Jamie moved that CRAB transmit their questions to the Police. There would then be a future meeting where this petition/referral would be the main topic. Dan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Ray suggested there might be a need for two forums - one in old Greenbelt and one in Franklin Park. He believed there would be different reactions at each.

Jamie restated that in light of the discussions so far, the next step was to share CRAB's questions with the Police Department. She indicated that once these questions are answered, CRAB would have further discussion at a future meeting incorporating all the materials received to date.

City Grant Review Panel - CRAB Representative

Jamie and Dan discussed their experience serving on this role. They both agreed it was a very efficient process. Sherry agreed to be the CRAB nominee for 2019.

Referral on Holiday Decorating Contest

CRAB agreed to consider this at the March agenda.

Reports from CRAB (ear to the ground)

Dea reported an incident at the Co-Op grocery store where a male had a cart full of steaks that he pushed out of the store. Dea was concerned that none of the employees attempted to stop the man. Dea indicated she complained to the office. Sherry indicated that retail employees are often told not to engage shoplifters for safety reasons.

2019 Meeting Schedule

CRAB confirmed that the next meeting would be held Thursday, March 14 at 7:30pm.

The meeting ended at 11:08 am.