

Security and Enforcement Committee Meeting Notes

19 October 2016

2:07pm called to order

**Committee members present:**

Albin Guillot
Brittany McGovern

Bob Simms

Robert Watters

John Zimmerman

**Committee members absent:**

Steve Caputo

Beverly Fulk

Ann Kesler

Dwyre McComsey

**Guests**: Bryan Drude, Gail Cavett, Emily Remington

Co-Chair Watters asked to amend the agenda to discuss a new item of business. Councilmember Guidry introduced an ordinance (calendar #31529) that will provide for anyone accused of a municipal offense other than in risk of danger to the community or a flight risk to be released if s/he is indigent. Currently, police officers have discretion whether they arrest someone for a municipal code violation. The municipal court judges have enormous latitude for how they treat offenders. The proposed ordinance hampers discretion of judges and police people. Co-Chair Watters stated that Commander Walls believes this will severely hamper his staff and does not believe this is a good idea. Co-Chair Watters stated that he does not believe this is good policy and will float it towards the FQBA and FQBL Boards to get some feedback from them; he suggested that the residents’ groups float the information to their memberships also. Discussion amongst attendees led to clarification of the ordinance, its language, and its potential effects on law enforcement officers and the public.

Albin Guillot resolved to amend the agenda. Robert seconded. It passed unanimously. Co-Chair Watters moved that the SEC committee recommends that ordinance 31529 be deferred for a period of not less than 90 days to allow business and resident organization to understand its impact on quality of life in the French Quarter. Co-Chair Simms seconded. It passed unanimously. Next steps were discussed.

Co-Chair Simms resolved that the September notes be approved. Co-Chair Watters seconded. It passed unanimously.

Co-Chair Watters provided an update on the RFP selection process. He stated that the selection committee considered four received proposals and came to the decision to recommend G4S as the winning bidder. An FQMD Board meeting was held on October 17, and the Board unanimously adopted the recommendation of the selection team. The next step is to begin contract negotiations with G4S. Executive Director Remington will proceed in obtaining a contract from G4S and to gather the the negotiation team to sit down and hammer out an acceptable contract.

The position of the FQMD Commissioners is that the first choice is G4S, and Pinnacle Security is the second choice in case contract negotiations fail with G4S. Upon questioning, Co-Chairs Watters and Simms provided details why the selection team felt G4S was the superior company.

Co-Chair Simms provided an update on the recent NOPD Community Engagement Night. As part of the consent decree, NOPD needs to involve community outreach events in each district. The chief selected facilitators to ask questions:

1. In your opinion, what are the greatest problems in your district, and what can NOPD do to help?” Concerns included:
* Vagrancy and panhandling (top concern)
* Bars/clubs that operate as poor neighbors in residential communities
* Drugs and prostitution: visible
* Lack of public safety: walking alone with confidence, drug dealers cruising in cars
* Fragile historic environment
* Public urination and defecation. Attendees discussed the need for more public restrooms in the French Quarter.
* Noise and sound. Simms said the Health Department hired four people to do sound checks who have been reassigned to the Zika epidemic.
1. How can community collaborate with the NOPD?
* Make donations to nonprofit organizations, not to vagrants
* Create restrictions on single beers or pints sold.
* Make the City cleaner.
1. What are we doing well?
* Visibility of Commander Walls
* Feedback on FQTF
1. What can we do better?
* Early notifications of COMSTAT and NONPACC
* Training officers with French Quarter ordinances

Commander Walls is now supposed to make a plan with all of these suggestions, as required by the consent decree. Attendees agreed to work with him.

Co-Chair Simms reported that, in September, nothing dramatic except arrests were up.

* 1555 calls
* 25% app/dispatch, 50% self-initiated
* 5000 miles driven
* 55 arrests, 18 apprehensions
* 423 (non-unique) subjects moved

Albin Guillot talked about the Night Out Against Crime and the presence of undercover detectives in the French Quarter.

Attendees then provided feedback on the French Quarter Task Force. Slower driving was suggested. Attendees stated that drug dealers have been reduced in the parking lots at Rampart and St. Louis. Co-Chair Simms suggested that residents provide feedback directly to officers. Discussion ensued about the brightness of the lights, which attendees believed were the correct level of brightness.

Co-Chair Simms stated that the new version of the app will be released within the next couple of weeks, hopefully by the end of the month. The goal is to have the new system up and running by the time G4S takes over administrative operations. Users will be prompted to update the application on their phones.

Bryan Drude noted that FQA are trying to raise enough money ($10,000) to buy a new Smart Car for the FQTF.

Co-Chair Watters asked Executive Director Remington to send a survey of attendance to all Committee members to determine the best day to meet and to set up recurring meetings.

Simms discussed the proposed low barrier homeless shelter. Simms stated that BB St. Roman’s concern was that it seems to be by invitation only, which creates a barrier.

Adjourned at 3:23pm