

MINUTES OF THE POLICE CHIEF'S ADVISORY BOARD

6:00 p.m.

September 29, 2022

Chairman Dan Henderson brought the meeting to order with the following Board members present; Police Chief Marshall Craft, Debbie Hall, H. William Mulvaney, Tesha Miller, Florence Cephas, and Jeff James.

Chairman Henderson asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the June 16, 2022, meeting. Mr. James made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the June 16, 2022, meeting. Mrs. Cephas seconded the motion; the motion so passed with all those present voting in favor.

Chairman Henderson reminded the Board Members that this will be the first Police Chief's Advisory Board Meeting to include public comment, he then briefly explained the process.

Public Comment

Chairman Henderson inquired if any members of the public had signed up to make comments; Dan Cannon of 411 Nylon Blvd came forward and presented the following statement:

Perspective on Newly Established Public Comment in Seaford. In June, the Delaware General Assembly (GA) UNANIMOUSLY passed a law that mandated "that meeting of public bodies (which includes Seaford's Police Chief's Advisory Board)...MUST provide an opportunity for public comment."

Of course, for all other municipalities, this public comment legislation was no big deal. However, to the best of my knowledge, Seaford had remained the only municipality in the State of Delaware not allowing public comment at its meetings until forced to do so by Delaware's GA.

This lack of public comment in Seaford was UN-AMERICAN and the antithesis of the spirit of governance of, by, and for the people.

FYI. Other municipalities in Delaware likely consider citizen input as a vital enhancement to and/or check on the actions/activities of elected and appointed officials supposed to be responsive and responsible to citizens.

In contrast, Seaford's rejection of public comments on dubious decision-making has NOT worked out well for Seaford.

For example, over the last 6-7 years the City of Seaford has been found guilty of at least six (6) violations of the FOIA laws, violations of several election laws, an attempt to establish an illegal right-to-work law, and most recently an attempt to establish an illegal fetal remains law.

There were no opportunities for citizens to address Seaford's Mayor and City Council (M&CC) with the comment about these SNAFUs (and others) at considerable cost to Seaford's reputation not to mention its bank accounts.

At this point, the success of public comment in Seaford will strongly depend on elected and unelected officials respecting the new law by showing good faith acceptance and utilization of this form of public input.

Public Comment About Speed Bumps On Nylon Blvd. The installation of speed bumps on Nylon Blvd. has been an unqualified success for this citizen and many others residing on Nylon Blvd. There has been a dramatic reduction in speeding, vehicle noise, and joyriding. Virtually NO large trucks now venture down Nylon Blvd. Large, lifted pickup trucks no longer roar between Stein Hwy <—>Pennsylvania Ave.

MY WIFE AND I URGE YOU TO MAKE THESE SPEED BUMPS "PERMANENT" BETWEEN MARCH AND DECEMBER to continue making Nylon Blvd a safer and more enjoyable place to live.

And please note that this POSITIVE public comment would not have been allowed until mandated by Delaware's General Assembly.

Finally, I strongly encourage all citizens of Seaford to bring their positive and/or negative opinions, observations, and recommendations into the forum of public comment for the betterment of our City.

New Business

Chairman Henderson presented New Business Item #1: VirTra demonstration at the Seaford Police Department for PCAB members.

Chairman Henderson solicited a motion to enter recess so Board Members could travel to the Seaford Police Department for the VirTra demonstration. Mr. Mulvaney made a motion to enter recess; Mr. James seconded the motion. The Board entered recess at 6:06 p.m.

The Board Members returned from recess at 7:35 p.m. Chairman Henderson solicited any questions regarding the VirTra demonstration. Mr. Mulvaney asked Chief Craft how difficult it was to obtain the grant funding for the VirTra simulation system. Chief Craft explained the research for the program took around a year and a half. The Police Department chose the Virtra System as it was the highest-rated training simulation of its kind. He noted the purpose of this system is not only to train Seaford officers but to allow the department to become a regional training facility. Chief Craft explained he was required to go before the Criminal Justice Council (CJC) to present the program and had to get their approval to receive funding.

Mr. James and Ms. Miller stated how impressed they were with the training simulator. Ms. Miller asked Chief Craft if the program developers have considered including youth offenders in the simulation since there may be instances where officers are required to use force against someone in a school-based setting. Chief noted VirTra offers

hundreds of scenarios in the simulation, but it may be worth presenting that idea if it doesn't already exist.

Chairman Henderson presented New Business Item #2: Speed bump update – Chief Craft briefly reviewed the speed bump pilot program on Nylon Boulevard and Magnolia Drive and noted these programs will expire in November. There have been mixed reviews on the speed bumps but they have been shown to reduce speeding and decrease the number of commercial vehicles that travel down Nylon Boulevard. The temporary speedbumps will be removed over the winter; however, if the Board feels these should be permanent, a proposal will need to be presented to Mayor and Council for approval.

Councilman Mulvaney asked if the Police Department has noticed an influx of speeding on other main roads, like Shipley Street, since installing the speed bumps on Nylon. Chief responded he was not aware of any.

The group briefly discussed other possible traffic safety and enforcement ideas.

Chairman Henderson presented New Business Item #3: Discussion on Board terms and Chairman position. Chairman Henderson explained the terms for each Board member were established when the Board was formed; however, those terms have become somewhat loose over the past few years. He explained the Board will need to determine which members would like to continue in their roles and if anyone would like to offer their position to another community member.

The group reviewed the initial Board guidelines and established which members are nearing the end of their term. The group agreed it would be best to schedule a November meeting to review and decide on reappointments and possible replacement candidates. The group agreed on the 10th of November.

Old Business

Chairman Henderson presented Old Business #1: Seaford School District Art Project for the 'Riding with the PACK' community engagement initiative.

Chief Craft updated the Board on upcoming events involving the Riding with the PACK initiative, including Seaford Night Out on Thursday, October 6, and the Faith in Blue event will take place in Nutter Park on Friday, October 7 through Saturday, October 8.

Chairman Henderson presented Old Business #2: Seaford Police Department Perimeter Fence – Grant.

Chief Craft gave an update on the Police Department fence installation. He also explained once the fencing is complete the department plans to incorporate the space into the High Schools evacuation plan since it will be a secure area in the event of an emergency. He explained the department has not received the award letter for the grant and that funding will not be released until sometime in February. Once funding is received the City can put the project out for bid. Chief estimated the project will not be completed until around this time next year.

Chairman Henderson noted before closing the meeting that Board Members are encouraged to bring any issues presented to them from the public to the Chief so he can research solutions and bring information to present at the next meeting.

Reminder of Meetings:

Next Police Chief's Advisory Board, Thursday, November 10, 2022, at City Hall starting at 7:00 p.m.

With no other business or questions, Chairman Henderson asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Miller made a motion to adjourn; Mrs. Hall seconded the motion; the motion so passed with all present voting in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Ashley Heinicke, City Clerk