

CENTRAL BUCKS REGIONAL POLICE COMMISSION

Minutes

February 25, 2015

The monthly meeting of the Central Bucks Regional Police Commission, held as a Town Hall meeting at Delaware Valley College, was called to order by Chairman Ron Strouse at 7:30 PM. All Commission Members were present. Also present were Chief James Donnelly, Lt. Pat Penecale, Mr. John Davis, Mr. David Sander, and an audience of approximately sixty people. Mr. Strouse led the Pledge of Allegiance.

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME: Mr. Strouse welcomed audience members and introduced the Commission Members, Chief of Police, and the Solicitor. Mr. Strouse explained how the Police Commission functions and the relationship/interaction with Doylestown and New Britain Borough Councils.

DOYLESTOWN BOROUGH PERSPECTIVE: Mr. Strouse spoke from the perspective of Doylestown Borough's Mayor, former Vice Chairman and current Chairman of the CBRPC. The following statements summarize the remarks made by Mr. Strouse. The Department requires flexibility and needs to respond to change. The primary reason Doylestown Borough entered into agreement to regionalize police departments was to save on resources. Although resources are limited and members of the Commission are always concerned about taxpayer dollars, necessary resources are provided for training and infrastructure investment. A dynamic police department responds to changes in the community and requires investment in police training, building structure, and equipment. The Commission discerns when/where to spend resources and where to save. CBRPD is a superior police department operating in a substandard environment which impacts the work of the police. A recent example was given where a pipe burst in the Department flooding a portion of the facility. This meeting will reveal amazing statistics in the Department's ability to address crime in the community. Along with the vitality of Doylestown, comes challenges for the police department including reducing the number incidents involving public drunkenness, disorderly conduct and drug abuse.

NEW BRITAIN BOROUGH PERSPECTIVE: Mr. David Holewinski spoke from the perspective of New Britain Borough's Mayor, former Chairman and current Vice Chairman of the CBRPC. The following statements summarize the remarks made by Mr. Holewinski. New Britain Borough has worked toward a regionalized police force for a minimum of five years. When the possibility of a merger with Doylestown Borough arose, New Britain Borough reacted positively, spent approximately one and half years analyzing the proposal, and merged on January 1, 2014 forming Central Bucks Regional Police Department. It is easy to see why large and small municipalities would reap the benefits of regionalization as it provides long-range cost reduction. New Britain Borough did not want to price itself out of police protection by attempting to remain a small single unit. The Borough enjoys the additional resources of a detectives unit, quick back up for its officers on incident calls and an opportunity for additional education/training of its officers. In 2014, the Borough has experienced a reduction in crime and an increase in crime resolution. Resident acceptance is important to Borough officials and has remained strong with the objection of one resident, which was addressed to satisfaction by Chief Donnelly. New Britain Borough is very pleased with the regionalization and anticipates future growth.

CBRPD 2014 PRESENTATION: Chief James Donnelly presented a slideshow on the results and various aspects of the first year of regionalization. The following statements summarize Chief Donnelly's presentation. The CBRPD *Policing Model* included strategic development, information sharing, officer

accountability, pro-active policing, and statistical analysis. Intelligence-led policing was explained as a system for collecting, organizing, analyzing and utilizing intelligence which is the primary strategy used at CBRPD.

Information Sharing is partner-based with the government (Federal/State/Local), the public sector and the private sector. CBRPD has many partners including the FBI, District Attorney, surrounding departments, social media, NOVA, Women's Place and Council of Southeast PA. CBRPD distributes a law-enforcement sensitive bulletin that is a collection of active investigations, recent arrests and outstanding warrants throughout the region to over 200 law enforcement officers. Additionally, CBRPD participates in an inter-departmental program for the collection and analysis of DNA which was established in 2014. Since its inception in mid-2014, CBRPD has solved two major crimes (burglary and rape) using the DNA database.

Officer Accountability is evident in the system CBRPD has created to monitor and manage the progress of officers, squads and detectives. There is no level set; it reflects the officers being on the street every day combating the problems that exist in our community. Everyone benefits from a safer town with a higher quality of life.

Pro-Active Policing includes directed patrols, traffic enforcement patrols, bar patrols, school patrols, security business checks, vacation house checks, special events, DARE, junior driver's program, bike patrol and foot beats.

Statistical Analysis is effective using an Intelligence Cycle which is outlined in six steps: planning/direction, collection, processing/collation, analyze, disseminate, and re-evaluate. The Department is in the process of developing a crime analysis unit to further the Intelligence Cycle.

Results were credited to the officers' hard work and dedication. Officers took a pro-active role which paid off in elevated quality of life for both communities. CBRPD micro-focused on four areas in 2014: burglary, disorderly conduct/public drunkenness, theft, and vandalism. Results are as follows: Burglaries 8 (Doylestown 7, New Britain 1) 74% decrease compared to three-year average; Thefts 101 (Doylestown 86, New Britain 15) 57% decrease; Vandalism 46 (Doylestown 38, New Britain 8) 60% decrease; Disorderly Conduct and Public Drunkenness 135 (Doylestown 122, New Britain 13) 16% decrease. While any decrease is good, it is not good enough for CBRPD. This is an area that will require additional focus. Part I Crimes were at its lowest in five years with a 41% decrease compared to the average of previous years; Part II Crimes were at its lowest at 544 with a 25% decrease.

Clearance Rates are reported to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting program. Clearance criteria is strict and allow for crimes to be cleared by arrest or exceptional means only. CBRPD cleared 44% of Part I Crimes in 2014; 74% of Part II Crimes. These percentages are well above Bucks County and State of Pennsylvania clearance rates.

Response Times is indicated as a next step toward improvement which is anticipated to be done on a quarterly basis. Incidents versus service calls will be considered while determining the adequate response time for each of these categories.

Traffic Studies are conducted at each intersection on a continual rotating basis. Traffic studies traffic count, average daily volume and the 85% percentile of speed. Results direct traffic enforcement and speed details ultimately reducing traffic accidents.

Traffic Accidents (Reportable) for Doylestown in 2014 was 58 compared to the five-year high of 85, New Britain 19, compared to the five-year high of 27. Non-reportable accidents for Doylestown was 284, New Britain 41. There has been an increase in non-reportable accidents for Doylestown; essentially reportable accidents were made non-reportable through effective placement of four-way stop signs and targeted traffic enforcement.

The **Budget** for 2014 ended in the black by \$126,667 despite being over budget by \$37,365 for insurance costs and \$43,148 for overtime. Forecasted expenses were \$3,544,821; actual expenses were \$3,381,806. Forecasted revenue was \$3,544,821; actual revenue was \$3,508,473. Past due revenue for 2014 is still trickling in during the first quarter of 2015.

New Technology – The regionalized department has acquired/updated technology during its first year including video cameras in all patrol vehicles, crime mapping, and participation in the DNA Database. Additional technology purchases are being studied including body cameras, license plate reader, and command control dashboard for live reporting and real time criminal activity.

Looking Forward, CBRPD is looking to continually improve research, analysis and working strategies to reduce crime. Additionally, the Department will continue to increase effectiveness and efficiency while keeping costs down, keeping up to date with cutting-edge technology, real time crime centers, cybercrime intelligence, crime analyst unit and community partnerships.

The forum was opened for a question and answer period. Chief Donnelly answered several questions regarding body cameras, license plate readers, statistics, and a previously settled litigation prior to regionalization.

NEW FACILITY PRESENTATION: Mr. John Davis, Mr. Phil Elhinger, and Mr. Joseph Phillips (Phillips & Donovan Architects) presented a slideshow on the proposed police facility. The following statements summarize the facility presentation. **Current Facility Shortcomings**, which do not comply with current building codes and standards, include functionality, safety, ADA, and energy. Pictures were displayed showing each of the shortcomings. **Required Attributes** for a new facility include space of average size (12,000 to 15,000 SF), clear points of service, streamlined interaction, secure transaction areas, separate administrative/police/evidence areas, sally port with direct access to processing/holding/evidence areas, separation of police and public vehicular traffic, secure parking area for police and personal vehicles, and access to major roads. A **Site Option Study** was conducted with the following search criteria:

availability, parking and public access, land acquisition costs, construction costs, and police program satisfaction. Sites studied in Doylestown Borough included Borough Hall addition and renovation, PennDot building adaptive use, and construction at PennDot Yard, Atkinson Lane, Lantern Hill, Mercer/Chapman, Harvey Avenue, and Temple Judea properties. Sites studied in New Britain Borough included new construction at Ironwood Business Center, Foster Lot, Land Chiropractic, Smith Marine, Knowles, and Detwiler properties. The **Recommended Site** for the new police facility and borough offices is the PennDot building due to lower cost, satisfaction of police needs, excellent proximity to Justice Center and 611 bypass, good public access/parking, and adaptive re-use of historic building.

Pictures of the PennDot building site were shown. Advantages of the proposed PennDot site include: conveniently located in region served, accessible to Route 611 bypass, located adjacent to parking garage, public entrance facing street/on grade/highly visible, sufficient site area to separate police and public vehicular traffic, secure police parking areas behind building, accommodates sally port, clear span roof structure allows flexibility in facility layout, building roof is relatively new, gas fired boiler is relatively new, and sufficient site and building area to allow for expansion.

The forum was opened for a question and answer period. Mr. Davis, Mr. Elhinger, and Mr. Phillips answered several questions regarding timing of occupying the PennDot site, the proposed central park village green, parking issues, other options reviewed, and expansion capabilities. Mr. Davis explained the renovations of the PennDot building and the community park will be treated as one project. He assured attendees the process and steps taken would be communicated to the public as they progress.

Chief Donnelly addressed a citizen concern regarding trucks “beeping” as they back up behind the PennDot building in the early morning hours. Chief Donnelly advised they should call PennDot directly and he will do the same.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made by Mr. Bill Macklem to approve the meeting minutes of January 28, 2015; seconded by Mr. Det Ansinn. Motion approved.

FINANCE: The finance reports were reviewed. Ms. Robyne Kelemen questioned the January Profit/Loss report in reference to SWAT and Part-Time Uniforms being at 100% of allocated budget item. Chief Donnelly explained the SWAT cost represents a one-time per year payment for inclusion in the SRT, SWAT services and negotiation services. There will be no further SWAT costs for the year 2015. The Part-Time Uniform costs represents the purchase of body armor vests. The BVP government program will reimburse CBRPD for 50% of this cost throughout the year.

Cash Reserve – A motion was made by Mr. Ansinn to maintain a cash reserve account for CBRPD that would not exceed \$100,000 on an annual basis; seconded by Mr. Holewinski. Motion approved.

Financial Services – An agreement to contract with the Finance Director of Doylestown Borough for financial services has been denied at this time and will be re-visited at year end.

NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution 2015-01 provides for the adoption of the VantageCare Retirement Health Savings (RHS) Plan #803567 which satisfies a Police Contract obligation. A motion was made by Mr. Holewinski to approve Resolution 2015-01; seconded by Mr. Ansinn. Motion approved.

Resolution 2015-02 provides for the adoption of ICMA Retirement Corporation to administer the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) which satisfies a Police Contract obligation. A motion was made by Mr. Ansinn to approve Resolution 2015-02; seconded by Mr. Holewinski.

OLD BUSINESS:

Body Cameras – Chief Donnelly reported he has met with four companies who submitted proposals on body cameras. He is in the process of reviewing the materials and will have a recommendation and report for the Commission upon completion.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Mr. Ansinn to adjourn at 10:15 PM; seconded by Mr. Macklem. Motion approved.

Respectfully submitted,

James Donnelly
Chief of Police