

**MINUTES OF COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING  
TUESDAY, 11/13/12, 4:15 P.M.**

Board Members Present: Dave Thomason, Bonnie LaForest, Cathy Niiro, Ed Johnson, Gene Barner  
Not Present: Lauren Nelson, Beth Connor, Jo Balda, Barbara Buchanan  
Dept. Staff Present: Chief Green, Martha Folsom

The meeting was called to order by Dave Thomason at 4:13 p.m. in the Police Department Conference Room.

**AGENDA TOPICS**

1. **September Minutes:** No discussion. LaForest moved to approve the September minutes, Niiro seconded. Unanimous approval. The September minutes were approved as presented.
2. **Introductions:** CAB members introduced themselves to new member Ed Johnson, and Chief Ed Green, and gave a brief background.
3. **Community Survey Discussion (from September meeting):** Chief Green explained that the CAB members will find that his plans for the Board are not what they have been doing in the past. The Board has mandates and directives, by Ordinance, and he intends to “exploit” the Board for those purposes. He would like members to get out into the community, find out what is going on and bring it back to the Police Department.

Chief Green gave a brief overview of some of the changes coming to the Police Department, so that the CAB is aware. We are planning to change the ProAct Officer position to a Community Service Officer position. It will be the same job, but adding a few more duties. We would like take a Sergeant position and add some additional duties for overseeing those Community Service activities. We would like to get the Neighborhood Watch program up and running again, as well as establish a strong liaison with the business community, especially the downtown merchants – by attending their monthly meetings. Chief Green said that the CAB members are the ones who can “get out there” and talk with citizens and the businesses and find out what they need. Niiro asked if we had a list of questions to ask, and Chief Green said not yet.

Chief Green said we will be keeping the School Resource Officer position intact, and that it is a priority. There is no position at the Department which serves a greater population and no other officer can impact that number of people. He said we are also reviewing the COP (Citizen On Patrol) program, and hoping to make it a very active program. He can see the COP's, in the future, being a part of event planning for special events. He used an example of the recent Halloween activities downtown, and how many officers we had there on overtime. Eventually, perhaps there could be one officer, and 5 or 6 traffic-trained COP's. He said the COP's are excited about these changes. He also spoke of using COP's for public fingerprinting duties.

Chief Green said that we are also going to be participating in the “STOP” DV (Domestic Violence) grant again. This is for DV training for the officers. He plans to keep foot and bike patrols active, and in the summer months, the School Resource Officer comes back to patrol and perhaps we can dedicate that position to downtown for the summer. He said that the public needs to know about the things we are planning, and the CAB can let them know.

Chief Green wants CAB members to review the City Ordinance which established the Board, to see some of their duties. (Folsom will send out the Ordinances via email with the minutes.) He'd like to see the CAB perhaps hold public meetings to get feedback, and perhaps hand out surveys. He said that he is only one person, he agreed to “steer the ship”, but he needs everyone's help on “direction”. He would like to see some surveys put together, perhaps on paper and also using an on-line method, (such as Survey Monkey).

Target groups from whom we'd like to gather feedback would be (for instance): High School, citizens, businesses, and Government entities. Discussion was held on getting high school students to return surveys, and that perhaps an on-line service would work best for that target group. Niiro said that the Youth Commission, of which she is a member, did a survey through a class at the school, and had the teachers involved, and they did get a good number of surveys back.

Chief Green said that the CAB's job is to bring information back (to the Department) on an on-going basis, to compile it, present it and then, after the Department makes any needed changes based on feedback, "go back out there" and see how we did. Thomason asked about targeting the college also, and Chief Green said yes. The Navy would also be a part of our efforts.

Chief Green asked if the CAB wanted to use this as a brainstorming session, maybe go around the table and talk about (survey) questions that could be asked; or perhaps the CAB could write some down and bring them to the next meeting. Niiro asked if we had any examples of other community surveys, and Chief Green said no, but we could probably dig some up. Thomason said that two of his favorite questions (for obtaining information) are "Tell me your number one concern about (the OHPD)", and "Tell me one thing you appreciate/like about (the OHPD)". These questions usually obtain good feedback.

LaForest talked about meeting the public and handing out surveys at National Night Out and that we don't usually get any returned. Niiro asked if we have any "funding", as offering an incentive (such as a drawing for a free gas card) can help in getting surveys returned. Discussion was held on finding a "sponsor", such as a service club, who could help with funding, as the City cannot "gift" public funds. Discussion was held on a timeframe for receiving and reporting back on feedback from surveys. The CAB would also need to make a presentation to Council on their findings. The feeling was, at least at first, to try for a six month timeframe, and then the Department would have a chance to make any needed changes (from feedback received) before the next six month period ended, to see if the changes were effective. Niiro said that we might need to look at how often the CAB meets, and the feeling was that going back to monthly meetings was probably appropriate.

Thomason mentioned another two groups to "target" and that would be senior citizens, and the Fil-Am. LaForest mentioned the Chamber of Commerce also. Discussion was held on breaking down the target groups, perhaps with CAB members taking the group/s with whom they have a "connection". For instance, LaForest is a Lion. Ed Johnson said that his wife is involved with a senior citizen group, so there is a contact there.

Discussion was held on how to let tonight's missing CAB members know what was going on. Folsom will get the minutes out to CAB members as soon as they are finished. It was requested that Chief Green perhaps write a cover letter, synopsizing what his goals and plans are. Discussion was held on how the community in general seems to be happy with the Police Department. Chief Green said he understands that is the case and, when the public is informed on the plans (changes) we are making, they may say "we don't want you to do that, we want you to do this". In that case, he said we may need to re-focus and change direction, based on feedback the CAB is receiving. Thomason said that a lot of people need to know about the changes being made at the Department, and informed where this Chief is going, and asked "what do you think". Discussion was held on ways to get information out to the public about the CAB's existence. Thomason suggested working with the Whidbey News-Times to get an article published. Barner said that he and Ed Johnson had been brainstorming this week, with the idea of getting the newspaper to put a header or footer in their "Police Blotter", which informs the public about the CAB. Johnson said that sometimes people might be uncomfortable coming into the Police Department to talk about an issue, but they might be comfortable meeting with a CAB member outside of the Department. Niiro said that perhaps we could do a press release once the (survey) questions are developed. The idea of getting business cards for CAB members was also mentioned. Chief Green and Folsom will discuss that.

**Action:** Ed Johnson made a motion to go back to monthly CAB meetings; LaForest seconded. Discussion was held that the meetings would remain the same time and location and on the second Tuesday, but of each month now. The motion passed unanimously.

Niiro asked what was next, to identify (target) groups? Chief Green said yes. LaForest asked if surveys would be different for each group, and Chief Green said he believed so. Chief Green said a couple of the

things he would like to see asked is "how would you fix it?" and "What do you see is wrong?" Niiro asked if the surveys would be anonymous - they will be. A person can certainly put their name on it if they wish, and can request a call-back contact from either the Department or a CAB member. Niiro asked if we identify (target) groups as the next meeting, will we also have some sample questions available. Chief Green said yes, but that he would like the CAB to bring sample questions also. Niiro asked if it would be worthwhile to perhaps have a member of the COP's on the Board. Johnson thought that it would not; that the COPS have a very specific job to do, which he sees as being more at the direction of what we come up with (as a result of the survey/s feedback). Chief Green agreed, saying that there are two "arms" of the Department – Admin and Patrol. He sees the CAB as falling under Admin, and the COPS as falling under Patrol. The CAB is more of a service to us at the Admin level, they are the ones out there with a lot of contacts, and the reason Members were chosen/appointed to this position (on the Board).

Discussion was held on the CAB phone line, which is an unattended line at the Police Department, with an answering machine attached. It is monitored daily, and calls either returned or passed on to CAB members. There is not much activity on that phone line (360-675-1572). Johnson said that, when we start talking to people, it might be beneficial to have something set up for email capabilities (for CAB members). Discussion was held on Public Records/Disclosure issues and that the email accounts should probably be outside of the City mail server. Folsom mentioned that perhaps CAB members could set up separate, personal accounts, with a like naming system, such as CAB-Gene@yahoo.com, (or gmail, or other free mail service). This information could be put on business cards if those are able to be produced.

4. **Pertinent Updates:** None, covered above.

## **GENERAL DISCUSSION**

1. **"Attaboy" for Explorers:** Niiro related that the Explorers had received an "attaboy" from Dave Williams for their help with the Navy League's Veterans' Day Program at the High School.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:02 p.m. on 11/13/12.

The next CAB meeting will be held on **Tuesday, 12/11/2013** in the OHPD Conference Room. (NOTE: Monthly meetings now.)

Prepared by M. Folsom