

SITKA POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSION

Wednesday November 7, 2007 – 7:00 P.M.

Harrigan Centennial Hall

REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

A. CALL TO ORDER

The Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Michael Wise Gwen Lazzarini Joseph Reeves

Absent and Excused: Gail Roderick

Absent: Dennie Daniels

Others Present: Marko Dapceovich, Mayor/Assembly Liaison Sheldon Schmitt, Police Chief
Scott Elmer, Fire Chief Garry McCrary, Sitka Police Department

Members of the Public: Dorothy Osbakken Kathleen Brandt Harvey Brandt
Shirley Robards Cliff Robards John Litten
Megan Pasternak

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: M/S Lazzarini/Reeves moved to approve the minutes from the October 3, 2007 meeting.

ACTION: Motion PASSED 3-0 on a voice vote.

D. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

The Vice Chair clarified to the members of the public that discussion of closing off Lincoln Street during tourist season was never brought up at prior meetings.

E. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Harvey Brandt, representing the Lutheran Church, disagreed with closing off Lincoln Street to create a pedestrian mall due to a tremendous lack of parking for the congregation and the services they perform for the community.

F. COMMUNICATIONS

Chief Schmitt would like to discuss increasing parking fines at next month's meeting.

G. REPORTS

1. Chair – None

2. Vice Chair – None

3. Police Chief

- Chief Schmitt discussed the number of calls for service and that there were 38 arrests made.
- The Department is hiring but has not received any acceptable applications.
- Justice, the K-9 dog, is actively working and has already been involved in 3 drug searches.

4. Fire Chief

- Chief Elmer discussed the Southeast Alaska Mutual Aid Agreement. It is still in draft form and will be handed out to Commission members in the near future.
- The Chief discussed the call volume and number of incident responses.
- The warning siren is in need of replacement. He is in the process of developing a draft siren replacement plan and will present to the Assembly for review. Chief Elmer referred to the map of Sitka's current siren coverage overlaid with the recommended locations and ranges of the proposed replacement sirens. He briefly described the capabilities of this new technology.

- The Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) will be presented with an emergency planning and response information flier that will be mailed out to the public.
- He has not received a response yet for the Assistance to Firefighter's Grant. The selection process does not end until mid-December.
- The Department is currently conducting an EMT training course and plans on holding a Firefighter training course this spring.

H. OLD BUSINESS

1. Tour bus parking on Lincoln St.

Vice Chair Wise brought up the question of where tour buses would park if they didn't park in front of Wells Fargo Bank.

Chief Elmer stated that when 2 buses park in front of Wells Fargo on Lincoln St. it creates a safety hazard for pedestrians.

Mayor Dapceovich stated that 2 buses cannot legally park there per the sign. He opposes dedicating parking to private enterprises and does not want buses parking on Lincoln St. He suggested enforcing current parking laws and stated that buses frequently park illegally and do not get a ticket. He would like to have designated parking for specific industries and would like to see Lincoln St. left alone in regards to closing it off.

Cliff Robards suggested people submit their suggestions/problems in writing. He would like to see the Commission discuss these issues with the entire community before sending recommendations to the Assembly.

Megan Pasternak reiterated her position that she disagrees with private enterprises having exclusive rights to parking. She suggests reinstating the 3 parking spaces in front of the Westmark's beer garden.

Gwen Lazzarini stated that two buses parking in front of Wells Fargo at the same time are a liability and one bus parking on Maksoutoff St. is dangerous.

Cliff Robards suggested the Police Department give leeway to delivery trucks, etc. in reference to parking enforcement.

John Litten suggested changing the wording on the sign from bus parking to commercial parking to encourage deliveries prior to 9:30 A.M. He purchased a mirror as suggested to help with safety concerns but has been unsuccessful in getting permission to install it. Chief Schmitt will look into it with the Public Works Department. Mr. Litten also stated that it's not just buses but big trucks that block views of the street. He suggested using money from the state head tax to enlarge downtown's parking.

No action taken on carrying over this item on next month's agenda.

2. DEGROFF ST. TRAFFIC CALMING OPTIONS

Chief Schmitt went over the cost of speed bumps/tables. They range from \$1,000-5,000 each and are removable for snow plowing and placement elsewhere.

Officer McCrary stated that residents feel that there is a speeding problem and suggests speed bumps instead of a portable electronic sign that costs \$15,000.

Vice Chair Wise asked if there really is a big enough speeding problem to spend thousands.

Chief Schmitt will look into indefinite placement of a Double Traffic Fine sign on DeGross St.

Dorothy Osbakken stated that as a resident of DeGross there is a speeding problem but violators are rarely caught in the act.

MOTION: M/S Wise/Lazzarini moved to ask Dan Jones, Public Works Director, to attend December 5, 2007 meeting to report on options and suggestions regarding speed bumps on DeGross St. in order for the Commission to make a recommendation to the Assembly.

ACTION: Motion **PASSED 3-0** on a voice vote.

I. NEW BUSINESS

J. COMMISSION COMMENTS

K. SET NEXT MEETING DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS

Next meeting date: December 5, 2007

L. ADJOURNMENT

PREPARED BY: Erin Olmstead
Contract Secretary