

Councillor Maher pointed out that under this system, assignments can constantly change, since senior officers can bid to move to other neighborhoods.

Commissioner Watson explained that there are two types of bids: shift bids and assignment bids. Through what is known as a bid for “4/2 patrol groups”, an officer can spend the first two days of a four-day workweek in one area with a patrol group, and then have to change assignment if other, more senior officers bid for that spot. Superintendent Giacoppo noted that the idea for this bid system came from the Somerville Police, who bid for every shift. Councillor Maher asked if Commissioner Watson supports this system. The Commissioner responded that he did not, because it flies in the face of community policing, and the continuity that requires. However, the Commissioner noted that the police associations support this bid system and included it in their contracts. The trade-off for the police in the contract was a fourth platoon of officers for the 6 P.M. to 2 A.M. shift in summer. Superintendent DeGou and Commissioner Watson stated that the second and third platoons have equal numbers of officers; the police department plans to reduce the numbers on these shifts and put thirty officers in the fourth platoon, with ten officers per night to cover the 6 P.M. to 2 A.M. shift in summer.

Councillor Maher stated that he saw the quid pro quo as allowing senior officers with 25 to 30 years on the force to get what they want in exchange for more officers on shifts where they are needed.

Superintendent Giacoppo described the neighborhood sergeant program as a great success. Citizen referrals to police in the neighborhood on a particular night are assigned to the neighborhood sergeant, who can follow up more easily.

Vice Mayor Davis summarized her understanding of the neighborhood sergeant assignment system as one in which sergeants are assigned to one area for four nights. While some neighborhood sergeants are not in patrol operations, there is a back-up sergeant in a patrol car all four days. Neighborhood sergeants can pick a shift, not an assignment. Commissioner Watson added that there are 13 back-up sergeants to cover the neighborhoods.

Deputy Superintendent Walsh then spoke about neighborhood meetings as an element of community policing. According to him, some neighborhoods such as the Agassiz have lots of meetings and police can plug into that structure. Other neighborhoods use neighborhood sergeant meetings. Commissioner Watson also pointed out that some police find it hard to return to the neighborhood where they grew up; even though there are advantages to knowing a neighborhood, it can be uncomfortable to police people they know.

Councillor Maher returned to the issue of bidding for shifts and asked if younger, less senior officers are likelier to overturn the bid system in their contract negotiations; Commissioner Watson did not think so. The Commissioner described the system of bidding for shifts for different times of day and stated that police do not want their shifts

to interfere with the paid private details they do, and this can affect the times of day they bid for.

Deputy Superintendent Walsh spoke about the neighborhood sergeant assignments. In his experience, as police get invested in neighborhoods, the more they enjoy being there, and they prefer to stay there. Because of this interest, the police redesigned the system of assignment two years ago, to allow sergeants to be assigned to neighborhoods where they are involved. The police also try to get officers involved in local events. Commissioner Watson also described the efforts of the police to overcome divisions between union and management in the department, through awards to retirees and recognition of officer achievements.

Ms. Sarazen spoke about her concern about cars running red lights at busy intersections such as Massachusetts Avenue and Pleasant Street, and Prospect Street and Western Avenue. Her experience is that the police pass the buck on enforcement. She feels strongly that something must be done about this problem and that there must be more traffic enforcement. Vice Mayor Davis noted a recent news story about a pedestrian accident and the efforts of Rozann Kraus to promote an education campaign for traffic safety, which will kick off in September. Commissioner Watson stated that he has been working with Ms. Kraus on bike safety measures. He noted that there are constant problems at the intersections of Massachusetts Avenue with Pleasant and Prospect Streets and that he has assigned officers there; there is also a problem with commuter traffic throughout the day. He asked that citizens note license numbers and phone the police, specifically Superintendent DeGou at 349-3310. Commissioner Watson will use the complaints to deploy officers.

Vice Mayor Davis stated that she would put in an order for enforcement at certain locations, including the intersections of Green and Magazine Streets, and Lambert and Cambridge Streets. She asked the Commissioner for his views on video enforcement in traffic. Commissioner Watson stated that he would like to be able to use this as a tool, since it would free up officers to do neighborhood enforcement on criminal activity.

Councillor Maher also noted other intersections that need more enforcement: Mt. Auburn and Eliot Streets, and Mason and Garden Streets. He asked if the police are in contact with the DPW to make sure that there are traffic signs on these problem streets. Commissioner Watson responded that they are in touch with the DPW and with Traffic and Parking.

Mr. Serwecinski, who lives in North Cambridge in the Harvey Street housing development, said that most of his neighbors are women and children. He has lived all over the city but has never felt as uncomfortable as he does in this development, because of armed robberies and assaults. He said that he and his neighbors feel like prisoners, and don't feel safe in the area around Montgomery, Clay, Jackson, and Clifton Streets and the Alewife T stop. Superintendent DeGou and Deputy Superintendent Walsh confirmed that there have been a number of recent incidents in the Alewife area; Deputy

Superintendent Walsh noted that Red Line stations are notable for spikes in criminal activity in the city.

Vice Mayor Davis asked how the community policing programs would handle the situation described by Mr. Serwecinski. Superintendent DeGou explained that a complaint by a citizen would result in a police report. The Community Policing Sergeant would become aware of the problem, hold a community meeting, and/or directly contact the complainant to discuss the matter and work out a plan to deal with it. The response could include assignment of bike officers and plainclothes police. Commissioner Watson added that other possible responses would be better lighting and community alerts.

Vice Mayor Davis asked how the police are using the principles of community policing to enable the community to be part of the response to crime in an area. According to Superintendent Giacoppo, the police first have to identify that there is a problem and then connect the dots. Next, the police contact community people, including neighborhood coordinators and liaisons, and try to enlist their help. The police may also issue a community alert. The neighborhood sergeant may call a community meeting, and involve detectives and community relations officers.

Deputy Superintendent Walsh commented that North Cambridge has one of the most active crime watch groups, with a newsletter and a Night Out anticrime event. In an area like this, police responding to a community problem will contact the director of the local crime watch group. The police may also take steps such as posting information on the Web, coordinating with the MBTA police, neighborhood associations and other entities, posting flyers, and distributing whistles; for example, at the Alewife T stop, community activists worked with a local construction company to use its lighting to enhance safety around the station. In Deputy Superintendent Walsh's experience, the neighborhood coordinator is the key contact, and the key to success is not police assignment but public involvement.

Addressing other efforts to solve and prevent crime on the local level, Commissioner Watson noted that there can be numerous simultaneous community alerts issued by the police, as well as stakeouts. Superintendent Giacoppo outlined how breaks in several recent cases happened, involving cooperation with community people, including Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) staff. He noted that the police have monthly meetings with CHA authorities. Mr. Fosque explained that, since the 1970's, the police have issued a crime bulletin everyday, and that this is one of the ways that they identify patterns of crime. He stated that this bulletin is almost unprecedented in police departments; police dispatchers use it to follow up on incidents. In response to a question from Councillor Maher, Mr. Fosque noted that the police can also use the reverse 911 system to contact a particular neighborhood.

Commissioner Watson stated that the police are also working with the courts about problems in specific communities. For example, after a series of housebreaks in Central Square, the court released the suspect on his personal recognizance, undercutting the

efforts of the police; the police then met with the chief judge to discuss this. The Commissioner also noted his concern with the release of suspects and convicts because of capacity limits at local jails and remarked that this is something that the police are addressing with the courts and community.

Mr. Serwecinski identified himself as the new North Cambridge Crime Task Force coordinator and asked for more police presence in his neighborhood.

Councillor Maher referred to the turmoil in Area 4 last year and asked the police to describe the current situation. According to Commissioner Watson, there are two police walking the beat in the winter, and eight or nine ongoing investigations including narcotic investigations and seizures. Superintendent Giacoppo noted that the police are also coordinating with the CHA, which needs action such as arrests to evict tenants.

Commissioner Watson then outlined how the community policing grant from the state will be allocated in Cambridge (**Attachment A**), and some of the limits on how the money can be spent; for example, it cannot be used to buy food for community events. He emphasized that a lot of community programs are funded by the state, and that Cambridge has used state money to improve the “interoperability” of its various public services to the point where it has one of the best systems in the state. The Commissioner considers the grant critical to improve the efficiency of the city’s police operations.

Councillor Toomey noted that the legislature had requested \$20 million dollars for community policing, with legislators earmarking money for their communities. There have been concerns about monitoring the program, which started in 1994 and has grown. He believes that some changes should be made to the program because communities with smaller populations are getting disproportionately larger amounts of money.

Vice Mayor Davis made the following motion:

**ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to investigate and take action to produce greater enforcement of traffic rules at the following intersections:**

- **Green Street and Magazine Street**
- **Inman Street and Massachusetts Avenue**
- **Lambert Street and Cambridge Street**
- **Mt. Auburn Street and Eliot Street**
- **Pleasant Street and Massachusetts Avenue**
- **Prospect Street and Massachusetts Avenue**
- **Prospect Street and Western Avenue**
- **Sellers Street and Massachusetts Avenue**
- **The left turn at Garden Street and Mason Street**

The motion carried on a voice vote.

The hearing adjourned at 8:35 P.M.

For the Committee,  
  
Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis,  
Chair

**CURRENT COMMUNITY POLICING AWARDS  
CAMBRIDGE POLICE DEPARTMENT****1. EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY ('FY 2003): \$403,750**

The matrix of allowable programs and projects is rather broad. Funds may not be used for construction, weapons, and meals. The funds are broken down into the following categories:

**A. Personnel \$63,250**

This category funds the salary and benefits for the Neighborhood Coordinator (Holly Levins, and 2 part-time non-benefit positions in Crime Analysis and Information Technology. The IT position is vacant due to the city hiring freeze.

**B. Training \$28000**

This category provides funding for a variety of training including:

- NECP2: New England Community Police Partnership, St. Anselm College, Manchester, NH. A three day conference for sworn personnel and community members to discuss what works in Community Policing and Problem Solving.
- COBWEB: Bicycle Officer skills training
- IACP Technology Conference: International Chief's of Police conference on technology applications in policing
- Customer Service Training
- Organizational Development Consulting (Chris Drew)

**C. Overtime - Beyond Tour of Duty \$160,000**

grant funded overtime supports a number of activities including:

- Hot spot walking and plain clothes patrols (parks in the summer, robbery pattern interdiction, Columbia Park)
- Youth Athletic Leagues – YMCA basketball, Floor Hockey
- Neighborhood meetings
- POP projects including traffic issues, street crime patterns, graffiti
- Citizen Police Academy

**D. Supplies & Operating Expenses \$60,000**

This category covers two major areas:

- Community "subgrants" for a variety of programs and activities including block parties, community cleanup, lectures, etc.
- Equipment for the Community Relations Section including printing, postage, displays, awards, t-shirts, etc.

**E. Communication Equipment \$2,500**

covers the cost of cellular phones and pagers

**F. Equipment \$90,000**

This category funds most of the department's computer hardware and software including desktop computers, printers, servers, and supplies. Other purchases from this category include mobile computing equipment (laptops in cruisers), police patrol bicycles and motorcycles for the Traffic Unit.

**2. Local Law Enforcement Block Grant (Federal Fiscal Year '02): \$125,917**

The LLEBG allows funds to be spent within seven purpose areas. The police department has chosen to allocate funds to 2 purpose areas:

**Crime Prevention \$54,000**

Crime prevention partnership awards have been made to 5 projects so far. Current awards are active with:

- Community Dispute Settlement Center: mediation training and referral \$8,000
- Girls' LEAP: mother/daughter self defense and empowerment \$6,000
- LifeSkills (Dept. of Human Services) drug/alcohol/lifeskill training \$21,000
- Cambridge Camping / Thompson Island Outward Bound Confidence Course \$5,000
- Meeting Place - supervised child visitation program \$5,000

**Equipment to Support Law Enforcement \$71,917**

This category supports the department's Mobile Computing infrastructure. Expenditures include Laptops, modems, and CDPD cellular service to run the network on which all marked patrol units and several portable investigative units are connected. The network allows users to run listings, check warrants, CAD call slips, CAD address history and, in the near future, access to the department's Records Management System and e-mail



# City of Cambridge

O-13.  
Amended Order

**IN CITY COUNCIL**

March 31, 2003

VICE MAYOR DAVIS  
COUNCILLOR DECKER  
COUNCILLOR GALLUCCIO  
COUNCILLOR MAHER  
COUNCILLOR MURPHY  
COUNCILLOR REEVES  
COUNCILLOR SIMMONS  
MAYOR SULLIVAN  
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to investigate and take action to produce greater enforcement of traffic rules at the following intersections:

- Green Street and Magazine Street
- Inman Street and Massachusetts Avenue
- Lambert Street and Cambridge Street
- Mt. Auburn Street and Eliot Street
- Pleasant Street and Massachusetts Avenue
- Prospect Street and Massachusetts Avenue
- Prospect Street and Western Avenue
- Sellers Street and Massachusetts Avenue
- The left turn at Garden Street and Mason Street
- Walden Street and Massachusetts Avenue
- Intersections around senior housing, senior centers, schools and playgrounds.

In City Council March 31, 2003.

Adopted as amended by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "D. Margaret Drury".

ATTEST:-

D. Margaret Drury  
City Clerk



4

# City of Cambridge

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

In City Council March 31, 2003

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

*Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis, Chair*

*Councillor David P. Maher*

*Councillor Timothy J. Toomey*

The Public Safety Committee held a public meeting on February 26, 2003, beginning at 7:22 P.M. in the Sullivan Chamber.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the issue of community policing and the grant received from the Executive Office of Public Safety to assist in the implementation of a community policing strategy.

Present at the meeting were Vice Mayor Davis, Chair of the Committee, Councillor Brian Murphy, Councillor David E. Maher, Ronnie Watson, Police Commissioner, David DeGou, Superintendent, Cambridge Police Department (CPD), Michael Giacoppo, Superintendent, CPD, Deputy Superintendent Michael Walsh, Community Policing, CPD, George Fosque, Director, Cambridge Emergency Communications, John Fantini, Cambridge School Committee, Garrett Simonsen, Assistant to the Mayor and Vice Mayor, and Elaine McGrath, Cambridge City Clerk's Office. Also present were the following residents of Cambridge: John Serwecinski, 175 Harvey Street, and Arvilla Sarazen, 15 Lambert Street.

Vice Mayor Davis opened the meeting, stating her concern that local communities and police know each other, and asking how that will happen.

Police Commissioner Watson stated that the police can have continuity in an area, since they bid for assignments every six months. Vice Mayor Davis asked if any police have assignments for longer periods. Superintendent Giacoppo described police operations, stating that there is a core group of officers who like their assignments, know an area and stay there. For example, in Vice Mayor Davis' neighborhood, some officers have been there for two years. According to Superintendent Giacoppo, the fly in the ointment is that assignments are made according to seniority, and senior officers can choose the most desirable assignments. In addition, the police force is becoming younger, given the recent significant number of retirements of older officers.

Commissioner Watson stated that the ability to assign sergeants to an area and to keep them there in order to let them get familiar with the area is limited by this ability of senior officers to pick assignments. Police contracts establish the bidding system, which was created in the mid 1980's and which allows officers to bid on assignments every six months. In addition, officers get to make four assignment picks every week, and most manage to get two of their top picks.

S-122

**Committee Report #4**

Committee Report from Vice Mayor Davis, Chair of the Public Safety Committee, for a meeting held on February 26, 2003 to discuss the issue of community policing and the grant received from the Executive Office of Public Safety to assist in the implementation of a community policing strategy.

**In City Council March 31, 2003**

**REPORT ACCEPTED.  
PLACED ON FILE. ORDER  
ADOPTED AS AMENDED. SEE  
ORDER #13**