

Town of Brookline  
Advisory Committee Minutes

Sean Lynn-Jones, Chair

Date: March 10, 2016

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Present: Carla Benka, Clifford M. Brown, Carol Caro, Lea Cohen, John Doggett, Dennis Doughty, Harry K. Friedman, Janet Gelbart, David-Marc Goldstein, Jennifer Goldsmith, Neil Gordon, Amy F. Hummel, Systke Humphrey, Angela Hyatt, Alisa Jonas, Janice S. Kahn, Steve Kanes, Bobbie Knable, Fred Levitan, Robert Liao, Pamela Lodish, Sean M. Lynn-Jones, Shaari S. Mittel, Mariah Nobrega, Michael Sandman, Lee Selwyn, Charles Swartz, Christine Westphal.

Absent: \*Lee Selwyn, Kelly Hardebeck

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The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM.

Also in attendance: Police Chief Daniel O’Leary, Fire Chief Paul Ford, Anthony Ansaldi, Public Safety Business Manager, and Melissa Goff

**REVIEW OF FY2017 BUDGET: POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Janice gave an overview of the subcommittee’s discussion. Talked about what has been happening in the department, specifically the efforts the department is making regarding training – De-escalation Critical Incidents Training. 13 vacancies are being filled by a fairly diverse group. Given recent interest and concern with accusations of racism, there has been an effort to create a training module about implicit bias. Workforce diversity survey – minorities underrepresented. They hired a consultant to interview minorities to get better feedback on their work experience. 40 officers of color, women officers and some retirees were interviewed. The Chief will be getting feedback which will inform future initiatives.

She gave an overview of criminal activity and other complaints. There is now a liaison officer to deal with leaf blower complaints. The Bike Patrol has been expanded. The Enhanced 911 program is in the pipeline. Currently, if you call 911 on a cell phone, the call doesn’t go directly to the Brookline dispatcher; rather it goes to Framingham and then gets routed back to us and that takes time. The next generation will recognize cell phones, allow for texts and images.

Chief O’Leary - successfully negotiated how command staff is assigned. For example, our focus on community outreach, part of the realignment was to move Walk and Talk back under Community Service staff. It is unfortunate that crime is up in some categories. A detailed report is on the Police Department website and is current through the end of the calendar year.

Q: How do we compare to other neighborhoods?

Neighboring communities, the same people commit the same crimes.

Q: Do you have numbers on the resolutions of these crimes?

The data is in the report.

Q: Suggestion that increase in some crime is a result of the opening of the marijuana dispensary. Are they related?

A: There is no correlation and we have had not problems.

Q: Do any people end up in jail for burglaries?

A: No, not too many. One person was recently tried as a career criminal.

Q: Some cameras don't look like they don't have shields anymore? What is the status of the cameras?

A: No replacements available with shrouds. That company has gone out of business. These cameras are larger and the shrouds don't work. Urban Area Initiative paid for them. We do have cameras everywhere.

Q: Details and police may do details in Newton – an 8 hour period. How does that fit together with their other obligations, full time work for the town? How does it work?

A: There is a limit to the number of hours an officer can work in a day, our limit is 18 hours. In order to work in Newton, they have put the restriction on for 8 hours minimum. The only way you can leave and work in Newton, is on your day off or if you shift starts at midnight.

Q: Why would the Newton Police want Brookline cops doing details in Newton?

A: Roadwork being done and they don't have sufficient numbers to cover the details.

Q: If you can't talk a person down, in other communities we hear that the police officer has shot and killed them. Are officers ever trained to shoot someone in the arm or leg to disable them?

A: The training that everyone falls back on is to aim for the middle. We are however, aggressively training our officers in classroom and scenarios situations and stressing talking as a first action. We have run scenarios to engage a person in conversation – get a name so it personalizes it, use the cruiser between you and the suspect for additional safety while you are talking, etc. Traffic stops, Approach cars safely in an appropriate way. Talk to the person. Explain why you are stopping them, etc. It will be less defensive but an ongoing conversation.

Software program that will be tailored to the types of learning we are using; they are observed, filmed and scored according to set of criteria. Get immediate feedback.

Experience in a simulation room, life-sized video, need to respond to a situation almost immediately. Puts things in perspective and is quite humbling.

Incidents at the high school – show them a controversial video – one from perspective of kids, the other is from police officers.

Q: Bike enforcement looks like it down?

A: Getting more compliance.

Q: Congratulations on tickets. Out of state collections is about at 50%. Is there anything we can do to improve that?

A: We use Duncan to go after these folks, but not very successful.

Q: Stingray equipment – to track cell phones?

A: We do have the capability to get search warrants to go through peoples' phones.

Q: Last week we heard from Alan that he didn't think the opioid crisis was as pervasive as elsewhere. Wondering what you are seeing?

A: We provided NARCAN to all of our officers, trained them in it in 2014 and we have since then used it about 10 times. 2015 we had three deaths from heroin overdoses and none so far this year. Since 2014 the youngest was 16 years old, a visitor from out of town. We have had a few distribution arrests but mostly people driving through town.

Q: All departments were having credit card service fees being pulled out and centralized. But why are they still here in your budget?

A: Melissa Goff explained difference in the fees and revenue creates a wash.

Complaints – no excessive force but a few discourteous complaints. Impacted by what is going on across the country. See that on gun licenses – when people get trained and take courses, they get told to get a full license to carry but we don't give those out.

Hot spots – high accident locations, mostly during rush hours – Hammond and Boylston, mostly fender benders. Going to these areas to determine what is causing accidents and see what can be done for further prevention. We will be doing a program on texting and driving. At first try to educate people instead of giving out punitive tickets.

Invited kids to spend 6 days with the police – 12 to 16 years old to try to get them involved in enforcement and understanding of police.

Develop a tool to evaluate juvenile arrests. One of the supervisors has to go through a check list.

Brighton High School kids, rushed a Store 24, took food. We have seen incidents of this being done in clothing stores and liquor stores.

We caught 6 of them, now know where they came from, what they took. Four of the six kids didn't have a record, you try not to give them one but still hold them accountable. Entered into an agreement with

a local community center and they did community service. Four of them completed it and their charges were dropped, the other two were given more time to complete service.

Q: Tasers versus guns – is there a reason they are not used?

A: We looked to deploy them but at the time they were still being debated because a few deaths had occurred. I think they are a good alternative to shooting although some people have no reaction to tasers. Not yet sold on whether we want to go that route.

Q: Breaking and entering, if not prison worthy, what are the crimes that cause our prisons to be filled to capacity?

A: Assaults, other robberies. Although I agree that someone entering your house is a terrible crime and should be looked at a little more seriously.

Q: Brookline doesn't give a full firearm license and restricted.

A: Full carry allows you to carry the firearm anywhere anytime. Restricted is based on your employment, if you are security guard or collect rents, can only carry during work time. Or if you just use if for target shooting restricted to the time on the range.

Q: Increased arrests for drugs in the high school?

A: Not a lot of drug arrests out of the high school – yes there are drugs there and kids who use drugs but we haven't had a lot of arrests there.

Q: What steps were taken to address the complaints about the incident within the force?

A: Some examples of words that were said to him that he wanted to stop. While we were there one of the officers asked if we could have training that was specific to Brookline. We agreed to three things – 1) go to a member of the command staff, (32 of us) and the Chief would bring it up and your name will get out there; 2) try to get names of officers alleged to have said this, put it on them, and facilitate a meeting between them; 3) organize a training on implicit bias. We went to officer who was going to develop the training with Harvard and he hadn't done anything. We actioned it and have a training scheduled now – for the 15<sup>th</sup> at Pine Manor. Regarding the most recent incident, steps were taken immediately.

A MOTION was made and seconded to recommend approval of the FY2017 Police Department budget of \$16,794,674.

**Vote:** With a vote of 26 in favor, 0 opposed with no abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the FY2017 Police Department budget of \$16,794,674,

## **REVIEW OF FY2017 BUDGET: FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Short term goals feed into long term goals. Increase training and opportunities in the department. Increase training in technical rescues. Design of new Hammond Street Maintenance Facility will include training facilities, a classroom and office.

There were five vacancies in the department at the time of the hearing.

Discussion of staffing, overtime, leaves, etc.

Firefighters are in their 4<sup>th</sup> year without a contract, currently in JLMC arbitration, the result of which will have significant budget impact.

Participation in the UASI program allows us access to state of the art equipment but need to have more training time so we can make the best use of this. Skills need to be used and practiced or they are lost.

Development at Hancock Village – narrow streets not a lot of ways in and out; the Chief has reviewed the site plans for emergency access.

There was a brief discussion and comments regarding the Wire Division and fire boxes throughout the town. Some would like the wire division to maintain the fire boxes, they are serving the town well, yet wire division staff is now located in DPW. If we are not spending money to have an entirely wireless system , we should at least maintain the system we have.

Chief Ford addressed the firebox question. We have a box alarm system that is multifaceted and intertwined. With boxes on poles, the lever doesn't tell fire dispatch what they need to know (location, type of emergency), just that someone needs help. On buildings, internal alarm systems tie into that box or master box. These boxes were installed in 1900s. The system is deteriorating. Some street boxes are out of service, not operational at all. Not a quick fix. Problem in stations with communications, because the copper lines on which the system of alarms and speakers run are deteriorating. Number of times street boxes are pulled is amazingly low. And the number of times they were some actual emergency, maybe once.

Q: Where does the wire division see themselves?

A: They went to the DPW with the understanding that they will work on wires.

Q: In terms of hiring, is the preference for Brookline a policy, part of the union contract, or established by some other mechanism ? The current ethnic make-up of the town, would seem to thwart efforts to hire a diverse workforce.

A: Municipal policy.

Q: Some point to expand the preference to include graduates of Brookline High School so to capture Metco students.

A: Think that was passed, but unclear if it translated to the fire side. Or pertained just to Police.

Q: Do radio boxes work when power goes out?

A: Yes they work in conjunction with the building system. On the street side, they do make ones that have battery backup.

Q: Does this include residences also?

A: Based on the number of people (13 and above) you are required to have them.

Q: What is training on technical rescue?

A: Perishable skills that we don't use every day. Pull people out of cars, ladders, hooking up hoses, etc. Technical rescue is training on proper techniques on a host of topics and unique situations – rope rescue – confined space rescue - specific set of skills unique to certain situations.

Q: Report about two Boston firefighters that may have perished because they did not have expertise fighting a fire in high wind (blowback). What are we doing to keep ourselves from similar situations?

A: Training on tactics that we were told previously not to do, now newly scientific theory concerns flow path. Fire service is changed forever with a new scientifically proved theory. We got an instructor from the academy to assist us at no charge.

Q: What kind of training dollars would you like?

A: UASI funds equipment and instructors but the communities have to pay for the staff to go. 8 guys got vehicle extrication, rope rescue, confined space, etc. on their own time as a pre-requisite for 8 day program of collapsed structure training. We have members of the department who are instructors for UASI. We pay them but then are reimbursed. \$60,000 is a continuing need. Even if I don't increase out size at all, refresher training yearly.

Q: How does training work? Could there be a stipend instead of overtime pay? Has any of this come up during collective bargaining?

A: UASI has a rope rescue course Mon, Tues, Wed – one guy works Monday but I have to pay someone else to cover him, all depends on when it falls. On a day off, it is overtime. Any changes would have to be coordinated through the union. Have someone do the training here - pay for outside contractor but firefighters wouldn't be paid since they would be working.

## Comments

What does it take to put in a new line item for training? We need to find the money and we can vote it. We need to prioritize funding across town –

We are prioritizing and that is called the budget process.

Let's wait until the budget process is done, and then we can make recommendations based on more thorough knowledge and can appropriate additional funds to those departments as deemed necessary.

Q: Will new developments at Hancock Village be built with state of the art fire suppression devises?

A: Yes but still somewhat uncomfortable – still bit of distance outside the range of the closest ladder company – ladder trucks have to have a 2 mile radius, travel distance for an ISO rating.

Q: Is fire partnering with police to do trainings on implicit bias?

A: Fire Department conducted their own trainings MCAD training, had a refresher with additional aspects, how to work together as a team, etc. and will continue it on a regular basis.

MOTION was made and seconded to recommend approval of the FY2017 Fire Department budget of \$13,014,196.

**Vote:** With a vote of 23 in favor, 0 opposed with no abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the FY2017 Fire Department budget of \$13,014, 196.

Fire Department received a grant to do smoke detector inspections and installations and other fire safety checks in the homes of seniors. 48 done thus far, many more scheduled and we have been getting good feedback. Going to submit another application to expand to just do safety checks and education, and also to do programing in private elementary schools.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Advisory Committee will be on March 15<sup>th</sup> .

Upon a MOTION made and seconded and voted unanimously, the meeting adjourned at 10 pm.

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#### **Documents Presented at Advisory Committee Meeting:**

1. PUBLIC SAFETY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT ON FIRE DEPARTMENT FY17 BUDGET
2. PUBLIC SAFETY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT ON POLICE DEPARTMENT FY17 BUDGET