

**MINUTES OF THE
POLICE CHIEFS ADVISORY BOARD**

7:00 P.M.

February 16, 2023

Chairman Dan Henderson brought the meeting to order with the following committee members present: Police Chief Marshall Craft, Debbie Hall, Pastor Kimberly McGill, and Kevin Andrews.

Chairman Henderson asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from November 10, 2022 meeting. Pastor, Kimberly McGill made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the November 10, 2022. Motion was seconded by Debbie Hall. Motion was passed with all those present voting in favor.

Public Comment:

Seaford Resident Dan Cannon of 411 Nylon Blvd came forward and presented the following public comment.

To: Police Chief's Advisory Board, City of Seaford, Seaford DE 19973 From: Dan Cannon, 411 Nylon Blvd, Seaford DE 19973 302.228.3446 seafordski@hotmail.com

RE: MORE PRESSING NEEDS THAN TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT Date: 2/16/23

The temporary installation of speed bumps on Nylon Blvd. was an unqualified success as there was a dramatic reduction in speeding, vehicle noise and joy riding. Removal of these bumps has seen a slow but steady resumption of speeding vehicles.

Over the last 2-3 weeks SPD surveillance on Nylon Blvd. has resulted in at least 4 stops of vehicles presumably receiving citations for traffic violations. We definitely appreciated this attention.

However, for a number of reasons, we also believe that there could be more productive allocation of SPD resources than for traffic control on Nylon Blvd/other areas while at the same time resuming effective traffic control.

To do so, **please recommend making the speed bumps on Nylon Blvd. permanent as soon as possible.** At the same time, post signage at the grassy ends of the bumps reading "Raise Plow." The new permanent speed bumps will restore traffic control and the new signs will, besides alerting plow drivers, help thwart drivers attempting to skirt the bumps by using the median.

Even more importantly, such moves would free up SPD personnel to be reassigned from traffic control to more significant, more urgent needs: arresting a spike in violent and non-violent behaviors and/or crimes in Seaford and reassuring Seaford residents of their safety.

As you may know, 8 different people made Public Comments at the 1/24/23 meeting of Mayor and City Council. About half specifically referenced concerns about these problems. This was especially poignant after the recounting of two extremely violent crimes against Seaford women (one a rape, aggravated assault and more; the other kidnapping, aggravated assault and more). In addition, there were citations of less violent but very concerning behaviors reported by others.

Underlying all of this was a distinct impression that the SPD response(s) to these problems was far less than overwhelming with allusion, in part, to staffing shortfalls/shortages. **Taking SPD officers from non-essential traffic details and assigning them to identified "hot spots" would be a positive step toward regaining a handle on such problems.**

My wife and I would certainly support the reestablishment of Nylon Blvd. (and other street) speed bumps for traffic enforcement and allow SPD to reallocate resources for more immediate, troubling needs.

Thank you.

New Business

Chairman Dan Henderson to have Chief of Police Marshall Craft speak on – 2022 Crime reporting statistics and strategies on combating crime in 2023.

Chief of Police Marshall Craft: In response to Mr. Cannon, we have had numerous discussions on recommendations for speed bumps absolutely work and they will be recommended in a near future council meeting. They will not be as aggressive and they will help with freeing up some of our resources. I do want to recognize some of the great work our officers are doing.

Crime has trended up this year in Seaford and is the same everywhere unfortunately, and a lot has to do with things such bail reform, early release from prison, placement of convicted felons who are now allowed to receive government housing has certainly significantly contributed to a spike in crime. Thank you to Council authorized the allocation of 2 more additional officers during this physical year due to crime rates going up and possible retirements. We have made a lot of arrests. Highest arrest per capita in Delaware.

We have brought back motorcycles, electric, increased the CID division, partnered with more state and local agencies, pole cameras installed. Search warrants with numerous arrests.

City is working with Code Enforcement and are trying to partner with the community by starting up a crime watch.

We have implemented traffic devices in certain areas to deter fatalities, such as low speed limits, speed bumps, and ordinances stopping pan handling and such in certain areas.

Diversion team for intervention of mental health, drugs, and homeless.

At 1913 Hours Pastor Florence Cephas joined the meeting.

Working with DIAC to identify high offenders/multiple offenders/violent crime offenders. Also working with Probation and Parole and State Police.

Street Crimes Unit well on its way to forming, formerly the STAR team, this. This will be a team of 9 highly trained people, hopefully in effect around June. They will need to be well trained and well equipped.

Identified a list of where we have different facilities, they are not required to notify the City. Half- way houses, ¾ houses, or Boarding room houses. Work in progress ref house bill 245.

House Bill 245- trying to pass and enhance it so cities and towns can monitor, screen, do inspections, and possibly have some say in where these facilities can go.

Ordinance that will be submitted by Code Enforcement to address nuisance properties. It will be read twice and given 30-day notice before going into effect.

We are always striving to do better by working together and communication.

Cadet Program – to improve our presence, they will be in uniforms and be equipped with radios, batons, oc spray. They will have the ability to cite parking violations and city ordinances. They can turn violations in to the Code department.

Council has approved a modified take home car program. This will help with recruiting officers.

Chief Craft touched upon the Advisory Board and how great it is to have people who know about their community and can voice their opinions on what they would like to see done.

Grants for cameras on Clarence Street and License plate readers. Partnered with the health initiative who have agreed to put in 3 cameras. We have worked with Woodland Mills Apts and they now have a license plate reader and we are currently working with Meadowbridge Apts.

We couldn't do our job without the support of our City Council.

SRO in school district, very successful. Very positive thing that Council has done.

Kidnapping/Attempted murder

Suspect never lived in Seaford, was from Salisbury

Picked up in Delaware on a fugitive warrant out of Salisbury

Incarcerated at SCI and then extradited back to Maryland

Released and then went to probation and asked to be sent to address in Maryland

Denied due to a fee due in Maryland, placed in Seaford

Probation and parole working with us would be a significant impact for the safety of our community.

Anita Bowers, Executive Assistant