

City Council
Alan Wintersteen, Mayor
Donna Chris
Kent Harding
Buford McComas
Tad Miller
Don Tubbs
Peter Twitchell
Connie Tucker, City Clerk

CITY OF BETHEL
P.O. BOX 388
BETHEL, ALASKA 99559

Public Safety Committee
Gary Vanasse, Chairman
Kent Harding, Council Rep
Paul Gregory
Tom Hildreth
Harold Jones
Roger Rothschild
John Wallace

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes of January 4, 1995

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, Harding, Hildreth, Wallace
Absent: Gregory, Jones, Rothschild (Excused)

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

motion M/M by Wallace, 2nd by Hildreth to amend/approve the minutes of the December 7, 1994, regular Committee meeting by/as presented. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Changes: Delete Old Business Item A: Marine VHF Emergency Channel/Radio.

V. CHIEF'S REPORTS

Fire Chief Young reports that the Fire Department is assisting other City of Bethel Departments with the OSHA Policies. The Fire Department just conducted an Infection Control Meeting with Paid and Volunteer EMT's at the January 3, 1995 EMT meeting. Training is important and with new volunteers, that they receive this information.

Chief Young also reports the number of firearms discharged December 31st/January 1st is less this year than past years due to the new policy of allowing fireworks to be discharged. Chief Young has had a lot of positive feedback from the community regarding this.

Chief Young also has received a request from a church group to discharge fireworks and will forward this to the City Manager.

Chief Young reports there were no calls for fire or medic units with regards to fireworks over the holidays.

Police Lt. Kevin Short reports that Chief Liu and AST F/Sgt Tanner put out a press release for the upcoming Citizens Police Academy. Three goals of the academy are:

1. Establish an Explorer Post
2. Residents of Bethel to have an active part in local Law Enforcement
3. Helping the Police Department and Alaska State Troopers/Recruit Reserve Program.

Current openings are 1 CSO. Robert Nelson has been rehired as Police Officer and will start the week of January 9, 1995. Officer Berlin promoted to W.A.N.T. Investigator. The Police Dept. had a Police Officer testing process in December, 3 applicants, 2 showed and 1 did not. Both applicants did not meet the requirements for hire. Police Dept. is creating an in-house Felony Investigator (patrolman) for Felony investigations.

Recent crime waves are Burglary and Snow Machine thefts. Police have put out Public Service Announcements on both subjects. Police have also received a lot of complaints about off-road vehicles on the road and will step up traffic enforcement for this.

Officer Chris Walker will be attending the D.A.R.E. Instructor school in California this month.

Mr. Harding asked how many on-going Felony Investigations are there? Lt. Short did not know and is currently developing a database for this.

Chairman Vanasse asked the progress on the Sophie Shomler case. Lt. Short could not answer as this is still under investigation.

Lt. Short gave Chairman Vanasse the new Bethel Police Department Policy and Procedures manual. Chairman Vanasse read the letter from Chief Liu to the Public Safety Committee regarding the new manual.

VI. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Hildreth supports the fireworks for New Years. Discharging of firearms is dangerous and the community appeared to have fun with the fireworks.

Mr. Wallace has received a lot of calls regarding snow machines on the roads. Is glad to hear the Police to step of traffic enforcement of this. Is concerned about the Police Procedures Manual. Why was this so secretive? Lt. Short said that it is not secret, just for internal use only. Mr. Wallace stated that the Public Safety Committee should have been able to make comment on this as well during its approval. Also echoed support of the fireworks, where discharging of firearms is dangerous and felt that this year was more quieter and safer. Mentioned a phone call from Sr. Capt Perry from the Fire Department about a call to Public Works to get the Fire Department driveway cleared of snow, Public Works told Capt. Perry tuff then hung-up. The Public Safety Committee twice now has addressed snow removal to the Public Works Committee. Would like this to be an agenda item for next meeting. Made comment on the decision of Lt. Short to now attend the Public Safety Committee meetings instead of Chief Liu. Mr. Wallace would like Chief Liu to be at the meetings once in a while. Lt. Short said that Chief Liu is currently busy working on the Community Police Academy and also the Grant for additional Police Officer positions.

Chairman Vanasse made comment regarding the Police Procedures Manual and how the Public Safety Committee can review the manual and make recommendations. Also, the Public Safety Committee will make an agenda item regarding snow removal. Chairman Vanasse did say that the Police Chief should be at the meetings, but it is OK for Lt. Short to be at the meetings.

Mr. Harding had no comments.

VII. PEOPLE TO BE HEARD

None

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

ITEM A: Police Department Turnover/Retention of Staff

Chairman Vanasse opens as this has been an on-going agenda item with the Public Safety Committee and were asked to bring some recommendations to pass this on to the City Council and to the Police Department.

Mr. Wallace would have liked to talk with the officers, both still on staff and those that have left to get input on this matter. Mr. Wallace asked Lt. Short why people leave?

Lt. Short states from his observations and tenure of 6 years is burnout is a big factor, case load burnout. The amount of cases an officer works is 200 - 300 a year. Being short handed and the amount of cases, officers get burnt out. How to solve the burnout factor is more personnel, and possibly scheduling changes. More in-house training is also being accomplished with other law enforcement agencies coming in to put on these classes, such as sexual assault.

Mr. Hildreth stated that Chairman Vanasse and Hildreth did talk with two or three of the officers that have left already, and have learned a lot.

CITY COUNCIL ORDERED
EXPUNGED FROM MINUTES
2/14/95

* R

Mr. Wallace made comment that the Police Department promote a step-ladder approach of in-house promotion. Example would be a CSO hired then becomes an officer, later promoted to sergeant then lieutenant such as the case with Lt. Short.

Chairman Vanasse has 15 recommendations that he has come up with, some are specific and some are broad.

- * 1.
- * 2.
3. City Council and Police Department Supervisors seek to improve the quality and stock of equipment, i.e.: pagers, vests, shower, etc..
4. City Council, City Manager and Police Department Supervisors seek to improve pay of staff to match similar communities.
5. City Council seek to settle the ongoing negotiations with APEA and ratify a contract.
- * 6.
7. City Council and Police Department Supervisors seek to fund and provide as necessary on-going professional training for Dept. Employees.
- * 8.
- * 9.
- * 10.
11. City Council, City Manager and Police Department Supervisor and Public Safety Committee seek to improve community relations.

* CITY COUNCIL ORDERED EXPUNGED FROM MINUTES 2/14/95

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12. City Council, City Manager and Police Department Supervisors seek to fund, recruit, train and maintain a Reserve Officer program to decrease workload.
13. City Manager and Police Department Supervisors seek to fund, recruit, train and maintain a Reserve Officer program to decrease workload.
14. Police Department Supervisors and staff seek to improve community relations by increased sponsorship and participation in community events and training.
15. Police Department to consider providing a suggestion box within the department for staff. Suggestions to be monitored by the Police Chief and City Manager.
16. Police Department promote a Step-Ladder approach of in-house promotion through the ranks.

Chairman Vanasse gave the list of recommendations to Mr. Hildreth to be included with the minutes. Chairman Vanasse made comment that some of the above matters are already being addressed by the Police Department, but there are also other areas that the Committee is not even aware of. The committee has been working on this issue, but there are certain things that we can do, but a lot the department must do. One of the things we are trying to do as a committee is make the Council, the City Manager, the Police Department supervisor and staff itself that we have recognized a problem with retention of staff and recruitment of staff as well. We have had this problem for a number of years but it has gotten a lot worse in the last year or so. Chairman Vanasse would like to see the Reserve Program come on again, which the department has been working real hard on, which is something that can help the workload. Lt. Short hopes the department can develop a volunteer force with the Citizens Police Academy.

Mr. Wallace would like to let the officers know that this is really important, we want to know why everybody is leaving because we want them to stay so that we have a little bit of continuity.

Mr. Hildreth made comment on passing a cruiser on the road, waving at the officer, sometimes they look the other way, but after you keep doing this, sometimes the officer has initiated the wave.

Lt. Short said the main goal of the department is the citizen community involvement of law enforcement. This is the key to success for many departments.

Mr. Harding said that the committee support funding for renovation of the Braund Building for a new Public Safety facility.

motion M/M by Wallace, 2nd by Hildreth that the Public Safety Committee recommends that the list of recommendations concerning the Police Department Turnover and Retention is a high priority with the Public Safety Committee and should be forwarded to the City Council for their review. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

I. NEW BUSINESS

ITEM A: Rotation of the Chair

Chairman Vanasse reflected on the previous meeting regarding his appointment as Chairman, but also reflected to the June 1994 meeting where possible rotation of the chair be every six months. Possibly one year would be more appropriate. Also, with the presentation by City Clerk to the committee later in the meeting is the Committee Rules and Procedures which recommends appointing a new chair each January.

Mr. Wallace suggests that changing of the chair occur in June just after budget as this is also when the new year starts for the city. Mr. Wallace recommends that we table this until the next meeting when the other 3 members can be present.

motion M/M by Hildreth, 2nd by Wallace to table until the February 1, 1995 meeting. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM B: Ambulance Replacement

Fire Chief Young reports that within the last two weeks a structural failure of Medic 3, the newest ambulance, so was placed out of service until a part from Seattle could arrive. Medic 2 was then placed as the front line ambulance, and two to three days later, after dropping a patient off at the airport, the firefighter/EMT saw its lights dim and smelled smoke. Medic 2 was taken to the City Shop where they found some problems with wiring and had taken a day and a half to replace the wiring but also check other wiring out as well. The Fire Department had to then put back in service Medic 3 which was also broke which was an unsafe vehicle. Medic 2 is 14 years old, Chief Young has brought this up now for the past two years, Chief Barker as well has brought this up. Medic 2 needs to rotate out and be replaced. Chief Young is making the Ambulance Replacement his priority capital project request this year.

Medic 2 does have a unique front end and that parts for this are no longer available or even for repair. The old Medic 1 Ambulance which is at PHASE is out of service, in fact buried in a snow bank outside. PHASE is seeking funding to replace that ambulance. There is a mutual aid with the National Guard for their ambulance, but does not meet the state requirements for the ACLU certification. Chief Young requests support from the committee for the ambulance replacement.

Mr. Wallace reflects back to when the city purchased Medic 3, the problems with that, that we do not want to get into that situation again.

Chairman Vanasse requests that Chief Young come back to the committee with the type of vehicle, vendor, price and possibly source of funds.

General discussion regarding seeking local funding from the community as well.

motion

M/M by Wallace, 2nd by Hildreth to table until the February 1, 1995 meeting. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM C: Committee Rules and Procedures

City Clerk Connie Tucker is addressing all committees regarding the proposed Rules and Procedures, as there has been no uniformity of the committees and the procedures in which to conduct business. The package delivered is a proposal subject to change.

If the Public Safety Committee has any recommendations or changes, please contact Connie Tucker so that everything can be looked at.

Chairman Vanasse spoke on items he thought were questionable, or to offer comment on.

Also requested comment for was the residency requirement for committee members. Chairman Vanasse said it should be the same as council requirements, registered voter and one year requirement.

ITEM D: Review Ordinance 9.08.050 Fireworks and Explosives

Chairman Vanasse stated this was brought by Fire Chief Young as he received a complaint from a citizen regarding the ordinance.

Chief Young reflected the past history of the ordinance and the change of the ordinance delegating a committee of three to make decisions on the fireworks issues. With the absence of the City Manager, and the Fire Chief in the position of Acting City Manager, Chief Young had a problem in making the decision without the third party.

General discussion regarding the ordinance, sale, discharge, etc..

Mr. Harding asked the question "What is the purpose of the ordinance?" If it is to prevent the use and sale of fireworks, then that is what it should do. If it has specific dates that you can sell and use fireworks, then that is what it should say.

Chief Young gave a short history of this years approval of the sale and use of fireworks.

General discussion regarding the committee of three, the absence of one of the members, an alternate should be appointed so that there is still a committee of three.

City Clerk Connie Tucker said that she can obtain other community Ordinance's regarding fireworks.

General discussion about the possibility of who the alternate might be, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, Mayor, City Manager designee in his absence In case the Police or Fire Chief was the acting City Manager.

motion M/M by Wallace, 2nd by Hildreth that the Public Safety Committee recommends to the City Council reference the letter by Kent Harding to Connie Tucker regarding City Ordinance 9.08.050, Fireworks and Explosives that the Committee of Three as defined by the ordinance establish policy regarding Item #2 and the Committee of Three make a decision on blanket or individual waivers. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

motion M/M by Hildreth, 2nd by Wallace to place this under Old Business at the February 1, 1995 meeting. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

II. ADJOURNMENT

The next Regular Meeting of the Public Safety Committee will be held February 1, 1995, 7:00 PM, at the Log Cabin.

motion M/M by Hildreth, 2nd by Wallace to adjourn the meeting at 9:48 PM. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 1994.

Gary Vanasse, Chairman
Public Safety Committee

City Council

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Kent Harding
Buford McComas
Tad Miller
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PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes of February 1, 1995

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was convened at 7:04 PM, at the Log Cabin, Bethel, Alaska by Chairman Vanasse.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Vanasse, Gregory, Harding, Hildreth, Wallace
Jones, Rothschild (Excused)

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

motion M/M by Hildreth, 2nd by Wallace to amend/approve the minutes of the January 4, 1995, regular Committee meeting by/as presented. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

V. CHIEF'S REPORTS

Chief Young reports that the rear wheels of Medic 3 have just fell off. Thought this would go good with the Ambulance Replacement agenda item.

Fire Department sponsored a Hazardous Materials 1st Responder class for city personnel to include Public Works and Police Department employees. Next will be a 40 hour Haz-Wopper class.

The Alaska Municipal League Risk Management Specialist was in Bethel, did an inspection, came up with suggestions, including the community. With all the different regulations, this information was well taken and will work into the present policy.

Volunteer EMT's and Firefighters are continuing training, all shots have been updated and infection control check-off.

Lt. Short reports the Police Departments focus is OSHA training. All officers have completed 20 hour course already with more training in the future.

1994 statistics are done, and there is an increase in activity over 1993. Total calls are:

Police Department	10,168
Fire Department	575
Animal Control	811
State Troopers	1003
Referrals	300-500

The committee was briefed on January 1995 statistics.

The department has hired 1 Community Service Officer, there are 2 vacant Police Officer positions, and will more than likely promote a CSO to fill one of the officer positions.

Rash of Burglaries during the Friday night storm (January 27) where money was mainly taken from business'.

Citizens Police Academy started on January 18, 1995 with 14 students. Hope to put on 2 classes per year.

VI. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Wallace was upset about the VHF radio with the Police Department. Also reported an individual had called 911 to report a chimney fire and the dispatcher had told the person to call the Fire Department.

Mr. Gregory was glad to see the resolution on the Marine VHF Radio. Does not know why the Police Department is so negative. Also made comment on the snow machine crossing areas. Brief discussion regarding this matter and also council is currently addressing.

Mr. Harding reports that the Snow Machine Signs have been discussed at council, and the City is preparing to review the State Sign Laws. 21 locations seemed excessive. Might have to go to the Planning Commission for assistance.

Mr. Hildreth, None
Chairman Vanasse, None

VII. PEOPLE TO BE HEARD

None

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

ITEM A: Rotation of the Chair

Chairman Vanasse gave brief history on this agenda item and stated that the committee has term limits, the chair should also have terms.

Mr. Wallace recommended that the Chair should be rotated at the fiscal year which starts in July.

General discussion regarding the different alternatives, the proposed Committee Rules and Procedures as addressed by Connie Tucker at the January meeting.

motion

M/M by Wallace, 2nd by Hildreth that the selection of the Chair for the Public Safety Committee be at the annual June meeting with an effective date of the July Meeting. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM B: Ambulance Replacement

Chief Young reports the Fire Department has been soliciting information from different companies for a replacement Ambulance. The Fire Department is looking at a conventional style 4 WD chassis compared to the van style that is currently in use.

Cost is estimated at approximately \$109,000.

Mr. Wallace asked if the City is financially able to purchase the ambulance with the current budget. Reasons are to possibly get this new ambulance to Bethel this season, instead of waiting until next year.

Mr. Harding will work with Chief Young for Bid Specifications.

motion

M/M by Hildreth, 2nd by Wallace that the City Council direct City Administration to initiate the procedures for Ambulance Replacement including bid preparations, advertisements and identification of funding. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM C: Ordinance 9.08.050 Fireworks and Explosives

General discussion relating to the January meeting and action taken by the City Council to appoint the Mayor to be the alternate to the Committee of Three. With the absence of Connie Tucker, we do not know if she has gathered information from other communities regarding their fireworks ordinances.

motion

M/M by Harding, 2nd by Wallace to table this until the March 1, 1995 meeting. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

ITEM A: Snow Removal

Mr. Wallace brought this as an agenda item from the January 4, 1995 meeting where problems were encountered with snow removal at the fire station. The Public Safety Committee on a couple of occasions have addressed the Public Works Committee and has seen no action.

During the most recent storm, both Police and Fire Departments called Public Works for help in keeping roads open in case of emergency but were denied by the Public Works Director. When the power outage hit Tundra Ridge Subdivision, Public Works did respond with equipment so that Bethel Utilities could repair the power problems.

General discussion including review of the recently adopted Snow Removal Plan. The plan also calls for the ability for Public Works Department to contract out to assist city crews. A line item in the budget needs to address this item. Adding additional city personnel for Road Maintenance is not a cost effective solution.

ITEM B: Marine VHF Emergency Channel Resolution

Mr. Harding drafted a Resolution as requested by the Mayor for the Marine VHF Emergency Channel.

Chairman Vanasse gave a brief history regarding this matter.

General discussion about the effectiveness of the radio, the recent searches where the radio would have provided assistance and its overall effectiveness for the community and region.

motion

M/M by Gregory, 2nd by Hildreth to approve the Resolution as presented. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM C: Taxi-Cabs

Mr. Hildreth brought this as an agenda item due to the number of complaints he has heard and witnessed regarding the taxi-cabs. Also reflecting to the Tundra Drums editorial regarding the taxi cabs brought good ideas such as back-up alarms, headlights on at all times, etc. Also made comment regarding the speeding, lack of stopping at intersections causing drivers to swerve to avoid collision.

General discussion with little the Public Safety Committee can do but forward to the Transportation Commission for their review.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The next Regular Meeting of the Public Safety Committee will be held March 1, 1995, 7:00 PM, at the Log Cabin.

motion M/M by Wallace, 2nd by Harding to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 PM.
Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 1995.

**Gary Vanasse, Chairman
Public Safety Committee**