

LAW ENFORCEMENT CONSOLIDATION COMMITTEE

DATE: April 25, 2007

CALLED TO ORDER: 5:05 p.m.

ADJOURNED: 6:21 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

ATTENDING MEMBERS

Lonnell Conley, Chairman
Sherron Franklin
Ron Gibson
Dane Mahern
Lynn McWhirter
Marilyn Pfisterer
William Oliver
Lincoln Plowman

ABSENT MEMBERS

Joanne Sanders

AGENDA

PROPOSAL NO. 636, 2006 - amends certain sections of the Revised Code of the Consolidated City and County relating to the Consolidation of the Indianapolis Police Department and the law enforcement division of the Marion County Sheriff's Department
"Postpone" until July 26, 2007 Vote: 8-0

UPDATE ON LAW ENFORCEMENT CONSOLIDATION – Sheriff Frank Anderson and Police Chief Michael Spears

LAW ENFORCEMENT CONSOLIDATION COMMITTEE

The Law Enforcement Consolidation Committee of the City-County Council met on Wednesday, April 25, 2007. Chairman Lonnell Conley called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. with the following members present: Sherron Franklin, Ron Gibson, Lynn McWhirter, Marilyn Pfisterer, William Oliver and Lincoln Plowman. Dane Mahern arrived shortly thereafter. Joanne Sanders was absent.

PROPOSAL NO. 636, 2006 - amends certain sections of the Revised Code of the Consolidated City and County relating to the Consolidation of the Indianapolis Police Department and the law enforcement division of the Marion County Sheriff's Department

Councillor Franklin moved, seconded by Councillor Gibson, to "Strike" Councillor Bradford's name as sponsor on this proposal, since he no longer serves on the Council, and add her name as the primary sponsor. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

Councillor McWhirter moved, seconded by Councillor Gibson, to add her name as a co-sponsor to the proposal, as well. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

[Clerk's Note: Councillor Mahern arrived at 5:08 p.m.]

Councillor Franklin moved, seconded by Councillor Gibson, to "Postpone" Proposal No. 636, 2006 until the committee's next meeting scheduled for July 26, 2007. The motion carried by a vote of 8-0.

UPDATE ON LAW ENFORCEMENT CONSOLIDATION – Sheriff Frank Anderson and Police Chief Michael Spears

Colonel Kerry Forestal, Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department (IMPD), stated that Sheriff Frank Anderson's wife fell last weekend and is in the hospital with an injured shoulder, and therefore he is at her side and is not able to attend this evening. Chairman Conley stated that the Committee wishes the best for Mrs. Anderson and completely understands Sheriff Anderson's need to be by his wife's side during her recovery.

Police Chief Michael Spears said that a great deal of work has gone into the consolidation by the 43-member Steering Committee and the 15-member Advisory Board. [Clerk's Note: A report on the consolidation efforts is attached as Exhibit A.] He said that these groups were responsible for every area of the new department and they did a wonderful job and put in a lot of hours. Consensus was reached almost unanimously by these groups on almost every issue and the process went very

smoothly. He said that, from a law enforcement perspective, the major goals were to increase the effectiveness of the department and increase the number of field officers in the communities. There were some hurdles, in that the Marion County Sheriff's Department (MCSD) had a Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) contract that extended to 2006, while the Indianapolis Police Department (IPD) had a contract that ended in 2005, leaving IPD without a contract for a year. He said that chiefs throughout IPD tried to be sensitive to the needs of officers in assigning shifts, duties and district assignments during that consolidation and made approximately 2,000 assignments during that time. He said that they created a hotline number for officers who wished to appeal their assignments, and there were only about 25 to 30 calls, and approximately half of those were resolved in favor of the officer. He said that others, due to seniority or other factors, may not have received the outcome they hoped for. He said that there is now a policy in place to determine shift or beat assignments, and there was very little movement or change in assignments.

Chief Spears said that another goal was to extend community policing out to all areas of the County. They have done a good job of increasing this policing coverage, but have not yet reached the level they want to achieve. He said that they have been looking closely at response times. In the first quarter of 2007, IMPD received and responded to 163,850 calls for service. Until they began to examine statistics, he did not have a full understanding of how understaffed MCSD was in the townships. As officers began covering new assignments, they expected to see a decrease in response time for MCSD and possibly an increase in IPD area response times. He said that these expectations, unfortunately, did occur. One of the reasons for the higher response time in IPD areas was due to procedural differences because of the amount of time spent on a call. He said they have implemented new methods to have a fair comparison of how response times work. These response times are monitored closely by supervisors in the field, working day and night, and adjustments and analysis are on-going. Some of the district boundaries have been restructured to help respond to community needs. He said that new patrol beats were re-designed to improve response times and increase effectiveness. They now have 100 patrol beats, and although there are times some of those beats are not completely full or shifts overlap, they are continuing to evaluate needs in each beat, based on the analysis of calls for service, crime rate, geography, population and change in activities. He said that in one instance, they used to have only one patrol beat in Perry Township, but now have four patrol beats in that area. While it may look like one patrol beat is not fully staffed, there are still more officers in that area than before.

Chief Spears stated that they are trying to look at those officers who are retiring to anticipate future needs. He said that in evaluating those who are leaving, it seems to be more supervisory positions, which means that they can then turn around and hire in more patrol officers at lower salaries to get more for their money. He said that there have been a few bumps in the road, but they seem to be relatively minor. He has not heard of problems with officers not being able to work together in their new assignments. There are a few incidents of new policies and procedural issues that have

caused a challenge from time to time, but these issues should work themselves out in time. He said that there was a promotional process in 2006 for the ranks of sergeant, lieutenant and captain. This process was challenged by the FOP. They were able to use it to make promotions in 2006, and are in negotiations with the FOP to use those lists. He said that last week, the IMPD voted to approve a contract, with 953 members of the FOP voting in favor and 262 voting against. He said that he is optimistic that this contract will be finalized soon. He said that the current strength of officers is 1,587, with an authorized strength of 1,640. He said that there is a recruit class of 52 which will be sworn in next Monday. He said that the field strength, which includes district uniform officers, district detectives, traffic officers and other specialty units, is at 1,182. Of those officers, 654 of them are run-taking officers. That number exhibits an increase of 47 officers in run-taking positions, which will be improved with the new recruit class. He said that another recruit class is scheduled to begin in October, which they anticipate to feature approximately 50 to 60 recruits.

Chief Spears said that one thing that has helped the IMPD in forecasting personnel needs is the Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP). He said that officers can declare their intention to retire within three years. He said that there has been a lot of talk about loss of officers. He said that the department has 78 officers they are losing due to retirement and the DROP program. Most of them hold ranking positions, and will be replaced with patrol officers assigned to neighborhoods. He said that he does not know of any officers who have left for any reason other than retirement. The DROP program helps them plan for attrition and recruit classes. He said that he is confident that the department will grow, and new recruit classes can be added if the need arises. He said that in a study of the top 25 cities in the country, based on population, the average number of officers per 1,000 citizens is 2.81, and IMPD has approximately 2.09 officers per 1,000 citizens.

Chief Spears said that a lot of attention has been given to crime statistics in the media recently, and rightly so. He said that for 2006 estimates, they had to combine the statistics for MCSO and IPD, and when those numbers were added together, overall crime was down 1.35%. He said that burglaries were up 1.3%, larcenies were down 2%, auto thefts were down 1%, aggravated assaults were down 7.13%, robberies were up 1%, rapes were up 4%, and homicides were up 24.11% in 2006. He said that the homicide increase is unacceptable and they are working hard to turn those numbers around. He said in analyzing these crimes, many of the factors are outside the control of the police department, such as lack of education, employment, parental supervision and moral values. He said that with more officers being added, there may be some programs they can initiate to help combat some of these issues to prevent criminal activity. He said that in January of this year, the overall crime rate was down 3.69%, but there is still a disturbing trend in homicides, with 34 homicides to date. In 2006, at the same time, there were 42 homicides, and while this year's rate is down slightly, it is still unacceptable. He said that overall, with a few bumps in the road, consolidation has gone fairly as expected. He said it is like the blending of two families into one

household and there are issues that still need to be worked out and defined, but officers have come together as a combined unit to keep the citizens safe.

Chairman Conley thanked Chief Spears for his presentation and said that this merger is indeed a bit like a marriage, where an independent man and independent woman need to work together to consolidate their belongings, ideas and goals and have to work together through the growing pains. Chief Spears agreed and introduced various staff members in attendance.

Councillor Gibson stated that he is very encouraged that he has not heard any complaints regarding the consolidation, and all those involved should be commended. He asked if there is an update on the social security issue. Suzannah Wilson-Overholt, Indianapolis Works Transition Director, stated that employees were mailed all kinds of information regarding social security and their options. The MCSD Pension Board requested a referendum and was designated by the Governor's Office to oversee that referendum so that deputies could vote as to whether or not they wanted to continue to be covered by social security. She said that deputies were mailed ballots, and many informational sessions have been conducted. They have until June 14, 2007 to vote, and once the ballots are all in, if the majority vote for social security, the entire force will be covered. Otherwise they will be out of social security. This issue should be resolved by the end of July based on that vote.

Councillor Gibson referred to Chief Spears' reference to programs the police department may be able to implement or increase that could help combat the societal issues that lead to criminal activity. He asked Chief Spears to expand on that issue as to what programs exist and what kind of cost may be associated with such an outreach. Chief Spears said that there are a variety of programs that reach out to the youth of the community to help them develop positive characteristics to keep them away from a life of crime. He said that the Police Athletic League (PAL) has a variety of sports and educational programs, as well as other gang resistance and education programs in conjunction with the schools. He said that the OK (Our Kids) program is a mentoring program and has made a significant contribution. The issue is with limited personnel resources. Until the IMPD reaches a point where the necessary and proper field patrols are provided for all the City's neighborhoods 24 hours a day, it would be inappropriate to shift dollars and personnel to these programs and organizations. He said that in evaluating victims and suspects, they almost mirror each other in attributes, and if young men and women cannot get a good education and find employment, it all too often leads to disastrous consequences. He said that it is wise to look at these causation factors and attempt to combat these issues on some level. Colonel Forestal added that the Sheriff has a program entitled "Stop and Think," where he meets twice a month in the jail with at-risk youth and has private conversations with them and gives them a tour of the jail to try and help turn them around. He said that they are taking the next step with this program this summer with a summer day camp to see where these kids have gone and where they are going. He said that the Sheriff gives these

individuals his personal telephone number to call if they find themselves in a situation where they need some advice to do the right thing.

Chairman Conley said that his theory on crime prevention is that education has to take place not only in the classroom, but in the bedroom, in the living room, in the dining room, in the kitchen, in the den, in the malls, etc. He said that with all of the temptations facing youth today, the key lies with education on all levels.

Councillor Pfisterer commended IMPD as a whole in the arrests made in a timely fashion for recent high-profile crimes. She said that one of the main concerns she has had during the consolidation was with regard to community policing. She asked what the goal is for the number of officers per district assigned to community policing. Chief Spears said that they need a core group of officers in every district that is available to respond to the community's needs. He said that every officer is a community officer and should be involved in their community, and he encourages this type of community policing. He said that it is unrealistic to think that officers can walk through neighborhoods during their entire shifts, but there are times in each day that officers can stop and walk the streets, enter community centers, and take time to visit the parks and schools. He said that the goal is that every officer becomes a community police officer.

Councillor Pfisterer said that she has become an advocate for crime watch groups and encouraged citizens to get involved in their neighborhoods. She added that faith-based organizations can also aid significantly in combatting crime in neighborhoods. Chief Spears said that crime watch groups are very important and can really make an impact in communities. He added that they are also beginning to organize efforts of faith-based entities and are having a meeting next Tuesday to jump-start that effort. He invited all individuals and groups of all faiths to get involved in this effort. He said that with limited public safety personnel, there is no way the department can reach every young person in need of services, and community watch groups and faith-based organizations can help greatly in that respect. Councillor Pfisterer asked Chief Spears to expand on the crime watch program, especially with regard to the reservations some residents have about possible retaliation and intimidation. Chief Spears said that they bring officers into the neighborhood in a public way as much as possible to show a presence and to show that these individuals care about the people in their neighborhood. He said that police get out in the neighborhoods and knock on several doors so that retaliation is not targeted at one or two individuals. He said that they encourage crime watch organizations to meet at other locations other than a person's home or to move the meetings around, so that those who cause problems in the neighborhood are not aware of the leaders, so that they target distinct individuals. He added that crime can be reported anonymously through Crime Stoppers, and officers are encouraged to become involved in the neighborhoods, so that the community knows who they are and knows where to turn to report crime.

Councillor Mahern encouraged the IMPD to work on increasing the diversity of their police force to mirror the communities they serve as much as possible. He said that it is

important to find personnel who can speak other languages, as the communities are becoming more and more diverse. Chief Spears said that recent classes have increased in diversity, with 30% of candidates in the last class that were African American, and the class being sworn in next Monday having a 43% minority composition. The department has also increased its diversity efforts with regard to promotions, and they promoted three African-Americans to Captain in 2006, with only a total of six African-American males promoted to Captain since 1974. Colonel Forestal said that recruitment is now all combined, so that civilian, patrol officers and operators are all classified together and are assigned to the best fit, both with regards to skills and diversity.

Councillor McWhirter asked what role, if any, IMPD plays in truancy. Chief Spears said that they first are concerned with making sure kids are ready to attend school, and that is done through enforcing curfews, and the IMPD does regular curfew sweeps. He said that they also do semi-regular truancy sweeps, working with school police forces during school hours to make sure kids are in school. He added that the third responsibility is to ensure that kids make it to and from school safely. They were extremely concerned about the recent abduction and rape of a student waiting at a school bus stop. He said that this is an area where residents can help a great deal by reporting students congregating during school hours or after curfew.

Councillor Oliver asked how priorities are determined on police runs when several crimes in progress are called in at the same time. He said that there is a huge problem with drug sales and drug houses, especially when it is an on-going enterprise that has been reported over and over. Chief Spears said that drugs are a scourge on the community and are responsible for most of the crime that occurs in this City. He said when a crime is reported, an officer is immediately dispatched in the field. He said that the problem with a report is that it still gives the offender the opportunity to stop their action and dispose of drugs before a uniformed officer arrives. He said that in some cases, special narcotics officers have to be involved in on-going or long-term investigations, so as not to jeopardize months of work that has already been done to ferret out the ones most responsible for the crime. He said that there are many units in a patrol district to monitor street-level dealing of drugs. All crime is important, and officers work very hard to intervene and stop the selling of drugs at every opportunity, as they are a contributing factor many times in the crime that occurs. Councillor Oliver said that residents are disturbed to sit on their porches and watch drug activity taking place at a house where everyone knows it is happening, and yet they do not see any action being taken against these individuals. Chief Spears said that without knowing of the specific case, he can only say that there could be many factors as to why the activity continues. He said that if neighbors do not report the activity or an officer cannot get there in time to witness the activity, this may slow the process down, but the police make every effort to eliminate this type of activity from neighborhoods. Councillor Oliver said that he would like to see more officers get out of their cars and attend neighborhood meetings and talk to people. He said that in his district, the officers are

not getting out of their cars and interacting with the community, so that the officers are strangers to the neighborhoods.

Councillor Plowman asked if the study has been completed with regard to manpower. Chief Spears said that it has not yet been completed. Colonel Forestal said that the Sheriff has turned this responsibility over to the Office of Corporation Counsel and he does not know an exact date at this time as to when it will be completed.

Chairman Conley asked Doug King, Chief Financial Officer, IMPD, if he has some information to share with the committee with regard to minority and women-based enterprise (MBE/WBE) participation in the consolidation process and the new IMPD. Mr. King said that he has a report from the Department of Public Safety from 2006, but is in the process of completing the first quarter report from 2007 with the merged departments. He said that as soon as that report is completed, he will make it available to the committee.

There being no further business, and upon motion duly made, the meeting was adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lonnell Conley, Chairman

LC/ag