

**POLICE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
November 3, 2010**

1. Call to Order

Chairman McIvor called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Darien City Hall. Committee members in attendance:

Aldermen John Poteraske and John Galan.

Staff members in attendance: Chief of Police Robert Pavelchik, Deputy Chief David Skala, Deputy Chief Cooper and City Administrator Bryon Vana

Elected Officials in attendance: Mayor Kathleen Weaver and Alderman Carolyn Gattuso

Guest/Residents in attendance:

Marcia & Robert Ryba, 830 79th Street, Darien, 630-971-8381

Terri & Tony Rainaldi, 913 79th Street, Darien, 630-960-4248

Ron Perrson, 7829 Nantucket, Darien, 630-852-8589

Todd Petersen, 7809 Mayfair Lane, Darien, 630-920-1208

Patricia Miller, 826 W. 79th St. Darien, 630-969-3739

Bob & Pat Delany, 622 79th Street, Darien, 630-887-1355

Lucy Nuzzo, 613 79th Street, Darien, 630-920-8073

Kevin Monahan, 7509 Norman Drive, Darien

2. Approval of Minutes

Alderman Galan requested that the draft minutes be corrected to add some important points regarding the discussion of DU-COMM. The minutes of the October 7, 2010 meeting will be presented at the December 2, 2010 meeting.

3. Communications

Alderman McIvor read into the record an e-mail that had been provided to her by Alderman Gattuso. The e-mail was from Mr. Bob Maul, 617 79th Street, Darien, addressing his concerns about the removal of the stop signs on 79th Street at Farmingdale Drive.

4. Old Business

4a. 79th Street at Farmingdale-Stop Sign Removal

Alderman Galan and Alderman Poteraske discussed the timeline that has occurred for the removal of these stop signs, indicating that in June/August of 2008 the traffic engineer from KLOA recommended the removal of these signs. They added that in January of 2009 the City Council approved the recommendation of KLOA and that just recently the signs were removed. Chief Pavelchik indicated that the collapse and rebuilding of Walnut Drive also contributed to the delay. He also added that the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) provides the guidance on stop sign usage. The Committee members then discussed the process of the Neighborhood Traffic Study and how it moved through the Admin Finance Committee with public comment on some issues.

Alderman Gattuso said that she has received many comments from residents about the removal of the stop signs. It is her understanding that lack of public comment on specific traffic issues led to the institution of the traffic engineer's recommendation. Recent comments to her from residents indicate concern about the school bus stop at 79th and Farmingdale and that the residents would like the stop sign reinstalled.

Mr. Tony Rainaldi, 913 79th Street, addressed the Committee. Mr. Rainaldi indicated that the traffic on 79th Street was a major concern for him due to both volume and speed; he said the removal of the stop sign is only making traffic worse. Mr. Rainaldi asked if the public opinion could overrule the traffic consultant's engineering judgment. Alderman McIvor answered that the full City Council would have to discuss and vote on reinstalling the stop sign. She also considers public comments and engineering advice to all be information in the decision making process. Alderman McIvor and Mr. Rainaldi questioned the audience and determined that all of the residents present from the area near 79th and Farmingdale were in favor of replacing the stop signs on 79th Street. Alderman Poteraske suggested postponing this discussion until the next Police Committee meeting so that additional information could be gathered and perhaps more resident input.

Mayor Weaver commented, in response to Mr. Rainaldi's question about whether or not a petition would sway the issue; the Mayor indicated that, no, a petition would not be influential as that was the practice of past City Councils and that practice led to many improperly placed signs. The Mayor stated that the MUTCD provides the proper legal and technical guidance for the posting of signs. The Mayor told the audience that the police department has loaner radar units that they can use to verify the actual speeds of traffic on their street.

Chief Pavelchik informed the audience on how the MUTCD provides guidance for stop signs and how stop signs are not to be used at speed control devices.

Mr. Todd Petersen, 7908 Mayfair, told the Committee that he feels less safe in his neighborhood and is afraid for his small children due to the removal of the 79th Street stop signs.

Mr. Ron Perrson spoke to the Committee. He said that he lives at the northeast corner of Nantucket and 79th. He asked the Committee if Farmingdale Drive was also considered a collector street indicating that perhaps it may be functioning as a collector due to volume.

Ms. Lucy Nuzzo, 613 79th Street, spoke to the Committee in support of replacing the stop signs on 79th Street.

Chairman McIvor recommended that the Committee gather more data on traffic and perhaps hear from other points of view before making a decision; she suggested continuing this discussion at the December meeting. Alderman Galan commented that if the Committee recommends a change it can be brought to the City Council on December 6th. Chairman McIvor polled the audience and indicated that all of the residents present for the 79th and Farmingdale issue wished to have the stop sign reinstalled.

4b1. Fees for Booking and Towing & Impound of Vehicles

Chairman McIvor asked Chief Pavelchik what the status of this issue currently is. The Chief explained that the Police committee has previously reviewed and approved the issue of fees for booking, arrested individuals and fees for towing cars. Subsequent to that, the City Council discussed the issues at their October Goal Setting Session. The issue comes back before the Committee tonight for final discussion before the City Attorney reviews the ordinance. Deputy Chief Cooper informed the Committee that the Darien ordinance will be modeled after Westmont with some inclusions from both Hinsdale and Downers Grove. For example, Hinsdale included street racing, where Westmont did not. The Committee agreed that the violations from Hinsdale should be added. The ordinance will now be sent to the City Attorney and then back to the Police Committee for final approval.

4b2. Police Staffing

Chief Pavelchik referred the Committee to his October 29th memo to Administrator Vana regarding police staffing. The Chief then explained to the Committee how the police department schedules officers to work in the field and provide service to the community. As a result of this explanation, the Chief told the Committee in an attempt to save police salaries and overtime, it might be possible to field less officers than scheduled on a trial basis. The Chief referred to this staffing method as “schedule five, work with four”. The Committee suggested that statistics be collected on how often calls for police service must be delayed for an available officer, how often the staffing level falls below five officers and why, and how often overtime is paid if the street staffing level falls before four officers. The Chief also pointed out that a reduction in the field force may or may not have an impact on the community’s perception of their safety and of police service. This impact cannot be predicted and won’t be apparent until after it occurs.

Alderman Poteraske commented that this seems like a “no brainer” to at least try this scheduling method to see what happens. Mayor Weaver added that chipping away at the overtime spent is a worthwhile goal.

Motion by Alderman Poteraske, seconded by Alderman Galan, to recommend to the City Council to try the “schedule five, work with four” method of police scheduling. Motion carried by voice vote of three ayes.

5. New Business

No new business to discuss.

6. Department Report

Deputy Chief Skala told the Committee that we (the police managers) will no longer be providing the Committee with the long drawn out statistical documents of monthly activity, but instead will be summarizing the highlights of the month from the press releases. Since the last Police Committee meeting several thefts of wrought iron benches have been reported; these thefts appear to be recyclers stealing the benches for profit. Alderman Poteraske questioned that the most recent press release only had six items and were these the only six items the police department handled? Deputy Chief Skala provided the Committee with the guidelines for press release material that is, what issues go in a press release and what items do not. Skala informed the

Committee that eight burglary to motor vehicles have been reported with six of those offenses being to unlocked cars. Halloween weekend activity included a battery, where a juvenile was shot in the face with a paint ball and three domestic disputes on the midnight shift. In response to Chairman McIvor's inquiry about press releases, Deputy Chief Skala told the Committee that they are free to share the press release with their ward residents, as it is a public document.

7. Public Comment

There was no public comment other than the comments of residents under Item 4.

8. Next Meeting Date

Chairman McIvor announced that the next Committee meeting will be on Thursday, December 2, 2010, 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

9. Executive Session

Chairman McIvor announced there is to Executive Session for this meeting.

10. Adjournment

The Committee Meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m., motion by Alderman Galan, second by Alderman Poteraske, motion carried by voice vote of three ayes.

Minutes Submitted by: Chief Robert Pavelchik

Approved: _____
Date

Alderman: _____
John Galan

Chairman: _____
Sylvia McIvor

Alderman: _____
John Poteraske