



**Meeting Minutes (Approved September 6, 2012)  
Public Safety Committee Meeting  
Monday, July 2, 2012 at 6:00 P.M.  
City Council Chambers  
Española, New Mexico**

**CALL TO ORDER** – Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm by Chairman Dennis Tim Salazar.

***Present at the meeting were:***

Chairman Dennis Tim Salazar  
Councilor Peggy Sue Martinez  
Councilor Cory Lewis  
Chief Stephen Branch

Councilor Eric Radosevich  
Councilor Elaine Herrera  
Councilor Robert Seeds  
City Manager Joe Duran

Minutes taken by Executive Secretary Victoria Gallegos (EPD)

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA** – Chairman Salazar stated the day and time of this evening’s meeting agenda was incorrectly listed as Tuesday at 5:30p.m. Chairman Salazar clarified that according to the Open Meetings Act, all future committee meetings will be held at 6:00 p.m. as ratified by the City Council after March elections took place. Motion to approve agenda was made by Councilor Peggy Sue Martinez; Motion seconded by Councilor Eric Radosevich, with motion passing.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS** – None

**COUNCILOR COMMENTS** – Chairman Salazar stated he was advised by Councilor Elaine Herrera that she would replace positions previously held by former Councilor Greg Ortega, which includes Public Safety. Chairman Salazar added that he had not yet received any correspondence from Mayor Lucero regarding this information, but welcomed Councilor Herrera to the Public Safety Committee.

Councilor Peggy Sue Martinez reiterated her desire for future committee meetings to run more efficiently in an attempt to be compliant with the Open Meetings Act and to provide accurate information to the public and committee members. Councilor Martinez referred to a list of procedures drafted by Interim City Manager Joe Duran and requested that everyone present in this meeting receive a copy of it for future reference. Item #4 on this procedures list states that the City Manager and the Mayor shall approve the committee meeting agendas. Chairman Salazar stated he believes each committee shall be responsible for approval of committee meeting agendas, not the Mayor and City Manager.

Interim City Manager Duran advised committee members that he and the City Clerk were responsible for drafting this procedures list due to recent issues with late or missing agendas. Mr. Duran stated he would make necessary changes to Item #4 for future reference. Councilor Martinez asked how long ago these procedures were drafted, and Mr. Duran stated that Department Directors have known about these procedures for at least two months. Mr. Duran suggested the list be introduced during the next regularly scheduled committee meeting for approval by the City Council since a motion for action could not be made today. Councilor Seeds agreed with this recommendation since he has personal experience having difficulty having items added to an agenda in the past.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

1. **May 7, 2012** – Tabled due to meeting minutes not being included in packet for review, and due to an error on agenda indicating incorrect date of “July 2, 2012.”

**Monthly report for June 27, 2012** – Item was tabled due to error on agendas distributed. Chairman Salazar reiterated that the agenda as presented was never approved by him or anyone in this committee and he did not appreciate the errors on the meeting agenda.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

2. **Santa Fe County Jail** – For informational purposes only.  
Chief Stephen Branch advised the committee that a meeting was scheduled with Santa Fe County Detention officials to negotiate the possibility of housing City of Española inmates in Santa Fe. Chief stated that the current housing for inmates is located in Las Vegas, NM (San Miguel County Detention). Santa Fe County has agreed to waive the booking fee and it is located much closer to Española which will cut on transports. Chief Branch stated the medical attention is included in the flat fee.  
Councilor Martinez personally thanked Chief Branch for his efforts.  
Councilor Seeds asked if there was a limit on the amount of beds at Santa Fe County. Chief Branch responded by stating there are usually 150 beds available at any given time. If for any reason Santa Fe County cannot accept an inmate for Española, we still have San Miguel/Los Alamos County as alternate housing facilities.
3. **Weapons** – Chief Branch advised the committee that the department has transitioned 98% of commissioned officers to Glock handguns. The department previously had a range of calibers assigned to officers and due to safety issues Chief Branch wished to have everyone carrying .45's. Councilor Martinez questioned why the whole department isn't completed with the transition, and Chief Branch responded by stating that one officer failed qualifications with the Glock. That officer is currently in remedial training.  
Chief Branch also advised the committee that there are several surplus weapons and ammunition that he would like to trade in. Proceeds would be utilized to order backup weapons for the officers. Chief explained he has contacted two vendors in New Mexico regarding the surplus weapons/surplus ammunition. Chief Branch also stated all officers have recently been upgraded and qualified with AR-15 rifles.  
Councilor Martinez questioned whether or not this issue had already come before full council before. Councilor Seeds commented he remembered past administration discussing this issue. Councilor Seeds advised Chief Branch to ensure the proper procedures are adhered to regarding surplus weapons, including surplus declaration, bidding process, licensed dealers, etc. Chairman Salazar suggested City Attorney's review before the process goes further.  
Chairman Salazar yielded the floor to City Manager Duran. Mr. Duran confirmed he has been updated on the surplus weapons situation and stated an inventory of surplus weapons has already been created.  
Councilor Radosevich made a motion to take before full council. Councilor Herrera seconded the motion. Motion carried.

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

4. **Hiring Status** – Chief Branch advised the committee members that the department's K-9 Handler Jack Casias had resigned his position and Officer Jeremy Apodaca has been temporarily reassigned until the position is filled permanently.  
Chief Branch also advised that Estevan Trujillo recently failed his mandatory testing into the Law Enforcement Academy and has since been decommissioned. Further action is pending.  
Chief Branch added that he requested to hire one certified officer, and will propose one non-certified position once it becomes available.
5. **Training** – Officer Solomon Romero is currently a LEA-Certified Training Officer. He is a Master Firearms Instructor and will provide training in the following categories: General Police, Use of Force, Narcotics, and Investigations.  
Chief Branch reviewed statistics with committee members and stated the recently-formed Burglary Task Force has shown promising results. Chief Branch also recognized HIDTA

(High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area) for offering free training for our department. Councilor Peggy Sue Martinez suggested that Mr. Jose Ramirez be formally recognized by the city for his efforts. Councilor Martinez also recognized Secretary Julie Sanchez for maintaining communication between HIDTA and Española Police Department.

In addition to updating training officers and firefighters, there is a customer service training being scheduled for office personnel, which is being offered free of charge by Northern New Mexico College.

Councilor Seeds expressed his concern of losing employees to higher-paying agencies.

Councilor Lewis expressed his concern about firefighters' wages being so low and also recognized their hard work last year by raising \$56,000 while fighting wild land fires. Chief Branch stated the funds raised were eventually utilized by the city to cease furloughs for city employees last fiscal year.

6. **Miscellaneous Statistic Report** – Chief Branch reviewed the monthly statistics including burglaries, citations, calls for service. Chief Branch also advised committee members that effective June 14, a directive is in place for all eligible citations (traffic, misdemeanor) be filed through Municipal Court Chairman Salazar recognized Traffic Enforcement Officer Gregory Esparza's high citation numbers.

Chief Branch also made an announcement about the Española Municipal Court being closed for one week while the court is being relocated to Industrial Park Road (mid-July).

Chairman Salazar yielded the floor to Councilor Peggy Sue Martinez. Councilor Martinez asked Chief Branch if the Chevrolet Impala which was purchased utilizing Fire Funds had been transferred back to the Fire Department. Chief Branch answered no. Councilor Martinez asked City Manager Duran to ensure the vehicle was returned to the proper department. Mr. Duran stated that vehicle is used by Mayor Lucero and other city employees to attend meetings and run administrative errands. Mr. Duran stated he would check into this issue tomorrow's date, July 3.

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

7. Chief Branch reviewed the Fire Department statistics provided in the packet. Chief Branch also announced there are restrictions on open flames and fireworks within city limits. Firefighters are authorized to issue citations to violators. Councilor Martinez asked why the moratorium was not advertised in our local publication. Chief Branch stated City Clerk Mascarenas was in charge of the announcement being published and stated the reason an ad was not placed in the Rio Grande Sun was because it was too costly. Chief Branch referred to Item #6 on the Agenda. Chief Branch recently had to draft a K9 job description. The City Attorney will review the draft policy. Councilor Martinez made a motion to take to full council for approval. Seconded by Councilor Radosevich with motion passing.
8. **EMS Grant** – Awarded \$7,000 - \$12,000. Funds are utilized in part for EMS training.
9. **State Fire Marshal Grant** - \$206,000. Paid \$56,000 for the fire truck and the rest is used on daily use items at the Fire Department. The City of Española only pays the firefighters wages. Chief Branch was able to send two employees from the fire department to a grant writing class sponsored by University of New Mexico recently. Chief Branch stated he had written a thank you letter to Rio Arriba County Emergency Preparedness Director Mateo DeVargas for allowing the utilization of their hazmat trailer stocked with \$20,000 worth of equipment and materials. Chief DeVargas awarded the City Fire Department with \$10,000 of grant awards. Director DeVargas will also allow the Command Center to be utilized for Española Fiestas this year.

Chairman Salazar stated he has seen officers talking on cell phones. Councilor Radosevich stated he thought law enforcement was exempt from the ordinance. Chairman Salazar also expressed his sadness over the resignation of the Library Director, Teddie Riehl.

**NEXT MEETING** – Monday, August 6, 2012 at 6:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT** - Motion to adjourn meeting made by Councilor Martinez.. Seconded by Councilor Radosevich with motion passing. Meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.