

**City of Bethel
Public Safety Committee**

Minutes of November 2, 1994

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was convened at 7:10 PM, at the Log Cabin, Bethel, Alaska by Chairman Vanasse.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Vanasse, Gregory, Hildreth, Rothschild, Harding
Absent: Wallace
One seat vacant (Twitchell)

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

No minutes available for the October meeting. Approval of minutes tabled until the December 7, 1994 meeting.

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

motion M/M by Hildreth, 2nd by Rothschild to approve/amend the agenda by or as amended. Voice Vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Old Business
Table Item A, City Utility Benefits for Police and Fire Volunteers
Delete Item C, Review of Animal Control Ordinance
Add Item C, Police Department Turnover/Retention of Staff

V. CHIEF'S REPORTS

Fire Chief Young; Fire Prevention Month is over. Over 800 school children visited the Fire Station. Smoke Detector testing at AC Store also was a success. More smoke detectors were tested this year, making this a record year. Carbon Monoxide detectors are now becoming popular. Fire Department has 2 left. Building repairs still on going. Apparatus floor repairs did not do well, final sealant is coming off. Have been working with staff at Public Works regarding this and will not address until spring time. Final work on Thermocouples will take place in the spring.

**PUBLIC SAFETY
COMMITTEE MINUTES
PAGE 2
NOVEMBER 2, 1994**

Mr. Gregory asked a question regarding the CO Detectors, and inquired about the Ayalpik Apartments if they had any. Chief Young referred this to Mr. Hildreth as the Ayalpik Manager. Mr. Hildreth stated that all apartments have smoke detectors, all have been either tested or replaced, and has brought to AVCP Housing regarding the purchase of a CO Detector to be placed near the boiler room. Also, the Fire Alarm is operational and is being monitored at the Police Department Communications Center.

Police Chief Liu; The new police vehicle was awarded to Tony Chevrolet in Wasilla. We are looking at a 5 month delivery of the vehicle. A former Bethel Police Officer who lives in Wasilla will inspect the vehicle prior to delivery so that it meets the specifications and also will be able to be placed into service almost immediately on arrival in Bethel. The new fleet of Suburbans already have 20,000 miles.

Scott Gagne has been promoted to Sergeant to replace Kevin Short who is now the Lieutenant. Current openings are Drug Investigator, Police Officer and Community Service Officer.

Activity has been busy the last 15 days, which coincides with the Permanent Fund Checks arriving. 102 Protective Custody's have been handled.

OSHA violations are being worked on at this time.

Mr. Vanasse asked why the Public Safety Committee was not involved in the bid process for the new vehicle. Chief Liu said that the bid was handled through Purchasing Department.

Mr. Vanasse also asked about the Police Department operations manual and why the Committee is not involved in this project. He would like the committee to receive a copy of the manual. Chief Liu says there will be a City Council work session on the 30th, and due to liability of the officers, this is a Council action.

VI. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Hildreth - Praised the Fire Department on giving the children the Cylume Light Sticks for Halloween. Children were more visible this year. Would like to entertain a motion to recommend the City Council to commend Fire Chief Young and Staff of the Fire Department their efforts in making the children visible this year during Halloween.

motion M/M by Gregory, 2nd by Hildreth to Recommend City Council to commend Fire Chief Young and Staff of the Fire Department their efforts in making the children more visible this year during Halloween by giving out Cylume Light Sticks. Voice Vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Rothschild - Was pleased to see a Police Officer at AC Store in the lobby, the porch area was free of drunks, no one smoking, and being able to walk into the store without having to fight the drunks.

Gregory - Made comment that when a Police Officer makes an appearance that most of the drunks leave the area.

Harding - Is glad to be on the committee as the Council Representative. The City Council appreciates the concerns of the community and appreciates the commendations to Departments and employees.

Vanasse - Welcomes Harding to the committee. Discussed why we did not have a special meeting regarding Public Inebriates as the committee should develop thoughts and concerns and ideas for a special meeting. Made comment on why the minutes of the last meeting were not done, explained that when I took the Chairman's position that I would be roped into taking minutes and writing things down and I am not very capable of doing that. Maybe Mr. Hildreth can do it or have a recorder here on behalf of the City Manager and forward the tapes to the City Clerk to make accurate minutes of our meetings.

Chief Young made comment on a discussion with Connie Tucker and Connie has a Minutes "Cheat Sheet" prepared with highlights action items of our meetings. All we need to do is fill in the blanks and she can prepare minutes from the information given to her.

Mr. Hildreth says if the Chairman wishes to appoint Mr. Hildreth as the Secretary of the Committee until such a time as he gets off or wishes to be replaced.

motion M/M by Gregory, 2nd by Rothschild to appoint Mr. Hildreth as Committee Secretary until such a time as Mr. Hildreth vacates his seat or requests change. Voice Vote. Motion carried unanimously.

VII. PEOPLE TO BE HEARD

John Hastie, AK National Guard Recruiter, 2nd Scout Battalion. Discussed the employer support of the Guard and Reserve. Gave a handout to committee members and chiefs from the National Committee for Employer Support. Will also visit the other committees and commissions. Would like to thank all committee members of their civic duty to the community. Mr. Hastie has submitted a letter of interest wishing his interest to serve on the committee. Would also like to the Nutulut Gun Club and the Public Safety Committee together to promote Gun Safety in the interest of Public Safety.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

ITEM A: City Utility Benefits for Police and Fire Volunteers

Tabled until December 7, 1994 Regular Meeting

motion M/M by Hildreth, 2nd by Gregory to table this until the next meeting as Mr. Wallace is not present. Voice Vote. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM B: Marine VHF Emergency Channel

Committee Member Hildreth and Fire Chief Young were asked at the last meeting to gather further information regarding this and bring to this meeting.

**PUBLIC SAFETY
COMMITTEE MINUTES
PAGE 5
NOVEMBER 2, 1994**

Chief Young has contacted the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and is possible for the City of Bethel to apply for a Land Mobile Radio for Maritime Services License which will cost \$120.00. We just have to fill out the License Form and send it in. The intent for Marine VHF is ship to ship or ship to shore and there is no objection for an agency such as ours to have a license.

Mr. Hildreth clarified comments made by Chief Young as the Seattle Fire Department and also Ketchikan Fire Department have this license as do other departments. Mr. Hildreth had talked with Greg Mockta at Greg's Electronics at length regarding this and Mr. Mockta had suggested instead of getting a Radio capable of all channels, get a radio capable of only monitoring Channel 16 which will save money for the City. This radio channel also is within the band limits and would not cause interference with the present radio system at the Police Department. Mr. Mockta can offer a 2 Channel radio which is programmable and both channels would be programmed to Channel 16 in case the dispatcher accidentally presses a button and changes the channel. Channel 16 would always be monitored. He can also provide a mount for the radio to go into the console which would look professional. The radio is also a Motorola brand. The only question at this time is in the Radio Room and antenna set up. If there is a spare port for the antenna to be screwed into, then we can utilize the current antenna system, but if not then an antenna would have to be mounted on the tower. Cost for this would be well under \$1,000.00

Chief Liu made comment on other people use this channel for standard communications therefore would distract his employees. Mr. Hildreth said that the FCC has assigned this as the Emergency Channel just as channels 9 and 41 on the CB Radio are designated Emergency Channels. If anyone is using this for standard communications, then they need to be told to switch channels. Chairman Vanasse stated that while he was fishing in Bristol Bay, and if someone went on channel 16 that other people came on and told them to get off, so it is a respected channel. Chairman Vanasse also said that these radios are becoming more and more popular and can also be used in the winter time for people who get lost and can maybe call for help before a tragedy strikes.

City Manager Hunter made comment that this radio can be placed elsewhere such as the Fire Department. Mr. Hildreth stated that the Police Department would be the most appropriate as it is manned 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

Mr. Harding recommends that the committee direct City Administration to discuss with the appropriate departments on the radio, location and legalities then report back to the committee.

motion M/M by Hildreth, 2nd by Gregory to direct Administration to discuss with the appropriate departments on the Marine VHF Emergency Channel, location and the legalities then report back to the committee for recommendation to council. Voice Vote. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM C: Police Department Turnover/Retention of Staff

At the last meeting, Mr. Rothschild recommended that we come back with thoughts, ideas, concerns regarding this matter.

Chief Liu stated that the committee was concerned about the cause of the turnover problem but also that the committee agreed to be supportive of the public safety department and enhancing the public relations between the departments and the community.

Mr. Rothschild would like to see more support of the Police Department from the people, but sees a hostile attitude from the people to the Police Department. Possibly the Police Department needs to have more community involvement such as barbecues, etc.

Mr. Hildreth stated that one of the reasons why this was made an agenda item was that the amount of money now that is spent training an officer, putting the officer through the academy is now in the area of \$25,000. We need to explore avenues to make the officers give a commitment back to our community by staying here a couple of years or so, and not make Bethel the training post for the State of Alaska. A suggestion was to make a contract for the officer that he spends so much time with the department, if not, then a prorated payback be established if he/she were to depart before the contract is up.

**PUBLIC SAFETY
COMMITTEE MINUTES
PAGE 7
NOVEMBER 2, 1994**

Discussion regarding volunteers and the reserve program. Mr. Gregory will address ONC for possible donations for funding of the reserve program. Also need to look at different ways to handle the PC's, which would relief the officers of this problem. Ideas were to re-establish the drunk tank.

Mr. Hildreth asked Chief Liu if the officers and staff come with ideas, thoughts, concerns for the daily operation and how does the Chief respond to those. Liu said that they do. Mr. Hildreth said he had comment from people regarding a memo or two that were written to the Chief regarding the OSHA fines/violations, and no action was taken by the Chief. Since the OSHA matter is in appeal status, he cannot comment on this matter.

Items of thought for morale of the Police Department are:

1. Facilities for Police Department. Should be a future agenda item.
2. Suggestion Box for employees
3. Attracting Applicants
4. Equipment for officers

City Manager Hunter said that part of the Braund Building renovations were to relocate the Police Department into the Braund Building. Since money is required to do this, it will be some time before this can be accomplished.

Chairman Vanasse made comment that if the Police Department says the lack of community support is part of the problem, then the Police Department has to go out and earn the support.

Also need to look at Goals and Objectives for both Police and Fire Departments. City Manager Hunter asked that the committee come up with two goals for the Police and two goals for the Fire Department.

Police Turnover/Retention will be continued at the next regular Public Safety Committee meeting.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

ITEM A: City Manager Presentation

City Manager Hunter handed out the Roles/Responsibilities for conducting Exit Interviews with employees. Also passed out Resolution 93-04, the Roles/Responsibilities of the Committees/Commissions from the City Council.

ITEM B: Public Inebriates

Chief Liu reports that this is an on-going problem. Most recent stats for the last two weeks which correlate with the Permanent Fund Checks being issued are 75% of the PC's are from the villages which taxes our Police Department. This matter should be dealt with as a regional matter and should include YKHC and AVCP. Items for consideration are a sleep-off center and an outpatient center. The jail only has two cells available for PC's with a total capacity of 10 persons. Example given was if there was one female and five males, if another male was picked up, there would be no room as the capacity per cell is five total.

Question was asked if Chief Liu has talked with the different agencies and he stated this is not his function. Since this is a regional problem, the City Council/Administration should be talking with YKHC, AVCP, and the different Tribal Councils regarding this matter. A sleep-off center and/or detox center should be opened. Funding for this facility should be addressed with different agencies.

This agenda item also affects the morale of the officers with the Police Department which makes up a majority of their work.

motion

M/M by Gregory, 2nd by Rothschild to have the City Council and Administration to talk with YKHC, AVCP and the different Tribal Councils to seek grants or other type of funding for a sleep-off and/or detox center. Voice Vote. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM C: Bootlegging Activities

General discussion regarding Bootlegging in our community. It appears that the Alcohol Reward Program is not working. We need to find different avenues to deal with the amount of alcohol coming into the community such as:

1. Loss of booze source
2. Retaliation

Also need to find ways to deal with the problem and this goes to the voters to either go wet, damp or completely dry. Voting has happened in the past, but always comes up where we live in a damp town.

Possibly the community can visit the known bootleggers and tell them that they need to stop.

There is not much the committee can do regarding this.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The next Regular Meeting of the Public Safety Committee will be held December 7, 1994, 7:30 PM, at the Log Cabin.

M/M by Hildreth, 2nd by Rothschild to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 PM. Voice Vote. Motion carried unanimously.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 1994.

**Gary Vanasse, Chairman
Public Safety Committee**