

Notes Security & Enforcement Committee Meeting

Tuesday, 16 June 2020
2:10 to 3:10pm

Via Teleconference:
<https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1487009343>

Video:
<https://meetings.ringcentral.com/personallink.html>

Meeting ID: 148 700 9343

Audio:
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- I. CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 2:10 pm
ROLL CALL:

Committee Members			
First Name	Last Name	Present	Absent
Ann	Kesler		X
Beverly	Fulk		X
Bob	Simms	x	
Brittany	McGovern	x	
Bryan	Drude		X
Frances	Hegenberger	x	
Gail	Cavett		X
Glade	Bilby	x	
Matthew	Emory	x	
Robert	Watters	x	
Steve	Caputo	x	
Vincent	Marcello	x	

INTRODUCTION OF ATTENDEES:

GUESTS		
First	Last	Role
Karley	Frankic	Executive Director
Ross	Bourgeois	NOHSEP
Eric	Smith	City Analyst
Juliet	Laughlin	Commissioner
Erin	Holmes	VCPOA
Renard	Bridgewater	MACCNO
M	Williams	

- II. Public Comment: Anyone who wishes to comment on actionable items must announce their name for the recording and indicate the item(s) on which s/he wishes to comment.
There was no public comment received.
- III. Approval of May 18th meeting notes (action item)
Ms. McGovern made the motion, and Mr. Watters seconded the motion to approve and it passed unanimously.
- IV. Chairman's Comments
Mr. Emory addressed the current civil action across the country under the movement of the Black Lives Matters doctrine and under the visible unnecessary brutality a lot of minorities have been experiencing. And now we are seeing a lot of civil unrest happening and more so a directional change in how policing is being addressed. The reallocation of funds and the confederate imagery still exists. It is

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the responsibility of this committee that New Orleans was the center of the slave trade for many decades. And with that we have been left with monikers, named places, statues that we have to be mindful that the people will expect them to be removed or renamed. And if they are not, people will take action into their own hands. He thinks it is critical that as a committee that we are sensitive that we address in a formal manner as opposed to being silent on that.

Mr. Watters made a motion: **“The French Quarter Management District’s Security and Enforcement Committee supports the BLM movement and dedicate ourselves to promoting racial equality and abide by bias free policing within our Supplemental Police Patrol Program” and that the committee forward it to the Board of Commissioners.** He explained that by remaining silent would put us on the wrong side of history and we should start in this committee to take action to let people know that we are sensitive to the issues and that we support equality and we support moving towards better times. Mr. Marcello seconded the motion.

Ms. McGovern noted that as the SEC committee noted that the motion should include the policing that the committee addresses should be included. Mr. Watters said that Ms. McGovern’s comment was right on point. And as we discuss increasing taxing for supporting increased policing in the French Quarter that we should be careful that we are developing our views to address this problem. Policing alone does not address the issues of mental health and homelessness that exist in the Quarter. That is a very worthwhile cost that we should be supporting, and we should be looking at using funds to address the issues that created the systemic conditions that created the problem in the first place. Mr. Emory referenced a new law in San Francisco that requires mental health workers respond to calls for mental health issues. And as we look at our funds, we should consider reallocating some of our funds to address some of these and not tie up police resources that would be beneficial as well. Mr. Emory asked if the committee should take a position on the renaming of places, etc. to help avoid angry response that could be damaging and avoid an anarchy response. Mr. Watters noted that we should be engaging the people leading the charge. And perhaps one idea would be to invite the Take ‘Em Down leaders to our next meeting. Communication and conversation is the way to diffuse things and perhaps to come closer to achieving somewhat measured change. We don’t want to postpone things, but at the same time we don’t want mobs tearing things up.

Mr. Smith noted that the French Quarter Improvement Fund is already funding, and the City would probably benefit from expanding, is the LEAD program in the French Quarter. The program attempts to address a lot of those nuisance offenders that tend to have underlying issues like mental health or are in need to social work. It is a wraparound program to try and bring people up, so we are not continually arresting people for misdemeanor offenses. In terms of thinking about programs that help with these issues instead of exacerbating them that is one that is only operating exclusively in the French Quarter. The other, in terms of mental health, New Orleans has one of the oldest Crisis Response Transport Units in the nation. The Crisis Response Transport Unit has existed within NOPD since the 1980s and consists of volunteers that respond to mental health issues calls to the police to deescalate situations and then transport patients to hospitals instead of involving police and arresting. That is also a program that has been consistently been unfunded that may be something to bring up in your conversations with any leaders especially NOPD, an expansion of that kind of program mat address some of the type of things that you are bringing up.

Ms. Frankic remarked that all of our patrols are staffed by off duty NOPD officers that abide by the consent decree are currently operating under the same condition of the NOPD. Chief Ferguson has put out information that NOPD has met the #8CantWait Constitutional Policing reforms. Mr. Emory want the committee to go on record that those changes will be incorporated in FQMD’s SPPP. Ms. Frankic recommended that we use abide instead of change in the words of the motion.

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Mr. Caputo asked is the motion fell within the mission of FQMD as the board has declined to take a position on other matters? Mr. Emory said that if we are going to take a stand that perpetuates the long-term success of the Quarter, if we do nothing our inaction creates anger, that could be catastrophic for the Quarter. Therefore, taking a responsible position on it should be a priority of the commission.

Mr. Bourgeois stated that as a career NOPD officer, he is proud to say that NOPD has seen a wave of reform in the past 10-12 years that are remarkable. And that the #8CantWait reform that state and local governments are being asked to tackle head on the NOPD has already enacted all eight of the recommendations. NOPD is head and shoulders above our colleges in other cities. He believes that this is being shown by day in and day out that we have not had the problems that other similarly sized and policed cities have had. That is a credit that NOPD got in on this reform early on.

Mr. Caputo reiterated that he supported the peaceful movement and protesting but wants to assure that the FQMD is consistent on when it takes a position on some issues and not others.

Mr. Marcello noted that his position is that we are not at odds with our mission that by only stating that we are only for equality and justice, and that is not at odds with our mission. At this point in time its important to declare yourself.

Mr. Bridgewater said that he would be happy to introduce Ms. Frankic and the organizers of the Take 'Em Down movement but there are various organizations working nationally and locally that are fighting to address issues of inadequacies and inequality. He thinks that it is important that this committee has taken a proactive approach in regard to those areas and making connections with the people leading these protests for change.

Mr. Watters read a section of the enabling legislation: *"E.(1) All powers of the board shall be exercised for the best interest of the district to aid in the improvement of public safety, quality of life, and infrastructure in the district, to aid in the preservation of its history, character, charm, and architecture, to beautify its appearance, to address its hospitality needs and its transportation and parking concerns, and to increase its marketability and its tourism and residential appeal."* He thinks that has to do with quality of life and there is no greater quality of life then is racial equality in our city and the French Quarter is very cognizant of these issues in the past and we carve the future. And there is a great distinction between [land use issues] and racial equality.

Mr. Simms questioned the reason the motion tying the SPPP into the motion. If we believe that it applies to all police programs not just the SPPP. The SPPP is no different than NOPD or all the other entities. Mr. Emory responded that it was the program that was within our purview and are funding the SPPP.

Mr. Emory noted that constitutional policing up until recently allowed actions that were inequitable. And while we are encouraged by NOPD's immediate response to these eight requests for reform, there may be additional requests in the futures. Mr. Watters made a point that the mayor has decided that the NOHSEP will replace the SPPP and the number one items for her vision for this force is bias free policing. That says that our mayor believes this is still an issue and that and security provided within the French Quarter need to be very conscious that they need to be bias free. And so he doesn't see any harm in putting in the language that we have.

Ms. Laughlin questioned if everyone was clear on what the BLM movement is? And asked what it is for the record. She said that when you are endorsing a movement you should state what the movement is. And the movement is not defined here. Mr. Emory read the mission of the Black Lives Matters Foundation (BLM)

#BlackLivesMatter was founded in 2013 in response to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin's murderer. Black Lives Matter Foundation, Inc is a global organization in the US, UK, and Canada, whose mission is to eradicate white supremacy and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes. By combating and countering acts of

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violence, creating space for Black imagination and innovation, and centering Black joy, we are winning immediate improvements in our lives.

The call for Black lives to matter is a rallying cry for ALL Black lives striving for liberation.

Mr. Emory asked if this was a mission we want to support? Mr. Watters said that it was a wonderful mission to support, Ms. Laughlin said yes. Ms. Frankic reread the motion and all committee members present voted in favor.

Mr. Simms asked for clarification that no one was implying that the SPPP was not in compliance. Mr. Watters replied no there were no complaints, but that the SPPP was the only program that the FQMD has any modicum of control over. Mr. Simms said he would be more comfortable if this was taken up by the board and Mr. Watters said that this was the step to get it in front of the board. Mr. Emory said this was not a stain on the SPPP in any way.

- a. Report on meeting between Security & Enforcement Committee leadership and New Orleans Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness

Mr. Emory reported that he had met with Mr. Bourgeois, Mr. Smith, Ms. Cavett, and Ms. Frankic on the transition in accordance with the mayor's plan. They expressed their timeline to us and anticipate this being executed within about 120-180 days, by the end of the year complete the transition away from the SPPP to the mayor's unified command.

- b. Report on meeting with City Council District C staff regarding possibilities for expansion of illegal carry penalties

Mr. Emory reported that he and Ms. Frankic had another meeting about the expansion of the illegal carry penalties around the ABOs. Cm. Palmer's office is doing the research to see what is available to us and what we need to do at the City and State levels. The City some more information and at that time we will have a little more clarity on what is possible. While we look forward to presenting the committee we still have a little more research to do.

- V. Update on the Board's review of the Supplemental Police Patrol Program deployment

Ms. Frankic reported that at yesterday's board meeting the commissioners voted to continue the deployment set at the March 26th special meeting of the board to have one officer during the day and two officers from 7pm – 3am to conserve the available funds to last through the remainder of the year. That said the board will revisit the deployment plan at their monthly meetings and revisit it with a vote within three months.

- VI. Update on the French Quarter Security Assessment

Mr. Emory reported that per board motion, FQMD provided a draft of the security assessment to support the transition of the mayor's unified plan so they can use some of the findings in the report to help their plan and consolidation of services. We hope to see a release of this document in the coming months for public consumption.

- VII. Update on the French Quarter Improvement Fund

Mr. Smith reported that due to missing remittances from New Orleans & Company the improvement fund budget had been reduced from \$4.3M to \$2.1M for 2020. The specific line items that

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survive in this revised budget are not available to be released just yet. However, the majority of the funds will be for projects that have already been completed or are in process with DPW. And the majority of the remainder will be spent supporting and salaries for the new NOHSEP French Quarter patrols. Mr. Emory asked when this significantly reduced budget will be available to be circulated and does Mr. Smith see wholesale cuts coming? Mr. Smith said most of the line items that FQMD saw in February that went to the City Council will be gone. He is waiting on one further approval to be able to circulate. He hopes to have that approval by end of the day so he can provide it to Ms. Frankic tomorrow (June 17) so she can circulate it. It will be a significantly different budget, since it is about half the funds they had expected. They do anticipate to continue their attempts at collecting the remittances from last year and in the event that the City is able to collect those, then those line items that have been excised will be put into an additional budget ordinance to get those line items back where it was.

VIII. French Quarter Crime Stats (Bob Simms)

Ms. Simms reported that for May the SPPP responded to 122 calls for service: 95 app calls and 27 dispatch calls and 1,240 self-initiated calls for a total of 1,362. They drove 4,607 miles which is about 1,100-1,200 miles per week. In terms of calls a lot are associated with suspicious persons and redundantly street people. The city has done a great job of housing most of the city's street homeless as you look around there are very few. Most of those homeless folks are now in hotels around the city. That has dramatically reduced the number of street people we see and have to deal with, however there are those didn't want to go to the hotels and they still remain on the streets of the city. They are the ones we are having the most calls from, mainly about blocking sidewalks, making a lot of noise, and tearing trashcans up. Staffing wise, in May we filled 99% of the shifts which is very high and had a very stable month. June has been less stable. NOPD went on 12 hour shifts for the tropical storm last weekend, on Sunday and Monday. That makes it difficult for NOPD to work their detail shifts either before or after their regular shifts. So we were severely impacted on Sunday and Monday. We were also somewhat impacted by the protests going around. Officers had to work special hours, but that is impacting up less. Crime wise there is not a lot of crime in the French Quarter. Person crimes are down 30, property crimes are down 25%, armed robberies are down 41%, homicides are down 50% compared to the same period as last year January to today. So that's obviously a result of the closures and the few numbers of people in the streets. He is sure it will pick up as things reopen. Crime for the first week of June, we had 2 person crimes. 1 was in the 800 block Canal Street when a DDD ranger asking a group of panhandlers to relocate and one took a knife out and threatened the DDD ranger. The ranger called for back up and NOPD officers arrested the subject. The second one was an aggravated battery that occurred at a bar.

IX. New Business (All)

Mr. Emory noted that the projections for the number of businesses that are anticipated to not recover and close permanently may lead to increased petty crimes, combined with the rising tensions arising from the social movements around the country now. He reminds everyone to be mindful, be diligent, we are going to have to work through this as a community, to promote the French Quarter in the best way possible. To promote investment, to promote spending, and come through this to promote the French Quarter in the healthiest and safest way possible to recover from this economic downturn. Please communicate any way the board can assistance in amplifying any needs.

X. Next meeting date: 20 July 2020

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 pm