



***PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
MINUTES
MONDAY, May 15, 2023***

The PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION convened in a SPECIAL CALLED MEETING on May 15, 2023 at City Hall Building, Boards and Commission Room, 301 W. 2nd Street, AUSTIN, TEXAS

Chair Ramirez called the Public Safety Commission Meeting to order at 4:32p.m.

Board Members/Commissioners in Attendance:

Nelly Ramirez, Chair	John Kiracofe
Rebecca Bernhardt, Vice Chair	Timothy Ruttan
Cory Hall-Martin	
Lauren Pena	
David Holmes	
Pierre Nguyen	

Board Members/Commissioners in Attendance Remotely:

Absent: Kristy Orr

PUBLIC COMMUNICATION: Two Citizens signed up to speak on item

Chris Harris and Sarah Rodriguez both signed up to speak on Item #2 – Austin License Plate Reader Program

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

There were no minutes to approve at this Special Called Meeting.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

1. 911/311 Call Center Update (Sponsored by Commissioners Kiracofe and Ramirez)

Lt. Maria Calagna was asked to begin her presentation on 911/ Communications & Call Center by providing responses to questions she received from the Public Safety Commissioners prior to the meeting.

- **Answering protocol for 911**
- **Answering protocol for non-emergency (this question is to be answered by Austin 311**
- **What/how is information gathered and collected**
- **How/when/why are emergency calls transferred**
- **Special call handling**
- **Response times**
 - How long does it take to answer calls currently
- **When does the response time clock begin**
- **A1 tool that was rolled out recently – Case Service**
 - Case Service is a non-emergency call-taking tool that allows APD to ingest non-emergency calls via software. It expedites the time it takes customers report crimes to the APD, and decreases the time it takes the APD to ingest those reports into our Records Management System (RMS). Case Service can be accessed via ireportaustin.com. Currently 2500 reports per month are entered using the non-emergency reporting tool.
- **How will it (or has it) impacted 911/311 wait times?**
 - Anecdotal evidence suggests that CaseService will decrease wait times, but that has yet to materialize. CaseService replaced another software that had reached its maximum effectiveness. CaseService has additional functionality that will be expanded upon. When leveraged, this additional functionality will decrease wait times for at least non-emergency and possibly 911
- **General Staffing Update**
 - Call taker staffing
 - Overtime being used to incentivize shite coverage
 - How much of the overtime budget figures that were presented in last APD Quarterly Report are attributed to that incentivizing?
 - When did the practice begin and how effective has it been?
- **Recruiting**
 - Where and how has the process changed
 - New incentives being provided
 - Projections for 2023, 2024 hires
 - Update on Transition

Lt. Calagna provide responses on all of the questions from the Public Safety Commissioners, and provided stats on **Austin 9-1-1 vacancies and upcoming training.**

Current Vacancies:

Supervisor – 2 positions

Lead – 4 positions

Dispatcher – 16 positions

911 Operators – 49
Total Vacancies – 71

Upcoming Training:

May 22, 2023
Dispatcher – 4
911 Operator -9

The commissioners had several questions at the end of the Austin 9-1-1 presentation.

- Do you call back when someone doesn't get their call answered? **Commissioner Kiracofe**
- What percentage of calls are mental health, police and or fire? **Commissioner Bernhardt**
- When a person calls and doesn't get answered what happens next? **Commissioner Pena**
- How is retention going with the new hires? **Commissioner Holmes**
- What is the relationship with National Crisis Suicide Hotline (988) referral to Austin /Travis? How does it work? **Commissioner Nguyen**
- Question on vacancies at EMS and AFD? **Commissioner Kiracofe**
- Why the difference between the two departments on vacancies? **Commissioner Ruttan**
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Interim Assistance City Manager, Mills weighed in on the response regarding dispatcher difference, and shared Austin Fire Department staff are the dispatchers in their department.

Commissioner Ramirez requested retention data, mainly the reasons. IACM, Mills committed to working with the departments on the follow up data requested.

2. Austin License Plate Reader Program (Sponsors: Commissioners Hall-Martin, Ramirez)

Citizen Comments on item #2:

Sarah Rodriguez –ALPR (Austin License Plate Reader) draft recently released has a lack of transparency. There is no discussions on what gets into the policy, also OPO recommendations have not been added to the draft. The policy does not adhere to Resolution #56

Chris Harris, Director of Police @Austin Justice Coalition - commented, I want to reiterate the current policy does not adhere to the resolution from council. The OPO (Office of Police Oversight) recommendations that were asked for was not included in the backup. The preservation requirements for data are not included as stated in Resolution. The OPO must be considered and included in the ALPR (Austin License Plate Reader) policy.

Chair Ramirez invited APD Assistant Chief Greenwalt, and Lt. Askew to begin their presentation to the Public Safety Board. The OPO (Office of Police Oversight) recommendations regarding the ALPR resolution had been forwarded to all commissioners by Chair Ramirez and Assistant Chief Greenwalt distributed hard copies of the ALPR draft General Order/policy prior to beginning his presentation.

AC Greenwalt being sharing that there are different iterations of the policy based on input from different organizations and groups that APD have been talking with about the policy. Greenwalt shared a little of the history on

the ALPR history and where APD is currently on updating the policy per the resolution directives. APD is:

- continuing to update to the policy
- APD has not received OPO recommendation on this policy
- Some last minute updates were put into this policy based on community input sessions that APD held on May 11, 2023
- the journey to bring back the Austin License Plate Reader program started last summer (2022) with a resolution from CM Kelly
- Resolution passed in September 2022 and required APD to do two additional community input sessions and to work together to build the policy for council to review/approve.
- Community Input sessions were held on February 7th and 22nd, and again on May 11, 2023.
- Input sessions did not garner a lot of attendance
- Although low attendance, there was a lot of questions and really good feedback at the sessions

AC Greenwalt elaborated on some of the sections in the policy that he thought were a little more important than others and highlighted some of the feedback that was received and is included in the current draft policy.

- Management of the ALPR system will be done through the Auto Theft Unit
- Most common offense to be solved with use of ALPR is being able to capture/return stolen vehicles
- A recommendation from OPO received several revisions ago regarding anyone who encounters any problem with equipment, instead of submitting a HELP TICKET, the operator needs to notify the Chief Security officer directly.
- Assignment Use and locations of ALPR
- Officers must check and double check to verify license plates to be sure they are correct when submitting the information on a vehicle
- License Plates run through TCIC (Texas Crime Information Center) to be sure the plate is still wanted for some reason through Law Enforcement.
- APD is including the Research and Planning Unit to work with the Police Technology and the Chief Security Officer to make sure ALPRs are deployed in and around the City of Austin equitably

The presentation continued at length with details in discussing the audits of ALPR and whenever a mistake is made by whomever (be it an officer or data entry personnel) on a license plate number that the information is to be included in the audit every single time. APD met with Joyce James Consulting and OPO to discuss/finalize the auditing guidelines for this policy. APD is working to be as transparent as they can without putting the actual locations of the cameras in the audit, because it

is prohibited by the resolution. AC Greenwalt offered to answer questions from the Public Safety Commissioners.

- What metrics are being used to track this program? Ramirez
- Where do the hot lists come from? Bernhardt
- TCIC (Texas Crime Information Center) is where hot lists come from and Class A Misdemeanor or greater is in the database, ow do you pull only the data for the Austin Police Department? Bernhardt Ruttan
- Considering security of the data collected, is every vehicle that goes by the cameras, will they be recorded and looked at for any /all information? Holmes
- Where will the cameras be placed and what is the impact on certain communities? Ruttan
- What is the impact on high speed chases? Bernhardt
- What is the definition of crimes? Bernhardt
- Are the license plates manually entered by officers?

A resolution was submitted for a vote, motioned by Chair Ramirez and second by Commissioner Nguyen and Kiracofe.

Chair Ramirez offered an amendment to the resolution that the “Quarterly ALPR Audit be brought to the Public Safety Commission.” A motion to vote to accept amendment by Chair Ramirez and Commissioner Ruttan second.

VOTE:

Yes – Unanimous (Commissioners Pena, Kiracofe, Nguyen, Holmes, Bernhardt, Ruttan, and Ramirez and Cory Hall-Martin)

No – Zero

Abstain – Zero

Absent: Commissioner Orr

Amendment was accepted and Chair Ramirez called for a vote to approve the resolution with the amendment.

VOTE:

Yes: 7 (Commissioners Bernhardt, Ramirez, Nguyen, Holmes, Kiracofe, Hall-Martin and Ruttan)

No: Zero

Abstain: 1 (Commissioner Pena)

Absent: 1 (Commissioner Orr)

The amended resolution from Public Safety Commission on ALPR (Austin License Plate Reader) was approved.

3. Vote for Public Safety Commissioner as Downtown Commission Appointment

Chair Ramirez shared her experience as the appointee from the Public Safety Commission to the Downtown Commission, and afterwards nominated Commissioner Holmes for the position.

Commissioner Pena expressed interest and nominated herself as the next appointee, however before a second to her nomination was received she withdrew her name/nomination. Chair called for a vote.

Vote:

Yes: 8 (Commissioners Ramirez, Kiracofe, Holmes, Nguyen, Pena, Hall-Martin, Ruttan, and Bernhardt)

No: Zero

Abstain: Zero

Absent: Commissioner Orr

Commissioner Holmes was elected as the new PSC Appointee to the Downtown Commission

Future Agenda items were not discussed.

Adjourn @ 5:50pm

The minutes were approved at the July 10, 2023 meeting on Commissioner Ramirez's motion, Commissioner Hall-Martin's second on a 6-0 vote.

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