

HOMETOWN SECURITY STUDY COMMITTEE
March 12, 2003, 1145 hours

Members Present: Chair General Stanley Heng, Carol Brown, Oscar Rios Pohirieth, Jim Geist, Don Marti, Major Guy Moon, Annette McRoy, Julie Righter, Tom Casady, Mike Spadt, Bruce Dart

Not in Attendance: Doug Ahlberg, Jeff Fortenberry, Larry Hudkins, Craig Madsen, Ken Svoboda

City Staff & Other Public Present: Jeff Cole (Staff), Corrie Kielty (Staff), Darrell Podany (Council Office), Mike Miriovsky (EMS Inc)

Approval of Minutes

Stanley Heng called for approval of the minutes of the February 26th meeting. **Jim Geist moved approval of the minutes, seconded by Carol Brown. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

Work Groups:

A motion was made at the last meeting that Committee Members wishing to serve on one of the Work Groups or having names of persons with expertise that should be on one of the Work Groups (Police, Fire/EMS, 911, Health/Emergency Management) were to submit their names for appointment to that particular group. A roster containing the names of persons wishing to serve on the Police Work Group and Fire/EMS Work Group was distributed. Co-chairs of the Police Work Group are Carol Brown and Annette McRoy; co-chairs of the Fire Work Group are Ken Svoboda and Doug Ahlberg. Since no one requested to serve on Health/Emergency Management or 911 Work Groups, it was suggested that they be reviewed by the entire Committee. Julie Righter expressed a concern that there would be no Work Group to study and make recommendations for 911, so she suggested that 911 be placed with the Police Work Group since 85% of their calls are police related and are the major source of their workload. Bruce Dart said that the Health Department is a part of EMS and their interests would be included in the Fire/EMS Work Group. **Motion by Carol Brown to approve the new Work Groups, Police/911 and Fire/EMS, and to add Julie Righter to the membership of Police/911 Work Group. Motion seconded by Jim Geist. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

Direction of Work Groups

Jeff Cole reviewed the Mayor's Charge to the Committee to develop a strategy to provide public safety services for the people of Lincoln as the city grows. The goal of the Committee's work is to distill an integrated package of recommendations that includes Fire, Police, 911, Health within the context of the Homeland Security environment. Work groups were to be established to focus on specific areas of concern. Jeff then reviewed a draft framework to guide work group activities. Work groups should begin by reviewing current information concerning department staffing, equipment levels and demand for services, as well as where funding is coming from.

Information was provided during the department presentations, and the challenge is to use that information to make good decisions. After reviewing this existing baseline of information, the Work Groups should examine how current performances match up with community expectations. It is very important before making recommendations to have a good understanding of where we are now in relationship to both current practice and expectations. The third charge to the Work Groups was to come up with a series of recommendations for the Committee to consider as part of the final report to the City in June.

Several committee members noted the difficulty in determining community expectations for emergency services. Carol Brown suggested conducting a survey of the community and asking them to provide input on what they want from their police and fire departments. She felt this information was needed before the Work Groups begin their work. It was felt that professionals would need to be involved to work with the respective Chiefs in developing appropriate questions for a survey to get the information that is needed to match up with the performance levels that are already being tracked. However there would be money involved to design and conduct a survey. Oscar Rios Pohirieth said another thing that is important to take into consideration is the diversity of Lincoln. There are over 50 ethnic groups in Lincoln and this Committee needs to look at their needs and how to meet those needs. It will not be possible to meet everybody's needs, but they should all be considered. Major Moon expressed a concern about the time it will take to prepare, distribute, get responses back, determine the impact and then make a judgment. Chief Casady said that another good way of gathering information is through a focus group. Carol Brown felt the focus group could be the Work Groups that are set up because there are neighborhood persons and others on those subcommittees. Corrie Kieley suggested that someone from the University could come to the subcommittee meetings to discuss the use of focus groups or surveys. Carol Brown and Don Marti suggested asking the Mayor's Office to look into the possibility of having a University Professor attend the first Work Group meetings and explain what can be done with focus groups and what can be done with surveys, what the costs would be, and how much time it would take

Since committee members felt it would be good to have someone from the University visit with the Work Groups, General Heng and Jeff Cole will make contacts and arrange that. Jeff Cole said that as Work Groups begin their work, there may be a need for an accelerated time frame, possibly weekly meetings. It was recommended that both work groups start immediately with meetings taking place the week of March 17th. The Work Groups can bring other departments of city government (Finance, Planning, Law) into their discussions, as necessary. Coming up with some kind of a sensible delineation of what community expectations are is difficult. The Mayor's Charge makes reference to looking at public outreach and fostering public discussion to determine what the public expects. This Committee can set up the framework for an ongoing communication process and provide a mechanism to effectively monitor community expectations for the future.

Next Meetings

The first meeting of the Police/911 Subcommittee is scheduled for March 19th at 11:45 a.m. in Police Department Classroom.

Fire/EMS Subcommittee scheduled their first meeting at Fire Station #1 on March 19th, 2:00 p.m.

The question was raised whether it was necessary for the full Committee to meet every other week until the subcommittees have something to report. To make sure that all Committee members are made aware of the progress that is being made, it was felt the full Committee should continue to meet every other week and the subcommittees can provide a short report. The full Committee will meet on March 26th at 11:45 a.m. in Police Department Classroom.

Jim Geist asked that financial information on what the city's priorities are be provided. He feels that public safety is the top priority of the city and it is important to see how the city is establishing priorities.

Public Comments

Mike Mirovsky of EMS Inc. said EMS Inc's basic function with the community is independent oversight of the 911 Center as well as the Ambulance Service. He said as a part of his job, he has done ride-alongs with the Fire Department and Police Department, and he encouraged Committee members to spend some time riding with both Departments. Chief Casady and Chief Spadt said their departments do provide ride-alongs and they will arrange ride-alongs for Committee members wishing to do that.

Mike Mirovsky also indicated that surveys have been done regarding EMS. Typically the community will tell you what they want, but they don't understand what the impact is on the community. He can provide information from those surveys.

Motion by Don Marti to adjourn, seconded by Jim Geist. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 1308 hours.

Submitted by:

Virginia Fischer