
SITKA POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSION

Wednesday, May 2nd, 2007 – 7:00 P.M.
Harrigan Centennial Hall

REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Daniels called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Mr. Dennie Daniels Ms. Gwen Lazzarini
 Mr. Michael Wise Mr. Joseph Reeves
 Ms. Gail Roderick

Others Present: Scott Elmer - Fire Chief
 Sheldon Schmitt - Police Chief
 Dan Jones - City and Borough Engineer

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – APRIL 4TH, 2007 MEETING

MOTION: M/S Lazzarini/Reeves moved to approve the minutes from the April 4th, 2007 meeting.

ACTION: Motion **PASSED unanimously** on a roll call vote.

D. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA - NONE

E. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

F. COMMUNICATIONS

The Chair mentioned the email exchange regarding the Village Committee as the only correspondence for the past month.

G. REPORTS

1. Chairperson - None

2. Vice Chairperson - None

3. Police Chief Schmitt

At the outset, Chief Schmitt informed the members that the Police Department will be coming up with a public service announcement regarding the Katlian St. speed limit sign. He will email to the members a copy of the PSA and the monthly report.

He updated the Commission on recent incidents that SPD has handled in the past month which included the following:

- A death investigation
- A teenage child caught with weapon. This case was referred to juvenile probation.

- A major drug case went before a grand jury.
- A major traffic incident involving DUI

He added that in the past month, SPD received 1,800 calls, conducted 170 criminal investigations, and made 30 arrests. Domestic violence calls were down but SPD gets on the average, 3-4 domestic disputes per week.

The Police Chief briefly spoke about the 40-hour dive program that Sgt. Harley is involved in which will standardize safety and training for all public safety divers in the State.

On personnel issues, 2 new police officers are in training but SPD is still short of one police officer and one dispatch and records clerk.

Chief Schmitt also mentioned that SPD received its electronic fingerprint scanner and has gone to the Assembly for the addition to the animal shelter. The impound lot is full and they are set to dispose 30 cards. They are also looking at disposing used parts from impound lots.

On the question from the Chair regarding the number of minor consuming cases, Chief Schmitt said that he has the statistics and will bring it back in the next meeting. He mentioned that they made efforts to find out where or how minors procure alcohol and have made charges. He estimated that 10% of the minor consuming cases get furnishing cases. They have diverted 2/3 of the cases to Tribal Court which is part of the Tribal Youth Diversion Effort (TYDE). He also said that majority of the offenders are first time offenders.

4. Fire Chief Scott Elmer

Fire Chief Elmer gave the following report from the Fire Department for April:

- SFD was successful in getting the funding for the ambulance with four-wheel drive.
- He has drafted the ID cards for the Commission and is ready to take their pictures.
- He checked on the turnaround for ambulance billing and learned that it's 6 weeks.
- EMS call volume was up last month but he noted that it is a normal trend at this time of the year.
- A representative from the Insurance Service Office (ISO) will be in town in August to do a re-rating for Sitka. He said the last time Sitka was rated was in 1990. Sitka has a middle of the road ISO fire insurance rating. It will be an involved process and he will give more details in the next Commission meeting.

H. OLD BUSINESS

1. Swan Lake Crosswalk Update

Chair Daniels noted that this issue is in the budget process right now but said he will call City Administrator John Stein for an update.

2. Tour Bus Parking on Lincoln Street/ Maksoutoff Street Traffic Flow

Mr. Jones gave the following comments on the proposed one-way traffic flow presented by Hugh Bevan:

- The proposed traffic configuration will take away one general parking space in front of Sitka Bazaar.
- It involves capital and operating costs for the following:
 - "Left-turn only" signage on Barracks and American Streets;
 - Barricading;
 - Seasonal sidewalk extension – cost of putting it in and taking it out;
- Storage problems for the above-mentioned infrastructure items;

- It will do what it has indicated to do i.e. increase carrying capacity and increase flexibility for parking of mass transit buses and delivery vehicles on Lincoln St.

He stressed that the proposal is a highly political issue. Nobody likes change. He raised the question, is this what the community wants to do?

Chief Schmitt said that SPD has tried this kind of configuration for Halloween and street fairs and it works. He also mentioned that Mr. Fred Reeder of Southeast Stevedoring whipped out a plan a few years ago for a “walking mall” covering 2 blocks.

Ms. Roderick remarked that the sidewalk extensions could be like the lightering dock under the O’Connell Bridge which the Harbor Department takes out in fall and brings back in summer. She also suggested asking a representative from the tourism industry if it is something that the cruise ship companies would provide funding for.

On Ms. Lazzarini’s question about the different kinds of temporary sidewalks available, Mr. Jones said that he will take it as an assignment and will provide the answer including costs in the next meeting.

The Chair said he will contact Mr. Reeder and ask him about the proposal.

3. Sitka Indian Village parking and traffic issues

Ms. Roderick distributed a set of talking points summarizing the issues brought up during the STA Village Committee meeting. To wit:

- (1) Request for additional signage on Kaagwaantaan St.
- (2) Request for further police presence in the Village
- (3) Assistance to clear Kaagwaantaan Right of Way from encroachments
- (4) Request for assistance to clear fire easements between Katlian and Kaagwaantaan
- (5) Concerns about four-way intersection at Seward, Marine, Barracks and Kaagwaantaan Sts.
- (6) Priority of snow removal on Kaagwaantaan St.

The members validated each concern and discussed how to address them including their enforcement. Chief Elmer pointed out that residents need to be involved as far as coming up with solutions and enforcing these.

MOTION: **M/S Daniels/Roderick** moved to recommend to City Public Works to install appropriate street signs on Kaagwaantaan St.

ACTION: Motion **PASSED unanimously** on a roll-call vote.

Chief Schmitt offered to work with Chief Elmer in writing a letter of response to the STA Village Committee addressing their concerns.

This agenda item will be taken off the agenda.

I. NEW BUSINESS

1. Traffic Calming/DeGroff St. alternatives – City and Borough Engineer Dan Jones

Mr. Jones presented and briefly discussed three traffic calming alternatives for DeGroff St. for the Commission’s consideration. These are:

- (1) Rumble strips 115 feet from the stop signs going towards Swan Lake
- (2) Central island plus rumble strip off as you enter DeGroff St. from Sawmill Creek Road and choke point between the rumble strip and the start of the central island
- (3) Chicanes/Slalom

He pointed out that a cross-sectional view of the rumble strip on the drawing. He explained that it is similar to the shoulder rumble strips on freeways but it will be designed for 20 MPH. The rumble strip gives notification that something is coming up ahead.

He clarified that Staff is not recommending speed bumps on stop signs as suggested by Mr. Wise primarily due to maintenance reasons.

On the second option, he said that the central island narrows up the street into 9.5 foot lanes. The central island will have rolled curbs and possibly 4-5 inches in height so it can be driven over for residents turning to their driveways.

On the chicane option, parking spaces bump out with the center line moving. He thought that this configuration bounces around too much.

Mr. Jones told the Board that they haven't check the costs of each option but will be able to produce the numbers if the Commission so desires. He also spoke about the concept of "local improvement district" or LID as a way of financing the project if the neighborhood is interested to get it done. He explained that an LID can either be initiated by the Assembly or by a petition by the neighborhood.

On a question from the Chair regarding the approximate cost of rumble strips, Mr. Jones estimated that at \$5/square foot, total cost could be around \$10,000 to \$15,000. He pointed out that it would be a worthy experiment if the neighborhood would want to do it.

Ms. Lazzarini commented that they could recommend doing it in stages: double fines, then rumble strips, then chicanes. On her question about the number of speeding violations, Chief Schmitt said there have been 4 violations so far.

Mr. Wise suggested that they present three options:

- (1) Rumble strips only;
- (2) Rumble strips plus central island;
- (3) Slalom/chicanes

The Chair directed the Secretary to mail notification to the residents and include drawings from Mr. Jones. He also requested Mr. Jones to provide the costing.

This agenda item will be back on the Commission's agenda under New Business.

J. COMMISSION COMMENTS

Mr. Wise raised the potential impact of the Indian River Bridge construction to tourists going to the Raptor Center. He said he witnessed a pedestrian walking to town in the middle of the traffic.

Chief Schmitt pointed out that it shouldn't be a problem since there is a detour path for pedestrians.

Ms. Roderick informed the members that she will not be able to attend next month's meeting.

K. SET NEXT MEETING DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS

Next Meeting Date: June 6th, 2007

Agenda items:

Old Business

1. Swan Lake Crosswalk Update

2. Tour Bus Parking on Lincoln St./Maksoutoff Traffic Flow

New Business

1. DeGroff St. Traffic Calming Options

As part of his report, Chief Elmer will give a brief presentation about insurance rating.

L. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

PREPARED BY: Maria Finkenbinder
Contract Secretary