

BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
PUBLIC SAFETY SUBCOMMITTEE

There was a regular meeting for the above-reference subcommittee held at **6:30 p.m. on Monday, March 11, 2013** in Conference Room #5, Bloomfield Town Hall, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT.

Committee members present were: Councilors Washington, Banks and Jacobs. Also present were: Councilor Rivers, Chief Paul Hammick – Bloomfield Police Department, Chief William Riley, Pat Braun – EMS and India Rodgers, Clerk of Council.

Absent was: Chief Robert Farmer, Blue Hills Fire Department

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 p.m.

POLICE

Crime Report

Chief Hammick reported that the month of February was fairly quiet. There was a 3% increase in crime, year to date. Most of these larcenies are predominantly shop lifting from Burlington Coat Factory, Home Depot and several other retailers. There was also one robbery in which a student was assaulted after school and items were stolen.

Officer initiated activity is up 25% year to date.

Chief Hammick mentioned observing the beginning of fatigue with officers in the department. Due to the shortage in manpower, most officers are working double shifts for coverage. A meeting will be held with officers to discuss strategies on how to abate this issue.

Personnel Updates

With new officers entering the Police Academy beginning on April 1, 2013, the department should have some staff relief by the end of the year.

There was a revised announcement for certified officers submitted to Human Resources for recruits. The department scheduled three candidates for interviews and only 2 applicants followed through with this process. Only 1 candidate passed the interview and will go onto the next phase for background investigation.

On February 15, 2013, Officer Gary Fitzpatrick retired from the department.

A promotional ceremony was held for Sergeant Matthew Suplee and Detective Robert Spellman.

Interviews are underway for the vacancies in Police Dispatch. Currently, there were two full time and one part-time position available. The part-time position will be offered to a selected applicant for acceptance.

Councilor Jacobs inquired about the quality of the candidates, prior experience and overall knowledge about law enforcement. He also asked about the process for advertisement of these positions.

Chief Hammick gave a brief description of hiring process as well as some incite about the selected applicants and their qualifications.

Community Services

The Citizens Police Academy will begin on March 12, 2013 with 14 attendees.

On March 12, 2013 the department will assist in the dignitary detail for the President Paul Kagame of Rwanda.

FIRE

Chief Riley of the Bloomfield Center Fire District thanked and commended the Public Works department for their clean-up efforts and assistance during Blizzard Charlotte.

EMS

Pat Braun of the EMS Committee reported that EMT classes were cancelled for Spring, 2013, due to a low response in recruitment. The commission had a brief discussion about advertisement for new classes. Currently, outside sandwich boards are used for signage in recruitment efforts. The EMS website is also under construction. It was noted that a few CPR classes were held and completed.

The committee also continued the discussion regarding scholarships for EMT classes. Currently, volunteers are reimbursed \$100.00 after training is completed. The cost per student for EMT classes is \$425.00.

Councilor Jacobs inquired about classroom size and volunteers who remain with the Bloomfield Volunteer Ambulance (BVA). Approximately, 20 students are in the average class and almost half remain as volunteers. Councilor Jacobs also stated the need to remain fair and equitable regarding the selection process for scholarships.

Mr. Braun also mentioned the appreciation of volunteers for a renovated lounge. There was carpet installation, painting and several pieces of furniture included to renew this space.

A brief report was given for Ambulance Operations during the 3rd quarter. AMR is still in place as the contracted agency to fill overflow. BVA has lost some volunteers to paid positions and it has been difficult to fill midnight shifts. Since the last EMT class, 9 volunteers are interested in service with BVA.

Mr. Braun also gave a brief explanation to Councilor Washington regarding the differences between the EMS Committee and Bloomfield Volunteer Ambulance.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilor Washington stated that he received a phone call from Mr. Gerald Lumpkin, a resident of Bloomfield indicating a major concern regarding speeding on Route 185 (Wintonbury Avenue) near Camelot Drive. Mr. Lumpkin expressed concern for the safety of his children and fellow pedestrians.

Councilor Jacobs inquired about the status of complaint from Mr. James McGovern. Mr. McGovern raised an issue regarding the filing of complaints of the police department and its overall effectiveness. Since his initial complaint, he has conducted a search on the career networking site, LinkedIn inquiring and requesting information from police chiefs in the state on how to be efficient in the complaint process. He also made a complaint with Dr. James Thompson, Superintendent of Bloomfield Public Schools regarding his initial complaint involving the school system. Mr. McGovern also suggested developing a volunteer police force for the town to assist with non-custodial duties such as parades and school activities.

Chief Hammick indicated that a consolidated meeting has been scheduled with Mr. McGovern, Dr. Thompson and himself to discuss these concerns.

It was also noted that Mr. McGovern previously had a blog in which he wrote about this issue with the Police Department and town government.

Nuisance Ordinance

Councilor Jacobs inquired about the current status of police activity in the Arnold Drive and Cliffmount Drive neighborhoods, since the ordinance passed to enforce some regulations.

Chief Hammick reported that officers continue to go to targeted locations to address these concerns. It was noted that the ordinance is another tool used to enforce measures from a different angle. It was initially drafted to apply pressure to the landlord(s) and residing students. There have been numerous contacts made in these neighborhoods with issuing tickers for excessive noise.

Councilor Jacobs expressed the urgency and frustration among residents residing in neighborhoods with excessive noise, trash, overnight parking, etc. The police department will continue to have enforcement authority with infractions and possible custodial arrests.

Chief Hammick offered to contact a list of concerned neighbors, to inform them of the role and support from the police department under the current ordinance.

Councilor Washington also addressed resident concerns regarding the amounts for fines. Most residents felt that the proposed fines were not high enough to have significant impact to deter behaviors.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Councilor Jacobs, seconded by Councilor Banks and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m.