



**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION
MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING
Monday, June 5, 2017**

The Public Safety Commission convened a meeting on Monday, June 5, 2017 at City Hall, 301 West 2nd Street in Austin, Texas.

Chair, Rebecca Webber called the Board Meeting to order at 4:00p.m. A quick announcement/reminder to board members to be sure to read letter from City Clerk’s office referencing new requirements related to City Code Chapter 4-8: registered Lobbyists. The revisions to the ordinance go into effect June 1, 2017. A handout of budget recommendation from PSC board in 2016 and a packet of budget recommendations for the last twelve months was distributed to all board members by Commissioner Webber.

Board Members in Attendance:

Rebecca Webber, Chair	Ed Scruggs
Daniela Nunez, Vice Chair	Kim Rossmo
Brian Haley	Sam Holt
Rebecca Gonzales	Noel Landuyt
Preston Tyree	Vanessa Perez

Staff in Attendance:

Troy Gay, Assistant Chief, Austin Police Department
Jasper Brown, Chief of Staff, Austin/Travis County Emergency Medical Services
Richard Davis, Assistant Chief, Austin Fire Department

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- The minutes for the May 1, 2017 meeting were approved. Commissioner Haley motioned for approval of the minutes and Commissioner Holt second. **The minutes were approved with a unanimous vote (10 Board Members in attendance)**

2. CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS – two citizens signed up to speak

- **Carlos Leon** – spoke on a false warrant for his arrest that currently exist in Municipal Court’s database. Mr. Leon stated the charge against him has already been dismissed and he has documentation to prove it. He requested Austin Police Department’s assistance in getting this matter resolved.
- **Greg Foster** - member of the ARIC (Austin Regional Intelligence Center) Private Policy Advisory Committee representing the Austin City Council and Public Safety Commission and was appointed by former Council Member Laura Morrison. Mr. Foster announced his resignation from the board due to his family relocating. He commented he began serving on the board in 2013 until his resignation in

2017. He shared some insight on how the Fusion Center works and how it is funded. It has been in operation since 2010 and is primarily operated by the Austin Police Department and is legally indistinguishable from APD. Fusion Center is funded and staffed by an expanding roster of the County, City and School Law Enforcement Agencies. The committee consists of five appointed representatives. The role of the City of Austin appointee is to be a community advocate although there is no statutory definition of what that role or what any other role is responsible for. Primary products of the board are 1. An annual report with recommendations for any private policy recommendations to the board and 2. Send a secondary report to the partner agencies incorporating feedback from the board. I was appointed to the board in 2013 and the committee has met five times since then and has not recommended any policy changes to the board. There is no definition on how an appointment should occur. I am here to answer questions if you have any. Commissioner Webber thought he (Greg) should be invited back to the July 2017 Public Safety Commission meeting if there is a quorum to have a meeting. Commissioners Webber and Nunez thanked Mr. Foster for his service and for attending PSC meeting today.

5. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Commissioner Webber opened the discussion by asking if the board members wanted to hold a regular meeting in July 2017, have a special called meeting on a different week in July, or if they wanted to cancel the July 2017 meeting. A poll was taken and 4-4 which did not include all of the board members that were present voting. There was more discussion and Commissioner Webber proposed that the board not meet in July 2017. **Commissioner Haley** seconded her proposal/motion.

Vote: Unanimous (all 10 members voting) not to hold a Public Safety Commission meeting in July 2017

Commissioner Webber asked if the consultant being hired to perform the look back and look forward study on the DNA lab would be available for the August 2017 meeting. **Assistant Chief Gay** explained that there had been a change in the direction of hiring a consultant. The UNT (University of North Texas) Science Center made an appealing offer and that meant no personnel cost due to APD, they (UNT) using a per diem calculation. Overall their cost for services was less. City of Austin is currently working an interlocal agreement with University of North Texas. In addition to UNT, APD is also working with Quattrone of Penn State University who could do a look back and look forward. Commissioner Webber asked if the board would be able to hear from the UNT reps in August PSC meeting along with Quattrone? **Commissioner Rossmo** – after listening to the details I have to say I am glad to hear the new direction APD is going with hiring outside consultants. UNT runs a state of the ark DNA Lab and I know John Holloway who is at Penn State University and they do excellent work. This is a positive step forward. **Commissioner Webber** opened the floor for discussion on any future agenda items and there was no response from the board.

3. Visitor's Impact Taskforce Update – Commissioner Webber's Item

Bill Worsham presented an update on the Visitor's Impact Taskforce decisions and recommendations. He offered a little history/background on the taskforce before discussing the hotel tax dollars.

- This taskforce held its first meeting in December 2016
- City Council formed the taskforce to work towards identifying ways/how the revenues from hotel tax are spent in Austin on various services.
- The makeup of the taskforce consisted of about 20 different stakeholders, none of which were taxpayers of this revenue.
- Stakeholders included directors from Austin Convention Center, & Austin Convention & Visitors Bureau along with reps from City of Austin Cultural Arts Department. Local business owners were also a part of the taskforce along with citizens such as me (Bill) who represented various groups. I represented Public Safety Commission.
- Main task was to collaborate on ways to fund a new Austin Convention Center
- Taskforce recommended to council that it continues to spend 15% of the Hotel Tax revenue on Cultural Arts Department. This recommendation limited the availability of funding to help offset some of the cost Public Safety agencies experience hosting various events that come to the city.
- There was some discussion on setting up TPID (Tourism Public Improvement District). Should hotel owners chose to form TPID this could be a positive effect to public safety. In the event a TPID is formed it is a source of revenue that could be used to help offset the cost of public safety services covering some of the events.
- Final report from the taskforce was sent to council/posted today, June 5,2017

There were several questions from the board members and Commissioner Webber asked if the board wanted to send a recommendation or wait until they have had an opportunity to see/read the final report from Visitor's Taskforce. The board decided to wait on drafting a recommendation, but rather have an opportunity to review the final report.

4. BUDGET PRESENTATIONS FROM AUSTIN POLICE DEPARTMENT, AUSTIN FIRE DEPARTMENT AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES - Chair Webber called on three speakers who were signed up to speak.

Tony Marquardt, President Austin-Travis County EMS Employee Association –addressed the board and offered a review of future agenda items he offered during the May 1, 2017.

- Schedule the Medical Examiner to come and review/evaluate the interlocal agreement with Travis County and its impact on services now that there are three ESDs (Emergency Service Districts) providing a separate medical direction. Would like to hear Dr. Escott’s concerns.
- Schedule a review on UT LBJ School of Public Affairs Project and recommend on how to better integrate with the community
- Discuss the modified Dispatch System
- Review safety matters and review the Active Shooter Policies
- Upgrade EPCR software (Electronic Patient Care Report) so that it has the ability to communicate with hospital software which hopefully will enable medical staff to reach more people out in their community. There are already plans in the future for fewer hospital beds in hospitals

Robert (Bob) Nicks, President of Austin Firefighters Association - spoke on AFD budget particularly the rising overtimes cost

- What is the current staffing percentage? AFD has 154vacancies
- Why is AFD in a staffing shortage? Simple, we are in a consent decree and it dictates how many people can be hired in a year. When the consent decree is over Austin Fire Department can hire as many people as they want.
- Clarification on exactly what a SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) grant is/does. SAFER grant operates with an expectation that the funding will help a department to reach a certain staffing level. This is the type of funding where once the funds are all spent; the program isn’t expected to stop. This grant helps departments to reach a certain level with a premise they would continue\be able to maintain the level of staffing moving forward.
- An AFD report/summary on staff vacancies and increasing overtime was offered to the board members by Robert (Bob).

Ken Casaday, President of Austin Police Association – addressed the Public Safety Commission and asked for its support/commitment to a send the Austin City Council a resolution asking the council to at least listen to one of the reports from the consultant groups. To date there have been numerous studies on APD and no action has been taken by the council. Per Ken, APD is still trying to get the 12 new bodies they were promised last year. Currently Austin Police Department is down on the time it takes to arrive to a priority one call, violent crimes are up and

detectives are overrun with cases. The detective allotment has not increased in years and we have officers leaving violent crimes unit due to being overworked. We are currently at 80% staffing. Our patrol should be 100% staffed. We are asking your help to reach goals from one of the outside studies completed for Austin Police Department.

Jasper Brown, Chief of Staff, Austin Travis County Emergency Medical Services –

Brown began his presentation by alerting the board to a change in the way the budget process has been done in the past and what Mayor Adler has requested in department assessments this year. The needs assessment presented is for five years as opposed to one year.

Five-Year Needs Assessment for EMS

- Total of 82 sworn positions
- Six Single Paramedic Response Units (24 Medics)
- Two Additional Stations (24 positions)
- 8 Communications Medics for increasing 911 call volume
- 9 civilian staff for finance, the Mobile Integrated Health Triage Line, quality assurance, maintenance, and scheduling
- Facility main improvements, training, and software

Chief Brown elaborated on each category listed as a need assessment. He emphasize the Patient Care Records communications/software is a big need for the department and how the program would save time and possible lives with quick access to patient's information by all health care workers involved in responding to a call. He informed the board of their 84 million budgets last year and how EMS brought in 51 million in revenue that all goes to the City of Austin general fund. Chief Brown shared with the board; EMS doesn't send anyone owing them money to a collections agency unless they absolutely cannot reach them to work out payment arrangements. 46% of the initial billing from EMS has some type of discount.

There was discussion and questions from the board members:

- No numbers/dollar amounts on the 5yr assessments slide, when can we expect to see the actual numbers (Gonzales)
- In reference to the six single paramedic response units, one person responding to a call have you seen this in other cities? I'm asking because of the comment earlier on the need for armor /protection (ballistic vests) for the medics. (Holt)
- Are medics issued helmets? (Scruggs)
- How much does it cost for building repairs? (Nunez)
- How much does it cost for apparatus repairs? (Nunez)

Chief of Staff, Brown responded – every medic on our streets is issued vests. There was a proposal from a medic that talked about upgrading the vest to one where a panel could be moved into for hot situations. There are no guidelines as to when they are supposed to wear the vest. We are coming together with Austin Fire and Austin Police to work on a policy for when all are supposed to wear the vest. The theory of upgrading to something that takes us more into the hot zone is not something supported by our partners (Austin Police & Austin Fire) right now.

The building repairs for Emergency Medical Services buildings varies between 6-7 million, and mostly all of the apparatus repairs are done by City's Fleet Services for the last three years. In addition to the fleet services department, there are some contracts with Dodge dealership and

vehicles have to be taken there. **Commissioner Webber** – commented there needs to be a future agenda item on EMS protective gear.

Richard Davis, Assistant Chief, Austin Fire Department

Five Year Needs Assessment –

Total of 80 sworn positions

-16 positions for Onion Creek Ladder unit

-48 positions for three new stations (con

-6 Battalion chiefs; 2 per year over next three years

-10 staff for special events, dispatch and inspection

-7 civilian staff for IT, compliance, and administration

-Facility improvements, equipment replacement, and software

Assistant Chief Davis- presented on the needs for Austin Fire Department. The four staffing practice is supported by the National Fire Association, and OSHA requires 2 in and 2 out for improved safety. Currently due to high retirement season that contributes to the more vacancies, and the fact that we are not able to hire due to the consent decree creates an even larger amount of vacancies. **Rossmo** – commented that the board has had brief descriptions of what is needed by public safety departments but no justifications that tells us why it is needed. I would like to see a business case where we might be able to support your (Austin Fire Department) requests. **Scruggs** – commented the board should remember the need for personnel a mapping person to complete the risk mapping overlay to be included in the CODE NEXT and how do we communicate the board’s support for this additional staff to the council and budget office? **Commissioner Webber** – commented on ways to communicate with the council offices and a vote was taken to send a memo to the council offices. The memo would state the need for a permanent mapping person to complete risk mapping for CodeNext.

VOTE: Unanimous (10 voting)

Troy Gay, Assistant Chief, Austin Police Department – presented on the five-year assessment for Austin Police. There is a need for 329 sworn positions. He elaborated on the 163 positions for Community Policing per Matrix Report and discussed the 79 recommendations from the Matrix firm that Austin Police agreed with 78 of the 79 items. The one they disagreed on was the keeping track of officers volunteering hours. Austin police are currently working on the 78 items recommended in the report:

-15 items pending

‘ -37 items in progress

-26 items completed

AC Gay shared answers to previous questions from the board car armor for APD and why the department was not purchasing the armor for both doors on 363 vehicles was 1.5 million. He offered an update on K-2 drug;

- January 2017 – April 2017 number of calls increased

- May 2017 – number of K2 calls went down to 330

- An additional 6, 000 in funds was spent to do additional testing for K2 drug

He told the board APD will be fully staffed in January 2018. Casaday – cautioned the board to keep in mind that is not the number the MATRIX report recommended. He stated the number should be 400 to 420 over the next 5 years to be completely staffed.

There were questions from board members:

- How many officers do we need to reduce the crime rate? (Nunez)
- Can you provide a breakdown on the percentage and types of crimes? (Holt)
- of the 163 positions does it include the District Reps (Nunez)

Commissioner Tyree- had a question for EMS concerning 911. Do we have the ability to text to 911 at this time? There was hearing impaired gentlemen here earlier who had this question. **Brown** – there are plans to address/have 911 texting into our system within the next 9-18 months. In the meantime there is the translator service available (Relay Texas) that they can call for service.

Commissioner Tyree – asked if the language in the recommendation could be stronger on the implementation of the Matrix report and hiring a mapping technician. **Commissioner Webber** responded she would work on drafting stronger language. Below is the recommendation sent to city council.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION 20170605-004

Date: June 5, 2017

Subject: Recommendation to the Austin City Council Regarding the FY 2018 Public Safety Budget

Motioned By: Commissioner Preston Tyree

Seconded By: Rebecca Webber, Chair

Description of Recommendation to Council

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Austin Public Safety Commission recommends the following actions to Austin City Council regarding the FY 2018 budget regarding public safety:

1. Allocate funds so that the Austin Fire Department can hire a permanent mapping technician;
2. Allocate funds so that the Austin Police Department can fully implement the recommendations in the Matrix Consulting Group’s 2016 community policing report.

Vote

For: 10 (Commissioners Webber, Tyree, Nunez, Scruggs, Haley, Holt, Perez, Landuyt, Gonzales, and Dr. Rossmo)

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 0

Attest: 0

Janet Jackson, Public Safety Commission Staff Liaison

Adjourn @ 6pm