

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Leslie Ford Notaro, followed by a Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Roll Call: Present were Councilmembers Glenn Gunn, Wanda Schwerer, and Jody Shirley; Mayor Leslie Ford Notaro, City Manager Lynn Rives, and City Clerk Patricia Gentry. Councilmembers Marv Behm and John Pietrowski were unable to attend. Vice Mayor Nicolas Pavouris arrived at 9:02am.

1. Discussion on Improving Public Safety, Promoting Stronger Ties Between Law Enforcement and the Community, and Identifying Opportunities for Improvement.

Mayor Notaro welcomed Pinellas County Sheriff Bob Gualtieri and Captain Mike Leiner; and Resident Martha Vasquez, organizer of the Neighborhood Watch.

Sheriff Gualtieri stated:

- The traffic citation statistics do not and should not capture Residents versus non-resident stops. They would not be accurate, as some residents have out of state licenses, some people have licenses with City addresses that no longer live here, and that it could be perceived as discriminatory enforcement.
- The FBI has mandated that law enforcement agencies transition from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR), a summary-based program, to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), a more detailed incident-based data reporting system by 2021. Education of the public is important as reports following the transition will appear to show an increase in activity. It will not be an increase in activity, but more accurate reporting of what's occurring, with more data and categories being captured. The antiquated UCR guidelines require that burglary and car break-ins be reported as larcenies. As a result, the burglary category in Belleair Beach is very misleading. There has been an increase in car burglaries over the last several years in Pinellas County. Upwards of 98% of vehicle break-ins are not forced entry, but are crimes of opportunity – "usually young people that are going down streets usually in the middle of the night trying door handles" "...as I tell people all the time don't be surprised when you leave your iPad, you leave your wallet with \$1,000 in it, you leave your credit cards, you leave all your stuff in your car, and you leave your car unlocked overnight in the driveway ... just lock your cars, because very rarely is there forced entry." Along with burglaries goes auto thefts. Last year there were three auto thefts in Belleair Beach, this year there were zero. Over the last year PCSO has been able to push that back considerably through significant enforcement efforts; most of the people committing the car break ins are coming

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out of St. Pete to north county and the beaches. There is usually a rash of them at one time, they find six open cars, that's six "larcenies", and it looks like a skyrocket in the report numbers.

- Traffic enforcement has increased according to the number of traffic stops. The goal is education, to get people's attention, and have them comply. Deputies are trained to use good judgment, good decision making, and use their discretion based on the circumstances and history of the driver. Traffic enforcement is about safety, not revenue.
- On the report, the location of a traffic stop isn't always where the violation occurred, the violation may have been on a side street, but the stop was made on Gulf Boulevard.
- In addition to being safe, people must also feel safe, which extends to traffic safety. He asked Council from their perspective, where do they believe the problems, issues, and vulnerabilities are so they can help drive enforcement in those areas – what do they *feel* and *see* when they are out, regardless of the data, so the PCSO can modify that activity with presence and enforcement, whether it's reality or perception – both can be corrected.
- Their visibility on Gulf Boulevard and in the neighborhoods is balanced by the activity and time of day – more visibility in the residential areas as an example at 3:00am in the morning, and on Gulf Boulevard in the afternoon balanced the other way.
- Visibility and presence do work, parking an unmanned cruiser on streets works as a deterrent, is done in other local cities and the tax collector's office, and is a deterrent to the kids looking for unlocked car doors.
- Deputies are vetted and chosen to work in Belleair Beach.
- Code enforcement is also done when needed.
- Beach patrol is in an all-terrain vehicle.
- Deputies from other areas who do backup calls, traffic stops, and respond to calls in Belleair Beach when needed is an added benefit to the City – all the assets and resources of the PCSO are part of the service. From December until June, Deputies that are assigned to other areas spent 355 hours on calls in Belleair Beach.
- Statistics for response times do not take into account what calls are self-initiated activity by Deputy, a true call for service, urgency of call, type of call, or whether it is a traffic stop. Overall response time is shown to be good in the City.
- Some cities have the PCSO give monthly reports at council meetings.
- An option to address concerns for having the Deputy's presence in the neighborhoods and having a presence on Gulf Boulevard at the same time, to deter people from using the center turn lane and the bike lanes as passing lanes and for traffic control on weekends, is to contract for additional Deputies dedicated to traffic enforcement only, with as little or as many hours as needed. Cities build the costs into their budget, but only use the hours as needed during the year.

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- Based on the size and needs of the City and for the most effectiveness, marked vehicles are recommended, not unmarked vehicles.

City Manager Rives advised that:

- The PCSO contract increase this year is 2.74%, which has been the standard for the past 12 years
- For background comparison – the first year’s contract had been \$382,000 – this year is \$473,000, a really good value

Martha Vasquez advised that:

- Her PCSO liaison sends her notices and information which she posts on Nextdoor

Sheriff Gualtieri reminded everyone to call when they see something, anything that makes them wonder if they should call - “inundate us – that’s what we’re here for”, and recapped his action items:

- Park unmanned cruisers at the north end and south end of the City for presence, rotate as needed, work with the City Manager as to location
- Provide statistics on response times for calls in the City
- PCSO will have a Deputy or Supervisor at each Regular City Council Meeting with a report
- PCSO will provide dedicated traffic enforcement from 2:00pm until 6:00pm on Gulf Boulevard this Saturday and Sunday [June 23 and 24, at no charge], or wherever the City Manager believes it is needed, and the City Manager will provide feedback

ADJOURN

The meeting was dully adjourned.

July 2, 2018
Date Approved

APPROVED: Leslie Ford Notaro
Leslie Ford Notaro, Mayor

ATTEST: Patricia A. Gentry
Patricia A. Gentry, City Clerk