

MEETING MINUTES
VALLEY AREA COMMUNITY POLICING COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2015
10:30 AM
LOS DURANES COMMUNITY CENTER
ALBUQUERQUE, NM

In Attendance:

- Maxine Cowton, Chair
- Sgt. Kenneth Johnston
- Officer Jerome Armijo
- Officer John Burley
- Benjamin "G.P." Lovato
- Officer Carmelita Michaud
- Dr. Kathleen O'Malley
- Jennifer Rhea
- Diane Grover, CABQ Contract Facilitator
- Commander Donovan R. Olvera
- Lt. Scott Lafayette
- Candace Knight, Public Observer

1. Call to Order

Chair Maxine Cowton called the meeting to order at 10:40 AM, noting that a quorum was in attendance

2. Introductions

All present introduced themselves by name

3. Welcome: Commander Donovan Olvera

Commander Olvera was welcomed by Chair Maxine Cowton and introduced to attendees by Officer John Burley. Commander Olvera explained that he has been here for 16 years and has served in many capacities including but not limited to narcotics detective, property crimes detective, specialized units detective, crisis intervention lieutenant, criminal investigator and others. He hopes to be a resource to the department and stated that it was all about the officers and accommodating what they need to be efficient and make the City safe. Although he is seen as a part of the hierarchy, he believes he works for the officers and believes that being open minded nets solutions.

Mr. Lovato raised concerns about citizens requesting information and getting no responses from, the City.

Ms. Cowton reminded the council that the guidelines are a working document and not binding because they were poorly constructed.

Commander Olvera stated that they are heavily involved in community meetings and questions are answered by Crime Prevention specialists. Lt. Johnston stated that he has a list of Valley Neighborhood Associations and will forward it to CPC members.

Ms. Cowton stated that the original guidelines state that the CPC recommendations will go to the chief of police. She wondered if they should actually go to the commander. Commander Olvera stated that Sgt. Johnston refers information from the meeting up his chain of command and discusses meetings with the Commander.

4. Tyson Hummell, ADR Coordinator and Assistant City Attorney, City of Albuquerque

Mr. Hummell wanted folks to know that the guidelines are not binding and are not a roadmap or instruction manual, but one template among many. It gives members an idea of how they can structure the CPC if they choose to do so. He explained that the CPC is “your ball game” and members get to choose how they want to operate as to bylaws and agendas and how they want to work with the area command. CPCs should not be thought of as a revisionist agency of change but as a sounding board or conduit between the community and APD. It gives area commands a direct contact and interaction with the group as representatives of the community. Members were chosen as people of influence in the community.

As to the Resolution, Tyson explained that they are helpful because they set out meeting times and places. Since these gatherings are subject to the Open Meetings Act we need to comply with the act. The resolution is good for 1 full calendar year and once complete, the City can post and publish the notices. The individual CPC groups can make the resolution their own and include the parts that are important to the CPC. The group is free to write up their own resolution.

Officer Burley suggested that our simple focus needs to be improving relations between the community and police.

Mr. Hummell clarified that police can provide statistics as needed on a case by case basis, specific to whatever concerns are being addressed.

Mr. Lovato raised concerns about the need for a hard copy of the SOP's. Tyson explained that the SOPs were available on line and that members could print them up for themselves if they needed a print copy. Mr. Hummell requested specific concerns from Mr. Lovato.

On several occasions the chair called for a point of order when members transgressed the rules of decorum.

Commander Olvera is hoping that by the time the group has completed their work together, everyone is patting each other on the back and on the same page. Building the community/police relationship is the goal. Both groups need to cross the existing barriers.

Dr. O'Malley expressed her desire to communicate with the community and to spur communication between the police and community. She would like to forget about guidelines and get down to the work at hand. She stated that Ms. Rhea had the idea to host a community meeting and sit with each other without the time constraints and rules. Dr. O'Malley had requested statistics because she wants to know what the community concerns are, based on the community requests coming in to the police. Commander Olvera stated he is happy to provide statistics as needed and does so at community meetings regularly.

Commander Olvera also discussed the good work being done at the Community/Police dialogues. At the one he attended officers talked of their concerns and the life they live, and community members were surprised to hear their perspectives. He felt the communication was enlightening, and specified that officers in the dialogues are speaking for themselves as individuals and are not speaking for the department.

The group discussed inviting Neighborhood Association (NA) members to the meeting. Lt. Johnston suggested that the group needed to be more grounded before we start inviting guests.

Officer Johnston suggested and Dr. O'Malley moved that all Valley CPC Members bring two questions to the next meeting. Police can ask two questions each of the community members on the council; community members can ask two questions each of the police. Questions should relate to police/community relations and/or DOJ issues. GP seconded and all were in favor; none opposed.

5. Adjournment

Due to time constraints, the chair declared the meeting adjourned at 12:10. Unfinished business at the January 21, 2015, meeting will be carried over to the February meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, February 18, 2015, at 10:00 am at Los Duranes Community Center.

Old Business for next meeting/Action items:

- Lt. Johnston will forward his list of Neighborhood Associations within the Valley Command Area to all CPC members

- All Valley CPC members will bring 2 questions with them to the next meeting. Community members will bring questions for the police; police members will bring questions for the community.

Omitted agenda items from January 21, 2015, meeting:

- Acceptance of December 19, 2014, minutes
- Chairwoman's Report: Maxine Cowton
- Approval of January 21, 2015, agenda
- APD Officers' Report
- Consideration of Resolution No. 2014-(1)