

Public Safety Committee Meeting 03-07-18

1) Adoption of minutes from last meeting

Moved to adopt by Lindquist

Seconded by Beaton

Minutes adopted

2) Community Action spoke about their capital campaign

Bill Henkel & Joan Penny

Bill sent a packet of the numbers to council members

2015-2016 the number of people needing assistance went up 26%

There is a gap between earnings and housing prices. Community Action struggles with providing dignified service to the community. Homeless have to come and share their story with kids in tow, and it is embarrassing for many. 1 in 4 in our community are touched by Community Action. What size of facility is needed.

Joan spoke of building a business plan and determining what resources are required. There is disparity between income and amount required for basic needs. They try to keep people in their homes.

In 2017 \$5.6 million was put into the community.

New Services Center requires enough space for the following:

- Capacity
- Space for appropriate intake process
- 18 full time staff for case management
- 4 full time staff for housing
- Skagit Vets connect area
- Need gender diverse staff
- Dream space – possibly a shower/laundry area
- Volunteer Center Area - Volunteers do a lot of work for seniors in their homes
- Energy & Home Heating
- Kids Instructional Zone
- Legal Assistance for DV

They are asking for \$50,000.00 over 3 years from Mount Vernon. This would be a services contract, not a donation.

Community Action uses the money locally, so it gives back to the community in many ways.

3) Chief Jerry Dodd Discussed Use of Force

Use of force is addressed in Mount Vernon Police Department Organizational value #2, placing the highest value on preservation of human life. Goal is to de-escalate and save lives. For example, with jumpers we don't use force.

Police are duty bound to investigate crime, and legally required to use force, if necessary, when making an arrest.

This is a highly emotional topic with strong viewpoints, with no national model, and is difficult to measure. Generally, officers are reacting to actions of a subject/incident. We recently had two officers injured and neither saw it coming. The threat is sometimes known, but not always.

Social media shows us a tidbit of an entire incident and you don't always know what led up to that moment.

Reviewed what is reasonable, unnecessary, or excessive. All of which are well defined by state law.

Use of force is commonly used in:

- Field Arrest
- Robberies
- Disturbances
- Traffic Stop
- Domestic
- Mental

Tools we use:

- Verbal & hands on
- Impact batons – not very effective, few officers carry them
- Beanbag shotgun
- Chemical agent – OC
- Electronic – taser
- K9
- Pepperball gun
- Vehicle
- Gun
- Rifle

Continuum of force – Department don't use this model. The department looks at the totality of the circumstances to determine what type of force is necessary.

Force can also vary depending on gender, size, and build of suspect, number of people, if the subject is armed and proximity.

Violent Society

There is an increase of officers being assaulted and officers are 3 times more likely to be injured on duty than other occupations. In 2017 we had 17 officers injured, compared to only 2 officers in 2016.

Now that the jail is open and accepting more bookings, once suspects realize they will go to jail and not just be released as they were before, they are resisting more.

Problems can be attributed to the following:

- Lack of skill
- Poor Equipment
- Acting out of Fear
- Physical Conditioning
- Violation of Policy

There is a national trend of defiance of officers. Also, suicide by cop is becoming increasingly popular. 27-30% of the shootings you hear about are attempted suicide by cop.

Department has a three-tier system to review all use of force reports

- Supervisor Review
- Command Review
- Chief Review

Also, we have annual use of force testing and analysis of outcomes.

In 2017 1 in 260 calls were use of force incidents. 0.384% for 2017.

24 out of 43 officers used force, and the average years of experience of those officers was 10 years.

- 56% of those force incidents were takedowns
- 13% taser (not effective on everyone)
- 12% hand control
- 12% DV calls
- 7.61% theft and assault
- 5% warrants

80% of these cases were misdemeanors.

Females being aggressive is increasing

- 2016 six females were involved in use of force

- 2017 24 females were involved in use of force

K9 is a good tool, used more than 100 applications with three contacts.

Department standards:

- Good recruitment-hiring
- Training
- Policy/procedures
- Good practice
- Supervision and evaluation process every 6 months
- Prevention programs
- Encourage people to complain

Gary Molenaar asked about aiming for arms and legs to just injure suspect. Chief Dodd explained that those are moving targets most likely in these situations and it is harder to hit a moving target and the potential for the bullet going elsewhere is a risk. Officers are trained to shoot at center mass.

Mark Hulst – has done ride-alongs and officers were always extremely respectful and have a way of de-escalating most situations.

Chief Dodd – Sometimes observe officers at calls. They take a lot of abuse. Proud as a city to have the quality officers we have.

Melissa Beaton – That is a testament to the hiring process.

4) Mayor - Joint Library Project

Working toward a collaborative effort for new library since the end of December. Tim Holloran provided a draft interlocal agreement for Mount Vernon and Skagit County to create a cooperative relationship to collaborate with the goal of establishing a collective long-range strategy and joint venture.

First step is to enter a feasibility study for the property at 208 Kincaid Street, parking lot. This site is a combo of county and city owned property.

Development concepts:

- Parking
- Library and Programming
- Skagit County Community Senior Services

Is what we want to propose going to fit? Needs:

- 10,000 SF for collection
- 14,000 SF of shared space, multi-purpose areas
- Meeting Room for 100 capacity and other meeting rooms
- Tutoring and research rooms

- Computing
- Teaching and Commercial Kitchen
- Fitness flex rooms – i.e. Wii golf or something that all ages can participate
- Lobby lounge
- Staff space
- Storage rooms
- Parking

Propose a 3-4 month feasibility period for:

- Environmental work
- Financial options
- Scoping
- Vision of building elevations

Now thru the end of March for interlocals with a joint meeting on 03-28.

April-June Feasibility

June 29th another joint meeting to review and decide next steps

5. Citizen Comment – Richardson

Complaining about the traffic on North 30th Street, noise and speed related. She can't sleep and now the new construction at the end is making it worse.

Mark Hulst – To put in a request to the Traffic Safety Committee for a speed hump.

Adjourned at 7:18