

May 5, 2010

**Report to the Mayor and the City Council
City of Austin**

Your Public Safety Commission met Monday, May 3 at 4:00 p.m. in the Boards and Commissions meeting room. We had two items on the agenda examining the Interlocal Agreement with the ARIC including an update on the development of the Privacy Policy, and an update on the Public Safety Cameras. We additionally began the process of detailed examinations of planned budget item requests from Police, Fire, and EMS.

We passed one motion to endorse the Interlocal Agreement with the awareness that it will be on the Council agenda for consideration on May 27. The motion passed with a vote of 6 in favor and 1 opposing as will be reflected later in the month from the minutes.

Most of our meeting time was focused upon testimony provided by Chiefs Carter, Shamard and Evans on items that would have budget consequences and reflected their assessments of critical items needed. We had highly detailed budget requests provided and will come back to those topics in subsequent meetings to better understand the requests; so that we may make informed advice to the City Council later in the summer.

As in past meetings there was considerable public interest in the topics as well as statements provided by individuals to the Commission. At times the room was noisy as some persons present were dissatisfied with the Commission's decisions relative to the Fusion Center and other topics that concern potential restrictions as well as data collected on citizens. I anticipate that such concerns will continue and the Commission will seek to continue to hear from various community interests about public safety issues. We repeatedly hear requests from some parts of the public for more frequent meetings and to meet in a larger venue. Those are requests that I forward to City Administration and via this communication to the City Council.

These are difficult times and events occur in many parts of the world that suggest complex and growing threats to public safety. The unexploded auto bomb in NYC's Times Square on May 2 is an example as was the February incident in Austin with the plane attack on the IRS building. We expect public safety issues including assessing adequate preparation of the City's resources and the conduct of members of these City Public Safety resources will continue to be important public concerns.

Michael Lauderdale
Chair Public Safety Commission