



**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING**  
*Monday, January 25, 2015*

**Board Members in Attendance:**

Cecil Bothwell, Brian Haynes, Julie Mayfield

**Guests in Attendance:**

Valerie Zeller

**Staff in Attendance:**

Deputy Chief James Baumstark, Chief Scott Burnette, Alex Carmichael, Paul Fetherston, Christina Hallingse, Chief Barry Hendren, Dawa Hitch, Chief Tammy Hooper, Gary Jackson, John Maddux, Jason Nortz, Dan Phairas, Stuart Rohrbaugh

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Bothwell called the meeting to order at 3:37 PM. Chairman Bothwell introduced the new members of the Committee and the staff, and provided an overview of the Committee's purview.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes from the meeting of 10/26/15 were approved as amended on Chairman Bothwell's motion, Councilwoman Mayfield's second on a 3-0 vote.

**3. UPDATES**

**a. Administrative Update**

**Paul Fetherston, Assistant City Manager**

**Tammy Hooper, Chief of Police**

Assistant City Manager Paul Fetherston and Chief of Police Tammy Hooper provided the Committee with an administrative update concerning i) progress towards downtown public space management, and ii) the Police Department's body worn camera program.

ii) Mr. Fetherston reported that staff has been working to form recommendations for public space management in the downtown since last April. Since that time, there have been a number of stakeholder meetings, the last of which occurred in December. Staff is compiling recommendations around high impact areas and incentivized area, and will schedule meetings with the chairs of relevant committees and boards or commissions with the goal of having something in place by June.

Councilwoman Mayfield asked if this would be a pilot. Mr. Fetherston replied that staff would recommend something with enforcement, but with the possibility of a sunset or other means of revisiting and making changes.

- ii) Chief Hooper reported that the Police Department began researching body-worn cameras two years ago and has put together recommendations based on best practices. Funding for the cameras was included in last year's budget, which rolled over into this year's. The Department is now purchasing 60 cameras for the Patrol, Downtown, and Housing Units and creating an oversight position to manage the program.

Chairman Bothwell asked if officers could turn off the cameras. Chief Hooper said that they could. The policy requires that the camera be on during all contact with citizens while in pursuit of official duties, with exceptions in cases of child abuse, at a victim's request, or during hospital visits.

Chairman Bothwell asked if the recordings would be a public record. Chief Hooper said that they would be the same as any other record related to an investigation. Chairman Bothwell asked how long recordings would be kept when they were not related to an ongoing investigation. Chief Hooper said that recordings not flagged for an investigation would be automatically deleted after 60 days.

Councilwoman Mayfield and Councilman Haynes asked about how one could request access to the recordings. Chief Hooper responded that the release of the recordings would be at the Chief's discretion. The recordings would not be released absent a specific concern with the interaction. The policy is in line with best practices, including the Sherriff's Department.

#### **4. New Business**

##### **a. Public Street Name Change for Merritt Street**

**Jason Nortz, Director of Development Services**

**Stuart Rohrbaugh, Emergency Address Coordinator**

Director of Development Services, Jason Nortz, introduced himself and Emergency Address Coordinator Stuart Rohrbaugh to the Committee. Mr. Rohrbaugh provided a brief history of Merritt Street. Merritt began as one contiguous street, but has since been divided into two. The south section only serves one home. There is an additional Merritt Street in Buncombe County outside the jurisdiction of the City of Asheville. Staff proposes renaming Merritt Street to "Merritt Park Lane." Public street name changes must go through the full Council and the public hearing process.

Chairman Bothwell invited a member of the public, Valerie Zeller, to speak on the issue. Ms. Zeller said that she lives on Merritt Street and has difficulty receiving her mail due to the duplicate street names in the area. She worries about visitors and emergency responders finding her home.

Councilwoman Mayfield motioned to recommend the name change for Merritt Street to the full Council. Councilman Haynes seconded. The motion carried on a 3-0 vote.

#### **5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was not additional public comment.

#### **6. ADJOURN**

Chairman Bothwell adjourned the meeting at 4:01 PM without objection.