

MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING HELD
ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2016, IN THE SPRINGHILL LAKE RECREATION
CENTER CLUBHOUSE

The meeting began at 7:34 p.m.

Members present were: Rick Ransom, Jamie Krauk, Dea Zugby, Sherry Burks, Daniel Hamlin, Janet Jacobs Parker and David Moran, Staff Liaison.

Other City Officials present were: Mayor Emmett Jordan, Council Member Konrad Herling, Chief James Craze and Captain Tom Kemp.

Also present were: Bob Rand, Carolyn Lambright-Davis, William Davis, Josh Hamlin, Katie Pugliese, Sharon Sampson, John Ford, Sr., Reverend Ray Raysor, Michael Hartman, Cynthia Newcomer, Alejandra Berumen, Nona Lowry and Andre & Gwen Thompson

Welcome & Introductions

Rick welcomed everyone. Jamie read the Community Pledge. There were introductions.

Council Referral – Forum/Community Discussion

Rick stated that CRAB had been tasked with trying to arrange a police community forum and determine if there were problems and how they might be resolved. He indicated the purpose was to hold forums that would be fair and allow for community input.

Rick reviewed and summarized some of the key points from the last meeting. Rick asked how CRAB could get residents, particularly at the Franklin Park community, to attend the forums and asked the audience for input.

Carolyn reported there was an e-newsletter at Franklin Park and Denise Knight with Fieldstone could use it to disseminate information to residents. She noted tonight was “back to school” night at Springhill Lake Elementary and Greenbelt Middle school and many residents were attending that program.

Janet encouraged residents to read the News Review and encouraged Franklin Park residents to submit information articles to the News Review.

Bob suggested posting an overhead banner at the City banner locations.

Sherry noted that most communities have email blasts. Jamie liked this as a proactive way to reach people in the neighborhoods.

William suggested holding the forum at Springhill Lake Elementary School. The multi-purpose room at Springhill Lake Recreation Center was suggested. Jamie noted it was good to have options depending on the forum’s form at.

Rick suggested a more informal format and noted a small group might be less intimidating for those who don't like to speak in public.

Jamie liked the small group approach. She suggested topical breakouts for the forum.

Janet asked if there was a neighborhood watch at Franklin Park. Carolyn indicated there was not one currently.

Katie asked about the goal of the forums and what they would encompass. She wanted to prevent incidents that were occurring all over the Country. Rick responded this had been discussed at the last meeting.

Cynthia stated it was important to define the term forum. She believed the forum should be a sharing opportunity. She favored more of an exchange than a presentation.

Michael asked about the Greenbelt Police Department's involvement in the planning of the forums. He favored their involvement up front. David responded that the Police Department was involved in the planning. He noted Chief Craze and Captain Kemp had a prior commitment (Citizen's Police Academy) and would arrive later in the meeting.

Rick asked each CRAB member to report on a specific area listed in the National League of Cities (NLC) column entitled "What City Leaders Can Do."

Dan had researched the "Build Trust" area and reported on a Takoma, Washington initiative called Project Peace. He indicated a major responsibility for this program falls on the Police Department. Dan stated there was a mega-problem that the system itself was not trusted and this would not be solved by CRAB. Dan indicated there were six pillars in the Takoma Project Peace program as follows:

- Pillar 1 - Community Policing & Crime Reduction
- Pillar 2 - Build Trust and Legitimacy
- Pillar 3 - Improved Policy and Oversight
- Pillar 4 - Enhanced Training & Education
- Pillar 5 - Officer Wellness and Safety Action Items
- Pillar 6 - Social Media

Dea reported on the "Get the Facts" area. She read a list of actions that had already been undertaken by CRAB.

Jamie reported on the "Listen" area. She noted that communities of color feel silenced. She provided two examples of strong community dialog that the National League of Cities cited were the Welcome Table New Orleans and the Dialogue on Race in Charlottesville, VA. Jamie explained that Welcome Table New Orleans is a citywide initiative of the Mayor's office focused on race, reconciliation and community. Its value is in long term relationship building, a consistent and deliberate process, and specific projects that the group can tackle together. Jamie indicated the Dialogue on Race in Charlottesville, VA began as a series of study circles in 2009

but grew to become a coalition of people across the Charlottesville area who work hard to make its mission of engaging every segment of the community and proactively finding concrete solutions and paths to action that promote racial justice and equity. Jamie reported the following observations: it takes time, allowing all sides to be vulnerable, trust, voices who have been there for many years, acknowledging fear, community history, tangible, structured guided process and listening is purposeful.

Jim reported that the Police Department reviews metrics regarding traffic stops. He referenced the CALEA report. Jim viewed the forum process as a listening opportunity. He noted that violation data provided by red light and speed cameras follows the same socio-economic trends as the officer-reported statistics.

Rick discussed the “Change” area and discussed buy-in from all involved. He noted the legislative requirements. Recommended bans on bias-based policing and enforcement of this. He stressed community oversight by citizen commissions. Rick indicated that police have become responsible for dealing with social problems that other professions are better equipped to handle. He believed there was a need for more education, job and social service programs.

Sherry reported on the “training” area and referenced NLC training programs to de-escalate a crisis. She listed the types of training police officers receive and identified several NLC suggested training programs.

Rick hoped the forums would allow the community to share concerns. He noted he had not personally had that experience.

Carolyn believed there would be good attendance at the forums. Reverend Ray and Carolyn suggested a Saturday session. Rick suggested a late October time-frame. He announced the dates and times for the Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) forums on security cameras and reported that the Franklin Park forum was on Wednesday, October 5.

Bob asked about the facilitator search. David responded that four potential facilitators had been identified, but more research was needed.

Katie stressed the need for a facilitator qualified in the area of race relations.

Rick encouraged the leaders in the community to help share information about the process and upcoming forums.

Cynthia observed that the Police have institutional power that the average citizens do not.

Konrad suggested promoting the forums in homeowner association newsletters and utilizing the Greenbelt East Advisory Coalition to reach residents in Greenbelt East.

CRAB scheduled the next meeting for September 22 at 7:15pm in Greenbelt East.

Emmett stressed the need for communication. He indicated there are real serious issues in and around Greenbelt. Emmett hoped this police/community dialogue would become an ongoing activity. He suggested partnering with an existing group and a meeting with youth residents right after school.

Chief Craze distributed a publication titled "Ending Discriminatory Racial Profiling in Maryland" from the Office of the Attorney General.

Approval of Minutes

Dan moved approval of the 8/11/16 minutes. Sherry seconded. The vote was unanimous.

The meeting ended at 9:20pm.