

CITY OF DENTON CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

June 6, 2016

After determining that a quorum was present, the City Council convened in a Work Session on Monday, June 6, 2016 at 11:30 a.m. at the Public Safety Training Facility, Conference Room C, at City Hall East, 719 E. Hickory Street, Denton.

PRESENT: Mayor Watts, Council Member Hawkins, Council Member Briggs, Mayor Pro Tem Gregory, and Council Member Wazny.

ABSENT: Council Member Roden.

1. Receive a report, hold a discussion and provide staff direction regarding police operations, services, and receive a tour of Police facilities.

Lee Howell, Police Chief, stated that the mission of the Police Department was to enhance the quality of life in the community through excellent public service, protection of life and property, and impartial enforcement of the law. He reviewed the values which included professionalism, respect, integrity, dedication and excellence. He reviewed the staff diversity of the Police Department and Animal Services.

Howell stated that over the past ten years, the City's crime rate had dropped. Calls for Service and Non-Injury Crashes had increased. Fatality Crashes had reached an all-time high. Municipal Jail Arrests were down. The Communication Center 911 calls were pushing 144,000 calls per year.

Howell reviewed the Department's accomplishments for 2015-16: A fully implemented body camera program. A downtown plan was in place with dedicated coverage. Expanded youth-focused outreach programs. Continued to exceed 80% live release rate at the Linda McNatt Animal Adoption Center. Denton Public Safety Training Center provided over 6000 hours of training: graduated 4th Basic Peace Officer Academy class, provided 132 hours of public education and 64 hours of City of Denton classes.

Howell stated that the Police Department had implemented the second phase of the body camera program with an average annual cost of \$80,000. They had a three-year contract with the option to renew to five years. This included cloud storage through Evidence.com.

Howell stated that the Department was dedicated to engaging the community and developing partnerships with citizens to address quality of life concerns and criminal activity. The Department remained focused on its outreach efforts to residential neighborhoods, apartment complexes, and retail and business establishments. The Department's social media presence continued to grow through interactions with citizens on Facebook, Twitter, and the Nextdoor program. The Department also placed an emphasis on establishing relationships with residents and business owners in the Downtown and Entertainment Districts.

Howell stated that the Communications Division provided 911 emergency service and dispatched calls for both Police and Fire in the City. He stated that a consultant specializing in communications operations was currently conducting a study of the division's space needs.

Howell stated that the 800 mhz radio system needed to be upgraded to a digital system. Motorola was going to stop support for these kind of radios by 2018. There would be a significant cost for the upgrade.

City Manager Campbell stated that this would be a high priority in the budget and funding would be an issue.

Howell stated that future goals for the Department included: Increase patrol coverage. Address traffic enforcement and safety related concerns. Improve communication center facility and service delivery. Enhance crime lab and forensic capabilities. Renovate police facilities. Increase “in-service” training. Continue technology enhancements. Address response times.

He stated that calls for service had increased about 15% over the last five years. With continued growth of the community, there was an increased demand for neighborhood patrol presence, increased volume of traffic on city streets and a related increase in traffic crashes. There was an issue of having at least one patrol officer available to immediately respond to a serious-nature service call, such as crimes in progress and incidents where citizens were likely to be in imminent danger. He stated that response times were an issue. This issue involved the length of time it took an officer, once dispatched to a call, to arrive at the scene. Excessive response times were directly tied to the staffing levels of on-duty personnel. He stated that the City tried to respond in five minutes.

Howell stated that officers were not able to conduct proactive activities, such as patrols of problem locations or neighborhoods, traffic enforcement, community policing activities, and general neighborhood visibility patrol work.

The Council and staff then went on a tour of the Police Department.

2. Concluding Items

- A. Under Section 551.042 of the Texas Open Meetings Act, respond to inquiries from the City Council or the public with specific factual information or recitation of policy, or accept a proposal to place the matter on the agenda for an upcoming meeting AND Under Section 551.0415 of the Texas Open Meetings Act, provide reports about items of community interest regarding which no action will be taken, to include: expressions of thanks, congratulations, or condolence; information regarding holiday schedules; an honorary or salutary recognition of a public official, public employee, or other citizen; a reminder about an upcoming event organized or sponsored by the governing body; information regarding a social, ceremonial, or community event organized or sponsored by an entity other than the governing body that was attended or is scheduled to be attended by a member of the governing body or an official or employee of the municipality; or an announcement involving an imminent threat to the public health and safety of people in the municipality that has arisen after the posting of the agenda

Council did not have any items for this meeting.

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With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

CHRIS WATTS
MAYOR
CITY OF DENTON, TEXAS

JANE RICHARDSON
ASSISTANT CITY SECRETARY
CITY OF DENTON, TEXAS