

The Police – Citizens Advisory Committee

February 15, 2005

Meeting Minutes

7:15 p.m.

In Attendance: City Marshal Thomas Howard, School Superintendent Mary Murray, Ann Lagasse, Joyce Crosby, Gary Twombly, Tony Pettingrew

Committee approved minutes of the January 24, 2005 Meeting.

T. Howard reported on the last month's productive meeting with John Macone, Editor of the Newburyport Daily News. Mr. Macone said he supports bringing back a bi-monthly column which will provide positive communication from the police department.

The committee discussed who should be providing the communication – the C.A.C. or the P.D. T. Howard feels it should be a different voice than the P.D.

A question was asked, "How is the P.D. going to respond to growth in heroin and oxycotine in the area"? T. Howard would like to see "As I See it Column" to show that action has been taken to stop those drugs from coming into the area.

The City budget was discussed. Funding for the P.D. is lower than the 2004 budget. Any further reduction will affect personnel on the street. Already the department is down four people - one detective, 2 dispatchers and one regular patrolman. The P.D. hasn't been fully staffed for nine years. 911 calls in 2004 are up over 2003. The committee discussed how can they be helpful in the budget process. I was suggested that the C.A.C. report to the City Council and tell the statistics of how many calls versus the amount of staff. However there is a concern that it might be viewed that the City is vulnerable and it would be like opening the door for criminals. A suggestion was made that maybe a reporter could drive around with a cop on duty.

Committee agreed to get to the mayor before budget is submitted. T. Howard will ask Mayor to come to next meeting.

M. Murray suggests doing an interview with T. Howard for the Daily News and WNBK about DARE officer and program being held at the middle school 6th grade for ten weeks.

A suggestion was made that all press releases from C.A.C. be emailed to City Councilors.

G. Twombly asked if City Survey done one and a half years ago is available so we can get the results and respond to them. T. Howard said results haven't been available and he's not sure if the tabulation is completed. He will look into it.

Next meeting is scheduled for March 8, 2005 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann Lagasse
Secretary