

COUNCIL CONFERENCE MINUTES

April 14, 2009

The City Council of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in a conference at 5:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building Conference Room on the 14th day of April, 2009, and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray, and the Norman Public Library at 225 North Webster 48 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Butler, Cubberley, Dillingham, Ezzell, Griffith, Kovach, Quinn, Thompson, Mayor Rosenthal

ABSENT: None

DISCUSSION REGARDING THE COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING PROGRAM.

The voters of Norman approved a seven year one half percent public safety sales tax increase in a Special Election held on May 13, 2008. One purpose of the revenues from the sales tax was for the promotion of community relations through a philosophy of community policing, which promotes partnership and positive interaction between public safety personnel and the citizens of Norman.

Councilmember Thompson, Chairman of the Council Oversight Committee, said the mission of the Committee was to develop a Community Oriented Policing (COP) Policy for the Public Safety Oversight Committee to utilize as they begin establishing benchmarks for the Police Department. He said the Committee reviewed several items in an effort to define community policing and outlined goals for the citizens committee to use in the execution of a Community Policing Program that will be unique to Norman. He said the Oversight Committee also recommended establishing a good measurable Five Year Plan so that at the end of the fifth year, the Public Safety Oversight Committee could evaluate the program and identify successes and/or problems. The information would be submitted to Council to determine whether or not to ask the voter to continue the public safety sales tax.

Lieutenant David Teuscher, Community Oriented Policing, Norman Police Department, provided background philosophy for community oriented policing and said universal principles describe community policing as a philosophy, managerial style, and organizational strategy. He said generally accepted goals of community policing are to promote better police through community partnerships and more proactive problem solving with the help of the community. He said community policing can help solve a variety of problems including the control, prevention, and fear of crime. He highlighted the values and principles of community oriented policing, which are embodied in the prevention of crime through community involvement and support by providing equal access, treatment, and distribution of police services and resources. He said crime prevention is the responsibility of the entire community and can only happen through community partnerships and participation. It requires an investment in training, which emphasizes problem analysis and solving; organization; communication; mediation and conflict resolution; diversity; and networking. The overall benefit of community policing is an improved quality of life for the entire community. Citizens enjoy a greater participation in setting police priorities and a better understanding of police duties. It empowers officers to make decisions and manage their time much better and encourages them to seek alternative methods to solve problems in their specific beats. He highlighted some of the misconceptions of community policing and said it is not just another name for social work; it is not simply a cosmetic gesture; it is not just another program or passing fad; and it is not soft on crime.

Lieutenant Teuscher said Staff worked with the Council Oversight Committee to develop the City of Norman's definition, vision, and mission for community policing. He said *Community Oriented Policing* is defined as a philosophy based on the concept that Norman police officers and Norman citizens work together in creative ways to help solve contemporary community problems related to public safety including crime, fear of crime, social and physical disorder, and neighborhood decay.

The City of Norman COP policy defines its vision and mission as follows:

VISION

The community oriented policing philosophy permanently and positively changes the police department's interaction with the community. The community's positive interaction with the police department is necessary in order to create a *safe, diverse and inclusive* community.

MISSION

Enhance the quality of service to the community of Norman by developing a partnership based on *trust using community relations, problem identification/solutions, and crime prevention.*

Lieutenant Teuscher said the goal established for community policing in Norman is to reduce crime and disorder by carefully examining the characteristics of problems in neighborhoods and then applying appropriate problem solving remedies. Officers will be responsible for a certain area and held accountable to provide solutions to issues within the area. He said partnerships are one of the core elements of the program. Relationships of trust between the police and the community will be developed and maintained to work towards the goal of establishing a network of resources to help in the problem identification and solving process. He said building trust will not happen overnight and will require ongoing effort. Trust is essential in developing the partnerships and close ties within the community. The process will include identifying community stakeholders, i.e., City of Norman; elected officials; community at-large; University of Oklahoma; Norman Public Schools; other law enforcement agencies; social service agencies; business community; and property owner associations. Another core element is problem solving and requires proactive efforts to identify problems, educate all parties involved, and assign resources to solve those problems.

The Police Department will perform a vigorous public information outreach program; increase visibility in the community; perform proactive crime prevention; work to improve problem solving; provide training to all department members both sworn and civilian are COP knowledgeable; recruitment for new personnel will aim to attract employees who are suited to a COP philosophy; and officers will act as a liaison and referral between citizens and other resources. The citizens responsibilities for the program include forming partnerships with their neighbors and their beat officer; being involved with their neighborhood and their community; communicating their concerns to their beat officer; assisting in the search for solutions to area problems; and helping to use those solutions to solve problems. The Police Department will prepare a Five Year Implementation Plan to establish strategies and activities to implement community policing concepts as well as an Annual Work Plan consistent with the Five Year Implementation Plan. The Annual Work Plan will provide detailed activity planning and accomplishments such as expected outcomes and activities, a time frame, and identification of those responsible for implementation of all components of the Annual Work Plan. Lieutenant Teuscher completed his presentation with a quote from Sir Robert Peel, the Father of Policing, "the police are the public and the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence."

Councilmember Kovach thanked the Oversight Committee and Staff and said the Committee meetings consisted of very frank discussions and he appreciated Staff's work and openness throughout the process. He recommended the policy to his colleagues and asked for their support. Councilmember Quinn said the program will take time to implement and reminded everyone it would require joint effort and participation from both the police and the community. Councilmember Butler said she was glad to see the diversity included within the program and the joint efforts from other City departments as well. Police Chief Phil Cotten said proper training will allow for participation

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from other City departments. He said members of other departments are out working in the community every day and by knowing what to look for; they may be able to alert the police of potential problems before they occur. Mayor Rosenthal said the Public Safety Oversight Committee will work with the citizens to create benchmarks and Councilmember Cubberley said they will also provide annual updates on the benchmarks including the successes and barriers. He said the Five Year Plan identifies the sources, but the program is long term and will continue long after the five year term. Mayor Rosenthal asked when the Five Year Plan would be completed and City Manager Steve Lewis said Staff will be working with the Public Safety Oversight Committee and anticipates completion in July.

Items submitted for the record

1. Resolution with attachment, Norman's Rededication to Community Oriented Policing
2. City Council Oversight Committee minutes of January 21, February 4, February 18, and March 4, 2009
3. PowerPoint presentation entitled, "City of Norman Community Oriented Policing"

Participants in discussion

1. Lieutenant David Teuscher, Community Oriented Policing, Norman Police Department
2. Police Chief Phil Cotten

The meeting adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor