



**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION
MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING
Monday, November 6, 2017**

The Public Safety Commission convened a meeting Monday, November 6, 2017 at City Hall, 301 West 2nd Street in Austin, Texas.

Chair, Rebecca Webber called the Board Meeting to order at 4:00p.m..

Board Members in Attendance:

Rebecca Webber, Chair	Daniela Nunez
Sam Holt	Noel Landuyt
Rebecca Gonzales	Ed Scruggs
Preston Tyree	Kim Rossmo
Carol Lee	Brian Haley

Board Member Not in Attendance:

Vanessa Perez

Staff in Attendance:

Troy Gay, Assistant Chief, Austin Police Department
Jasper Brown, Chief of Staff, Austin/Travis County Emergency Medical Services
Richard Davis, Assistant Chief, Austin Fire Department

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes for the October 2, 2017 meeting were approved. Commissioner Haley motioned for approval of the minutes and Commissioner Nunez second. **The minutes were approved with a unanimous vote (10 approved 0 disapprove).**

2. CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS –eleven citizens signed up to speak

- **Carlos Leon** – Capital Metro Bus Operators and Customer Service
- **Joell McNew** – Update on SAFE HORNS and the ongoing efforts to promote student safety on West Campus
- **Anthony Marquardt** - President of Austin Travis County Emergency Medical Association – update on EMS operating without a contract
- **Gus Pena** – Miscellaneous topics
- **Chas Moore** – Signed up to speak on Item #5

- **Kathy Mitchell**– Signed up to speak on Item #5
- **Carol Drennan** – Signed up to speak on Item #3
- **Matt Simpson** - – Signed up to speak on item #5
- **Ken Casaday** – Signed up to speak on item #5
- **Nancy Hohengarten** – Signed up to speak on item #3
- **Chris Harris** – Signed up to speak on item #5

3. Update on Austin-Travis County Sobriety Center – Sponsored by Commissioner Rossmo

Carol Drennan, Interim Executive Director, Austin Travis County Sobriety Center

Nancy Hohengarten and Assistant City Manager Arellano accompanied Ms. Drennan for the presentation.

Carol begin the presentation by mentioning the name of the center is being changed from Sobriety Center to Sobering Center. The presentation included an overview of the history of the center and a current status of the center and its benefits/offerings.

Topics discussed were:

Mission of the Austin Travis County Sobering Center

Public Intoxication

Effects of Public Intoxication

Cost of booking for Public Intoxication

Currently only a person who has been arrested can come to the center

What Happens after an arrest

The Center will only accepts folks delivered by Law Enforcement or EMS

Safe Sobering

Ms. Drennan shared that Austin was following the Houston Recovering Model because of the success of its program. She reiterated that the “Sobering Center “is not a treatment center, we give referrals. There were questions and discussions from Commissioners’ Webber, Haley, Landuyt, Holt, Lee, Tyree and Rossmo.

4. Six Month Update on WUI Code Adoption - Sponsored by: Commissioner Tyree

Speakers: Justice Jones, Wildfire Division Manager, Austin Fire Department

Robert (Bob) Nicks, President, Austin Firefighters Association

Commissioner Webber asked Assistant Chief Davis, Austin Fire Department to introduce this item and the presenters from Austin Fire Department. **Chief Davis** introduced Pablo Ruiz and his team over the Wildfire Division. **Mr. Ruiz** introduced Joe Malone, Mark Baker (who was attending on behalf of Justice Jones) and Bob Nicks. **Mark Baker** began the discussion by giving an update on the WUI Code and was happy to hear the board using the acronym WUI (Wildland-Urban Interface Code). Mr. Baker introduced the tentative schedule to adoption of the WUI Code and commented that the schedule has been changed slightly sense Chief Kerr had presented last November (2016).

Mark Baker presented on the WUI (Wildland Urban Interface) tentative schedule to Adoption and

- WUI Areas Map (identifying areas that would need the code to be enforced)
- Map of WUI Code
- Partnering with City Departments to help with WUI Code getting into Code Next
- Supporting Plans and Recommendations documents

Bob Nicks commented he began working on this project (WUI Code) in 2010 and worked to get a resolution passed by council that included getting the risk overlay maps to be included in Code Next. Bob shared that they now have a GIS person that was temporary, but will become a fulltime employee for Austin Fire Department to complete the risk overlay maps. He expressed appreciation for the help of the Public Safety Commission in the past with getting the resolution passed by council and asked that they continue to help in the future with the WUI code being included in Code Next.

There were questions and comments from Commissioners Lee, Tyree, Scruggs and Webber. At the end of all the presentation Joe Malone expressed thanks for all of the support they received from the Public Safety Commission.

5. Draft Contract between City of Austin and Austin Police Association – Sponsored by Commissioner Rossmo and Gonzalez

Speakers- Sarah Griffin, with Denton, Navarro, Rocha, Bernal & Zech's Firm

Chas Moore- Austin Justice Coalition

Kathy Mitchell- Texas Criminal Justice Coalition

Matt Simpson- ACLU Texas

Ken Casaday – President, Austin Police Association

Chris Harris – Grassroots

Commissioner Webber invited Sarah Griffin to speak first. **Sarah** is with Denton, Navarro Law Firm, outside counsel hired to assist with labor relations in each of the three contracts. She begins by stating they had not presented this (proposed contract COA & APA) to council yet so she was limited in discussing the contract. She attended the meeting (PSC) to go over the eight points submitted by the Austin Justice Coalition and the outcome/status on each of the eight points. The points were from the Austin Justice Coalition and they were voted on by the Austin Travis Democratic party. The eight points were taken and tried to insert into the contract. The points focused mainly on accountability and transparency. Sarah reviewed each point and the current status/agreement that had been reached by the Austin Police Association and City of Austin was communicated to the commission members.

Chas Moore was invited next to speak and he brought Kathy Mitchell, Matt Simpson and Chris Harris along to speak as well on the challenges and successes they observed within the police department. Chas commented they (both APA and Austin Justice Coalition) had come a long way in working together and while they don't agree on everything he appreciates how Austin police are willing to work together to bring about change for all to benefit. **Kathy Mitchell** spoke next concerning the proposed City of Austin and Austin Police Association contract and expounded on the eight items and how they came about. The two greatest accomplishments she highlighted were the 180 Day Rule and the new complaint procedure. **Matt Simpson** commented there's room to grow in this city for improving the trust between police and the community. One of the things he

stated needs to happen for better transparency is for the civilian review panel to have subpoena power to be much more effective. This is one piece where we hoped more would have been done to change/improve. **Chris Harris** stated we have a serious problem in the area of use of force by police in communities of color. Chris shared statistics on the total number of homicides in the City of Austin and the number (13) of homicides committed by the Austin police. Chris closed his comments with we (City of Austin) have a serious problem in the area of use of force on people of color in this town. The proposed agreement doesn't go far enough in addressing everyone's concerns.

Ken Casaday commented we have spent the last eight months making modest gains. There were gives and takes on both sides. We have had heated debates, but we had one common goal and that is to have a better police department. With that I will open it up to any questions. There were questions from Commissioner Nunez, Rossmo, Gonzales, Holt and Scruggs. There were questions and much discussion; do sworn and non-sworn complaints go to police monitor, APD is under staffed by how many officers, has the city council weighed in on the eight points from the community groups, what happens if the contract is not passed by council, the contract expired on October 31, 2017 how does the force operate once the contract has expired? At the end of the questions being answered Commissioner Gonzales motioned for the Public Safety Commission to send a recommendation to council in support of the ratified contract. Commissioner Holt seconds the motion. **Commissioner Webber called for a vote:**

Favor – 4 (Commissioner Holt, Gonzales, Rossmo, Tyree)

Opposed -5 (Commissioners Lee, Webber, Nunez, Scruggs, Landuyt)

Abstained – 1 (Commissioner Haley)

Commissioner Webber commented the Distracted Driving item would be brought back for the January 2018 agenda.

Adjourned @6:20pm