



Minutes of the Northwest Area Community Policing Council
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, October 17, 2017
Northwest Area Command
10401 Cibola Loop NW
Albuquerque, NM 87120

Meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. with five board members, 12 members of the public and 11 members of the Albuquerque Police Department present.

The council said the Pledge of Allegiance, approved the September minutes and agenda for the meeting without any changes.

No CPOA/POB update was given.

The main speaker of the evening was new Northwest Area Commander Paul Szych. Commander Szych: "Thank you for your time. It is crucial to work together to solve problems and work through issues facing our city and our area." He stated his ideology and the mission he passes along to his officers is, "Let's do the right thing for the right reasons." He stated that is his main philosophy for running the Northwest Area Command. Commander provided a bit of information about his background: He said he is invested in the Northwest and plans to stay for as long as possible. He stated that he left the Detroit Police Department looking for a place to raise a family and chose Albuquerque. He has lived here for 16 years. He spent eight years as a sergeant in the investigative bureau before being promoted. He would like to focus on tackling violent crime and then property crime. He plans to do so through his experience in working with investigations; implementing tact plans especially around the upcoming holidays and in

the hotel areas. Commander Szych also discussed his thoughts on the newly proposed pawn shop ordinance making its way through city council stating that it would help give law enforcement another tool to fight crime.

The Commander noted that the Northwest is one of the few areas in the city that is actively growing and that with great authority comes great responsibility, so it is vital to hinder crime in the Northwest now, before things escalate.

Q&A:

Q: How many officers do we have in the NW area?

A: Approximately 50 total. There are more in other area commands. Resources are allocated by call volume.

Q: What's your take on Community Policing?

A: I started one of the first community policing programs in Michigan. As a concept it is a must. If you look at the ratios alone, police are not meant to be a standalone force. Everything involving policing is community policing. It's mandatory in the way we function and think.

Q: Politicians think Policemen can be bought at a grocery store. It's difficult to get policeman. How can it be fixed?

A: Whoever is elected, I will serve and do my best to assist them. Recruitment comes down to a lot of factors, not just money. A lot has to do with job satisfaction, and the officers knowing they make a difference, come to work and have a clear mission. I want officers in the Northwest to know that and to stay here. That's how I will help with recruitment as an area commander.

Q: (Paradise Ridge Homeowners Association) What can we do? How do we get involved?

A: Neighborhood watch is extremely important. Reporting even small things, when you hear glass break or see a suspicious person jump a fence. Because of alert neighbors, we make arrests. Pete Gelabert is our Crime Prevention Specialist, and he will assist with setting up a neighborhood watch and has many useful resources to help fight crime.

Contact: Pete Gelabert - (505) 768-4850 pgelabert@cabq.gov

A: I have one easy tip for you – the little red ball on your automatic garage door opener. Cut it off. Criminals can use it to grab onto and open your garage door while you're not home.

Q: Do security cameras work?

A: APD officer (Previous answers were Commander Szych) Yes. We've seen positive results as well from the systems that have two-way communications. The Officer stated he was able to help solve a domestic violence case due to evidence caught on a security camera.

Q: Is inviting groups like Guardian Angels who tend to take law enforcement action into their own hands due to APD's short staffing a good idea?

A: Commander Szych: Let the professionals do the work that they do, because sometimes what starts with the best of intentions, can end poorly. We've seen that the average property crime criminal is becoming more violent; they have guns and will use them. Having folks who are not trained officers deal with these types of criminals might not be the best idea.

Q: Apparently there's a process of "Going Federal". What does that mean?

A: We are working as a team to ensure the most violent criminals receive convictions. The Department has launched an ALERT program which insures the people involved in the criminal justice system have the information necessary to prosecute our city's most violent, repeat offenders. We are working closely with the District Attorney's office and the Feds to ensure they get Federal charges where applicable.

Q: What shifts are officers working?

A: Some 8's, some 12s, some 10s. The officers stated that 10s are right in the middle and give him enough time to interact and do his job.

Q: What kinds of calls are we seeing in the NW?

A: The biggest thing now is property crime.

Q: What about domestic violence? When there's a DV situation is someone going to jail?

A: For officers to put someone in jail on a DV call, they must have probable cause. If there is probable cause an arrest can be made. Investigations must be extremely thorough and if probable cause exists the order says the officer SHALL arrest.

Added information – it's the 10 year anniversary of the Family Advocacy Center. Many people don't know about the resources housed there, and people are encouraged to learn more:

<https://www.cabq.gov/police/albuquerque-family-advocacy-center>

Q: A friend of a board member had their home broken into. The board member commented on how the officers were extremely professional and cordial, and related that their attitude and courtesy was appreciated. He said that in his 50 years he had never encountered more professional officers. The officer who responded to the call was actually at the CPC and stood up to be acknowledged.

Old Business

- a. Suggestion/Comment box status: Celina – will have it mailed to the NW area commander and once Commander Szych receives it, he will provide it to the CPC.
- b. Revised Guidelines – CPC Policies were handed out and community/members were asked to review them.

New Business

- a. Request DA present at November meeting?
- b. Rescheduling meetings in the New Year? New administrative assistant has a scheduling conflict due to MHRAC Mental Health Response Advisory Council. Suggested moving the meeting back to the Don Newton Taylor Ranch Community Center or a school.

Matters from the public

- a. Discussion of transition will continue to be important, as current CPC recommendations should remain in place. Also the council is considering writing a letter listing their priorities to the transition team.
- b. Westside Collation of neighborhoods is a good resource. 33 neighborhoods involved. Learn more about community and its leaders. They meet the first

Wednesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at the Don Newton Taylor ranch
Community center.

- c. Soda Pop with a cop at Eubank and Lomas coming up 3-5:30 p.m. on Wednesday October 18th.
- d. Remember Halloween is approaching and there will be lots of kids in the streets.
- e. The Council is always open to new members and suggestions of how to recruit new members. Residents can find out more:

<https://www.cabq.gov/police/community-policing-council>

- c. Adjournment –