

**POLICE COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
December 7, 2010**

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman McIvor called the meeting to order at 6:05 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: Alderman Carolyn Gattuso

Guest/Residents in attendance:

Marcia & Robert Ryba, 830 79<sup>th</sup> Street, Darien, 630-971-8381

Carolyn Gattuso, 7933 Sawyer Road, Darien

Darien Police Sgt. Gerald Piccoli

Darien Police Sgt. Greg Cheaure

Darien Police Sgt. James Topel

Darien Police Sgt. Steven Reed

Darien Police Officer Jason Norton

Darien Police Officer Steven Liss

Darien Patch reporter Lauren Williamson

***CHAIRMAN MCIVOR ADJUSTED THE ORDER OF AGENDA ITEMS; THE ORDER DOES NOT FOLLOW THE POSTED AGENDA, BUT ALL ITEMS WERE ADDRESSED***

**2. Old Business**

Agenda Item 4a. 79<sup>th</sup> Street at Farmingdale-Stop Sign Removal & General Traffic Issues

Chief Pavelchik highlighted his December 3, 2010 memo to the Committee and pointed out to them that stop sign placement and traffic speed issues are completely separate topics. Alderman Gattuso told the Committee that she had heard from six to eight residents who wanted the stop sign reinstalled on 79<sup>th</sup> Street; she added that the residents were concerned about a school bus stop. Mr. & Mrs. Riba told the Committee that they have concerns about the speed on 79<sup>th</sup> Street.

Alderman Poteraske made a motion that the Police Committee recommend to the full City Council the reinstallation of the stop signs on 79<sup>th</sup> Street at Farmingdale Drive. This motion was seconded by Alderman Galan and approved by a voice vote of three ayes.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

Alderman Galan made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 7, 2010 meeting (Agenda Item 2a); the motion was seconded by Alderman Poteraske, Chairman McIvor abstained. Minutes approved by a voice vote of two ayes.

Alderman Galan made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 3, 2010 meeting (Agenda Item 2b); the motion was seconded by Alderman Poteraske. Minutes approved by a voice vote of three ayes.

#### 4. Communications

##### Agenda Item 3 a - IRMA memorandum Regarding Training Cuts & Potential for Liability.

Chief Pavelchik shared with the Committee a memorandum from the Intergovernmental Risk Management Agency (IRMA), regarding budget cuts and training liability. The Committee held a brief discussion on whether or not enough training was being done in the police department. There was no public comment on this issue.

##### Agenda Item 3b - Letter from Police Union

Chief Pavelchik shared with the Committee a letter from members of the police union. Sgt. Piccoli, a union representative, read the letter to the Committee and discussed with them the officers' concerns about staff reduction plans. He commented directly to Alderman Galan that training in the police world is very important but that the scheduling of training also hinges on the availability of officers to go to training. Alderman Galan commented that in fact the decisions addressed by the Committee are financially based and asked Sgt. Piccoli if there is some training that is lacking or missing. Answer, not really. Alderman Galan emphasized to Sgt. Piccoli that he should come to the Committee if he feels something is needed in the police department. He added that during four or five manpower discussions at the Committee and Council, no one (from the police union) came to the meetings. He continued that this staffing change is a trial, a temporary change to gather data and see what happens.

Alderman Galan emphatically stated that he did not want to be in a position to have to fire or lay off police officers. Alderman Galan asked Sgt. Piccoli to comment on the letter's suggestion that the City Council is not cutting waste (page 3 of the union letter); he specifically asked Sgt. Piccoli if he was aware of waste that is not addressed? Piccoli responded as a resident and complimented the Council on their review process. He did not address any specific item as waste, but spoke generally of "niceties vs. necessities". Administrator Vana asked Sgt. Piccoli if any of the letter's signers has information about waste in Darien government? The Committee members then emphasized previous budget cuts that have been made including the 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks contribution and parade candy.

Alderman Poteraske asked Sgt. Piccoli to specifically address the letter's comment about employees who did not get raises. Sgt. Piccoli responded that he thinks some employees did not get raises, but did not have a specific instance.

Chairman McIvor told Sgt. Piccoli that she has an issue with comments made in the second paragraph of the letter regarding the perception that the City is "taking advantage" of the current economic situation. She continued that the City Council is responding to and trying to live within the current economic climate by reviewing all aspects of City services and expenses. McIvor said that she does not want to create an additional danger or liability to any staff members or residents, but that the staffing change is a trial. She told Piccoli and the police officers present that the Council needs their help to understand the police function and try to work together.

Alderman Galan commented that the letter from the officers was a good thing, a bit of a “wake up call” that they are interested in the operation of the Committee and the Council. He added that it is his goal to find ways to balance the budget, to make everyone happy, to balance all City services, to pay people fairly and to train them properly. To achieve these goals, he welcomes the input of the employees.

Alderman Poteraske said that the reality is it’s going to be another tough budget year as revenues are down. He asked Sgt. Piccoli about the letter’s statement that a five officer shift level will not compromise safety as a four officer shift level does; how does that work? Poteraske added his opinion that the staffing change should be tried to see what happens. Sgt. Piccoli responded by stating that the general feeling among the patrol personnel is that once a cut to a four officer staffing level is made, there will be no going back to a five officer level.

The Committee members reiterated that the staffing level is a trial change and that they want to work with the officers to gather information.

Sgt. Greg Cheaure also spoke to the Committee and provided a copy of his comments for the record. Administrator Vana asked Sgt. Cheaure if he could get the answers to some of the questions that the Committee asked of Sgt. Piccoli.

DUCOMM Fee Adjustment

Chief Pavelchik shared with the Committee correspondence from DUCOMM regarding final numbers for dispatch service. As was explained to the Committee that the DUCOMM presentation final cost numbers were determined once final participants were determined. The Chief explained that the Village of Oak Brook (broth Police and Fire) and the Pleasantview Fire Protection District did not join DUCOMM. As explained in Deputy Chief Cooper’s e-mail, the yearly fee for Darien will now be \$344,766 up from the original estimate of \$320,679.

Chairman McIvor Communication with School District 66 Superintendent about D.A.R.E.

Chairman McIvor commented that she had read an article in the Darien Patch (on-line news service) regarding the possibility of School District 66 and the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program. Chairman McIvor asked that Chief Pavelchik and Officer Nick Skweres follow up with Dr. J. Tiede, Superintendent of School District 66, about whether or not the school district is interested in this program with the Darien Police Department.

**5. New Business**

Agenda Item 5a - Surplus Property for Auction

Alderman Galan made a motion to recommend City Council approval of an ordinance authorizing the disposal of surplus property as outlined in the Agenda Memo. The motion was seconded by Alderman Poteraske and approved by a voice vote of three ayes.

**6. Department Report**

Chief Pavelchik informed the Committee that during this meeting Deputy Chief Cooper forwarded them an electronic link to the Southern Poverty Law Center web site so that the committee members may review a recent training video.

Chief Pavelchik told the Committee that in the last thirty days there were no less than ten instances when the volume of calls for police service overwhelmed the resources available to the point that no police officers were available. He further explained that collecting this data is still a work in progress. Deputy Chief Skala pointed out to the Committee that he anticipates working with only four officers on the street on a very regular basis (especially weekends) due to comp time requests. He also opinioned that working with four officers is not a proper staffing level for this community and he bases this opinion on his experience.

Deputy Chief Skala highlighted police calls from the press releases.

**7. Public Comment**

There was no public comment other than comments recorded for the specific agenda items. Chairman McIvor noted that Police Commissioners Carol Gierut and Frank Noverini were present in the audience.

**8. Next Meeting Date**

Chairman McIvor announced that the next Committee meeting will be on Thursday, January 6, 2011, 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

**10. Adjournment**

The Committee Meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m., motion by Alderman Poteraske, second by Alderman Galan, 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