

Village Of Wesley Chapel

Safety Committee Minutes

November 16, 2006

The Safety Committee of the Village of Wesley Chapel, North Carolina, met in the Fellowship Hall of the Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church at 120 Potter Road South on the date above. These minutes are submitted to summarize the discussions and motions passed.

Attendance

Committee members present included Bryan Raughley, Allison Maher, Bill Moran, Jen Viohl, John Stoehr, and Tessie Morris, and Hank Pressley. Council Liaison Brad Horvath also attended.

Visitors included Sean Maher, Carol Mullis, and Betty Plyer.

Meeting Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

The committee was called to order at 7:00 pm.

2. MINUTES APPROVED

The meeting minutes from 10.12.06 were approved. Jen Viohl motioned and John Stoehr seconded. The Committee voted to accept the minutes.

3. REPORTS OF SPECIAL PROJECTS

a. SCHOOL SAFETY

Jen Viohl and John Stoehr met with Mrs. Bateman, the principal of Wesley Chapel Elementary. They provided a summary of their meeting. Mrs. Bateman provided an overview about several security practices, including: volunteer background checks, visitor logging, uniformed patrols of the outdoor trailer classrooms, critical responder teams, lockdowns, and additional security cameras. The trailer classrooms will be marked on the roofs for identification by helicopter.

The Committee informally agreed that the Committee's role concerning school safety is to keep a relationship with school principals.

b. LAW ENFORCEMENT

Sean Maher, a resident and retired police officer, presented a public safety concept for future consideration. Mr. Maher's concept is to implement a public safety officer program within the Village. The intent of the program is to prevent petty crimes by omnipresence using an organized and trained group to patrol subdivisions, shopping centers, and rural roads.

The concept is to organize an official group of trained citizens, preferably citizens with law enforcement or military police experience. The group will supplement the patrols of the Union County Sheriff Department by acting as extra eyes and ears to suspicious activities. The group will conduct patrols within the Village and directly report suspicious activities or crimes to the Sheriff Department. The omnipresence works to deter petty criminals and its effectiveness is a proven crime prevention method. Mr. Maher explained the national

problem of identity theft and cases that have been reported within the Village, including an example of stealing vehicle registrations from unlocked cars owned by unsuspecting residents.

Mr. Maher and Councilman Horvath presented the concept to the Sheriff. He spoke with the Attorney General's Office about the legality of such a program and resources that might be available to launch the program. He also reported that the Village would need to review the concept with the Village's attorney and insurance broker.

Mr. Maher answered questions from the committee members and visitors, including how the patrol would differ from neighborhood watches and how the patrol could be integrated with neighborhood watches. The committee informally agreed that crime statistics should be obtained and evaluated from the Village and surrounding jurisdictions. [Allison Maher volunteered to collect and analyze data.](#) Mr. Maher was encouraged to further explain the details of his concept in a white paper or equivalent that explains why a program is needed, as well as who, what (cost and benefit), where, when, and how a program would be implemented.

The Committee informally agreed that this concept would provide value to the Village residents and businesses, especially as a provisional means of protection until the Village has a full-time law enforcement presence. The committee informally agreed that questions about this public safety concept should be included in the 2007 Village Survey.

[Mr. Stoehr volunteered to contact Weddington's public safety committee to understand the research and evaluation process that their town used to determine their law enforcement needs.](#)

c. FIRE PROTECTION

Bill Moran presented an overview of current and future fire protection issues affecting the Village. Mr. Moran and Mr. Raughley summarized the recent attempt by the County Fire Marshal to conduct a county-wide fire protection study. The study had a threefold purpose to evaluate: (1) the feasibility of a county-wide fire taxing strategy, (2) re-defining fire district lines, (3) general fire protection adequacy using NFPA 1720. They reported that the study was canceled by the County. However, the local fire chiefs began meeting to analyze the fire protection issues, including fire district borders and firefighter training.

Mr. Moran provided an outline of a white paper designed to educate the Village Council and residents about fire protection issues created by the Village growth. The paper will evaluate fire protection using the National Fire Protection Association's nationally recognized standard NFPA 1710 and potential options to consider for meeting the growth issues. Mr. Moran, Bryan Raughley, and Hank Pressley will prepare the white paper. The paper will be submitted to the Committee for review and approval.

Visitor Carol Mullis, a resident, provided a history of the Wesley Chapel Volunteer Fire Department (WCVFD), including that the fire call volume has increased significantly over the years.

Mr. Moran, Mr. Raughley, and Mrs. Mullis explained to the committee the potential issue of a county-wide fire tax. The issue is that fire tax revenues collected from residents in the local fire district could be used to subsidize fire protection outside the fire district. Since growth is occurring at a fast rate in the Village, they agreed that it might be in the Village's best interest for the Committee to explore conceptual methods to assure that fire tax revenues collected from Village residents are utilized solely for emergency services within the Village/fire district. Mr. Moran agreed to include this issue in the scope of the white paper.

The Committee informally agreed that the white paper was a good first step and survey questions should be designed for the 2007 Village Survey.

d. SURVEY QUESTIONS

The Committee will be drafting a set of survey questions related to public safety for the 2007 Village Survey.

e. WEB SITE LINKS

No action reported.

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The committee alternates, Hank Pressley and Tessie Morris, were introduced. The alternates provided an overview of their backgrounds.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. MISSION STATEMENT

A draft mission statement was presented by Bryan Raughley for the Committee. The Committee will formally vote to accept the mission statement at the next meeting.

b. NEXT MEETING

The Committee agreed not to meet during December. The next meeting is scheduled for January 11, 2007, at 7pm. The Committee intends to meet on the second Thursday of the month thereafter. Bill Moran will record the minutes at the next meeting.

c. JOINT MEETING WITH WEDDINGTON PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Mr. Stoehr has contacted a representative of Weddington's public safety committee. Mr. Stoehr will invite Craig Horne to the next meeting.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members did not have any announcements.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 pm. A motion was made by Jen Viohl. John Stoehr made a second. The Committee voted to adjourn.