

## HOMETOWN SECURITY STUDY COMMITTEE

April 9, 2003, 1145 hours

Members Present: Chair General Stanley Heng, Carol Brown, Oscar Rios Pohirieth, Jim Geist, Don Marti, Jeff Fortenberry, Craig Madsen, Ken Svoboda, Julie Righter, Tom Casady, Mike Spadt, Bruce Dart

Not in Attendance: Major Guy Moon, Larry Hudkins, Annette McRoy, Doug Ahlberg

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

### Approval of Minutes

General Heng called for approval of the minutes of the March 26th meeting. **Jim Geist moved approval of the minutes, seconded by Ken Svoboda. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

### Comprehensive Plan

Steve Henrichsen from the Planning Department provided information on the Comprehensive Plan (adopted 5-28-02 by the City Council and the County Board), including population projections, future growth areas and where Fire, Police and EMS falls within the Comprehensive Plan to the year 2025. The county population for the last census was 250,000, with 90% or 225,000 in the city of Lincoln. The Comprehensive Plan's 2025 projected county population is estimated at 363,000 and 328,000 for the city of Lincoln. This works out to an annual population growth rate of 1.5%. Currently there are about 80 square miles inside the city limits. By the year 2025 it is projected that 40 square miles will be added to the city limits, with new growth in all directions around the city. The need for future fire stations and police substations to serve the new growth areas is included in the Plan. There also is a section in the Comprehensive Plan that deals with paying for the services needed to serve this area. Listed are other funding sources, such as impact fees which are being phased in over a four year period beginning on June 2nd.

Lincoln's population at the 2000 census was 225,581. Every other year the Census Bureau does population estimates using a system based on economic and demographic indicators. The Census Bureau will be doing that this year so there should be a new population estimate. The growth for Lancaster County has been estimated at less than 1%. Chief Casady said the Comprehensive Plan's 1.5% growth seems optimistic and he asked if the population estimates

are adjusted. Steve said that the first annual review of the Comprehensive Plan is underway, but the Comp Plan mandates that we wait three years before making any adjustments in the Plan.

### **Work Group Reports**

Fire/EMS: Jeff Cole reported that the Fire/EMS work group has met three times. At the last meeting, Steve Henrichsen from the Planning Department gave a presentation on the Comprehensive Plan and the Fire Department gave an overview of their CIP plan, going into detail item by item on the two stations that failed on the last election. Opinions on why the bond issue failed ranged from it being a political issue, to the economic conditions, to Fire taking on the ambulance service and the timing not being good. At their previous meeting (which was before the Comp Plan presentation), the work group had a lot of questions about growth and fire services. There was some concern about growing too fast and the implications for fire service. Noted was the fact that insurance ratings are affected by fire service and that Lincoln is able to secure for all citizens a lower insurance rate. Doug Ahlberg, who chairs the group, asked the committee members to start generating questions for the Fire Department to respond to.

Police/911: Carol Brown, co-chair of the Police/911 work group said the group is meeting weekly. They have no recommendations yet to bring forward. Jim Geist said that Chief Casady has talked about the need for more substations around the city and he wondered about the feasibility of co-locating a police facility with a fire station. Chief Spadt responded that Station 14 in the Highlands has a substation for LPD, and he and Chief Casady have discussed other co-locations as the city grows outward. Chief Casady said an agenda item for next week's Police/911 subcommittee meeting is capital improvement needs of the Police Department. This year, for the first time, the Police Department presented to the Capitol Improvement Project Committee a police substation in conjunction with a fire station in southeast Lincoln. The main reason to have full service substations is to be able to deploy efficiently and minimize travel time to beat areas. Locating a police substation in a particular area does not necessarily have an impact on crime in the surrounding environment, but it does, however, have a positive socio-economic impact on the neighborhood. The substation at North 27th was identified as an example of this type of impact. Interesting to note is the fact that Police and Fire were co-located at 9th and Que Street until 1965 which is when fire station #1 at 18th and Que was built.

There was general agreement at the last meeting that service needs exist and there are three questions to be looked at; productivity within the branches of public safety, how to decrease cost and increase output, and whether it is appropriate to re-examine the current missions and/or funding. Jeff Fortenberry said he would like to see laundry lists of ideas coming from the subcommittees, and he wondered when that would be happening. Jeff Cole said that the Police/911 subcommittee has been looking at specific issues and has set the next five week agendas to focus on; April 16th capital needs, April 22nd 911 staffing, funding and equipment needs, April 29th Police Department/LPS collaboration on School Resource Officers, May 6th Police Department staffing and number of officers per population, May 13th officers versus

civilian work force and the Police Department's use of paraprofessionals. It was the consensus of the Committee that any recommendations of the subcommittee should be brought forward as a work in progress for review by the entire Committee.

### **Homeland Security Update**

General Heng keeps in touch with the Military Department and there has not been much information coming down from the federal level which does not make it easy to plan on the State and local levels. He is waiting to see what kind of latitude states and local entities will have after information through intelligence shields is analyzed regarding possible problems here.

### **Public Opinion Research**

Jeff Cole said it was decided at the last meeting that because of budget and time constraints, a comprehensive survey could not be done and the Hometown Security Committee was chosen to provide community input. Chief Casady had developed a list of questions about the level of police response at certain situations to provide an opportunity for community input. Julie Righter also developed a list of questions regarding 911 to gather the same information on community expectations of the 911 Center. Since the Hometown Security Committee is the community focus group, he wondered if those questions should be distributed internally. The Committee felt they should have the opportunity to answer the questions. Similar questions should be generated for Fire/EMS. Craig Madsen asked that information be included about how much resources goes to each of the categories listed in the questions. Jeff Cole will send out the questions and compile the results.

Oscar Rios Pohirieth noted the need to keep community outreach strategies in mind as we move forward with recommendations.

### **Future Meeting Date**

Next week's Police/911 subcommittee will meet on Wednesday, April 16th at 1145 instead of the regular Tuesday meeting date. The Fire/EMS subcommittee will meet at its regular meeting time, 1600 hours on Thursday.

The next Hometown Security Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, April 23rd at 1145 in Classroom A.

## **Public Comments**

Mike Mirovsky asked about the possibility of bench marking and looking at other communities across the nation to see how they operate and what works. Chief Spadt said he does check to see how fire service is provided throughout the country, but his main concern is the expectations of this community. Chief Casady said that bench marking is a good way to know where you stand, particularly when there is a limited amount of time to work with, and that is why he provided a lot of information about other police departments in Nebraska and the United States.

Meeting adjourned at 1310 hours.

Submitted by:

Virginia Fischer