



***PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2022***

The PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION convened in a SPECIAL CALLED meeting on 13th, SEPTEMBER, 2022 at 6310 WILHELMINA DELCO DRIVE, 78752 in Austin, Texas.

Chair Bernhardt called the Public Safety Commission Meeting to order at 4:04p.m.

Board Members/Commissioners in Attendance:

Rebecca Bernhardt, Chair

Board Members/Commissioners in Attendance Remotely:

Nelly Ramirez, Vice Chair
Kathleen Hausenfluck
John Kiracofe
Michael Sierra-Arevalo
Cory Hall-Martin
Rebecca Gonzales

Absent: Rebecca Webber

PUBLIC COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approve the minutes of the PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING on , July 5, 2022.

Chair Bernhardt called for a vote to approve the minutes from the meeting of July 5, 2022. Commissioner Ramirez motioned to vote and Commissioner Gonzalez seconded.

Minutes were approved with

Voting:

Yes: 5 Commissioners Bernhardt, Ramirez, Hall-Martin, Sierra-Arevalo, Gonzales

Absent: Commissioner Webber

Abstain: Commissioners Kiracofe and Hausenfluck

No: Zero

2. **August 1, 2022 minutes:**

Motion to vote to approve by Commissioner Gonzales and second by Commissioner Ramirez.

Vote:

Yes: Commissioners Bernhardt, Ramirez, Kiracofe, Hausenfluck, Hall-Martin, Sierra-Arevalo and Gonzales

No: Zero

Abstain: Zero

Absent: Commissioner Webber

Minutes approved with a unanimous vote.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

3. Quarterly Stats Report – Austin/Travis County Emergency Medical Services

Teresa Gardner, Chief of Staff, ACTEMS presented the quarterly stats for FY22-Q3. The stats presented were on:

-Incidents, Patient Contacts, Transports – Jan.2021-July2022

-Priority 1 Compliance by District FY22 Q3

-Priority1 Response Interval by District FY22 Q3

-EMS Department Staffing 3rd Quarter (this data presented was through the end of June 2022. This chart showed where all the vacancies were in EMS. Per, Chief Gardner the vacancy rate has improved somewhat from 22.4% to about 21%.

-Sworn Separations chart included the reasons for the separations by type

-Sworn Tenure at Separation

-Vacancy Rates Sworn and Civilian

-EMS Turnover Rate

-EMS Medic Academy Start Dates (October 10, 2022 has 28 confirmed for the class)

Commissioner Hausenfluck asked the number of students committed for the next class.

Per Chief Gardner, currently there are 28 cadets confirmed and they would like to have 40 in each class. Forty is the max number their rooms can hold for classes/training.

Chief Gardner shared an increase to entry level pay for medics was approved by council and goes in effect on October 1, 2022. Commissioner Ramirez asked if the one year contract has been approved by City Council and Chief Gardner responded the contract has been approved.

Commissioner Kiracofe asked about stats concerning Fentanyl related calls; is the use being tracked by EMS and whether or not its usage has increased.

Chief Gardner responded it is being tracked, but she couldn't comment on increase or decrease at this time, but could get the information for him.

Commissioner Bernhardt asked for the information concerning Fentanyl tracking/usage to be included in the next quarterly report from EMS.

4.

Discussion and possible action on the Austin Police Department's use of the LRAD during the 2020 protest and currently, including potential injuries to police officers and the public. Speakers: Jeff Greenwalt, Assistant Chief, Austin Police Department and Kevin Welch, Electronic Freedom Foundation, Austin

Assistant Chief Greenwalt commented on an LRAD (Long Range Acoustic Device) and its use by APD is made by the executives. APD currently has four LRAD systems available for use. These are portable and can be mounted on tripods, on the top of a roofs or on the top of a police vehicle. Per Chief Greenwalt, LRADs are not used as a sonic weapon. An officer does not make the decision to use the LRADs. Assistant Chief Greenwalt, reviewed the different decibels with the commissioners. He stated that the officers who sustained hearing damages during the summer 2020 protests attributed the damage to bullhorn use and fireworks shot off during the protests.

Kevin Welch, commented it'd be difficult to know definitively that the LRADs didn't contribute to officers hearing damages. Mr. Welch shared information from one of the LRAD model's use manual on when LRAD are used at or closer than 120 feet from people, LRADs can reach decibel levels above 115, which could cause possible hearing damages per Mr. Welch. According the manual Mr. Welch stated he would have to debate the conclusion that the hearing damage was definitely not caused by the LRADs. Mr. Welch commented he was unfamiliar with the manual being cited and asked for a copy of the document, and once received he will share with the commissioners.

5. Discussion and potential assignment of a member of the Public Safety Commission to a working group of the Austin Parks and Recreation Board to address crime in Austin's park.

Chair Bernhardt introduced this item and asked if there were any Public Safety Commissioners interested in serving/joining the Austin Parks and Recreation Board. Commissioner Hausenfluck volunteered to join the working group.

Vote: (Commissioner Ramirez motioned to vote and Commissioner Gonzalez seconded)

Yes: Commissioners Bernhardt, Ramirez, Gonzales, Kiracofe, Hausenfluck, Hall-Martin, and Sierra-Arevalo

No: zero

Abstain: zero

Absent: Commissioner Webber

6. Wildfire Readiness Update Resolution #20160512-016

Justice Jones presented on number of local CWPPs (Community Wildfire Protection Plan) completed and implemented, number of local CWPPs started but not completed, percentage of high-risk WUI (Wildfire Urban Interface) areas where identification of potential local CWPP planning areas is still ongoing. The number of public presentations and home assessment provided. The number, size, type and location of fuel mitigation activities conducted.

The number of training hours received and conducted. Justice Jones shared that the first East Austin Firewise Alliance has been completed with the Chamonix community. Currently the number of local CWPP completed and implemented is 20. Mr. Jones touched on the percentage of high-risk WUI (Wildfire Urban Interface) areas of potential local CWPP planning areas is still ongoing is 49%. Austin Fire Wildfire Readiness continues with public presentations and home assessments and over the last six months 43 home assessments they have provided. Commissioner Bernhardt requested that this work continue targeting low income communities. Chief DelaReza responded they (Austin Fire Department Readiness Unit) had to resort to one on one visit to reach more of the low income communities. Another challenge was the low income communities do not have as many organized neighborhood groups as others neighborhoods. Justice Jones shared there is a Build Back Better program sponsored with federal dollars to go to lower economic neighborhoods that can help with programs such as this one.

Future Agenda Items

- G.R.A.C.E ACT** Implementation - (Hausenfluck) Ramirez brought the topic up again today
- Update on various reports done for APD from local consultants and law suits (Kroll Report, Joyce James update on training and racism report) (Rebecca Gonzales)
- Homelessness Update _ HEAL Program, what is the status? Do they have goals established going forward? (Hausenfluck)
- Update on HOST (Homeless Outreach Street Team) (Ramirez)
- Substance Support Programs in place by EMS (EMS include data in next quarterly report)
- Light Duty Firetrucks to be used locally and for less serious calls (Bernhardt)
- 911, 311, staffing and call handling and recruiting (Kiracofe)

Adjourned @ 5:06pm

The minutes were approved at the October 3, 2022 meeting on Commissioner Kiracofe's motion, Hausenfluck's second on a 6-0 vote.