

Members Present

Elizabeth Husbands
Laura Gonzales
Robert Newby
Maureen Eke
Shirley Dexter
Raquel Fruh
Amy Shawboose
Jeannie Jackson
David Ling

Members Absent

Susan Poindexter—Excused
Anne Swift—Excused

1. Welcome & Introduction of New Members

The meeting was called to order by Laura Gonzales, Committee Chair, at 5:15 p.m. Committee members were welcomed by her. Introductions were made of members to guests.

2. Approval of Agenda:

Additions to the agenda, as follows, were made: 1) MI Roundtable for Diversity 1st Friday Forum, 2) Holiday potluck and 3) ACLU lawsuit with the Sheriff's Dept. A motion to approve the agenda as amended was made by Jeannie Jackson and seconded by Maureen Eke. The motion was unanimously supported by the committee members.

3. Public Comments:

No public comments were presented at tonight's meeting.

4. Guest Speakers:

Laura Gonzales provided an overview background of the events that have led up to the invitation to have the guests present at tonight's meeting. Present at tonight's meeting are Kathie Grinzinger, Mt. Pleasant City Manager; Glenn Feldhauser, Mt. Pleasant Director of Public Safety; and Captain Paul Lauria, Mt. Pleasant Police Department. Mr. Feldhauser provided an overview of the Public Safety Department, which includes police and fire, as well as an overview of the basic functions of each department. A question was asked regarding the process/procedure for handling a citizen complaint against a police officer or firefighter. The onus is not on the citizen to prove/verify the violation; it is the department's job. Complaints are first presented to the shift supervisor, who will talk with the officer. Policy violations are passed on to the Administration for an investigation to be conducted with one of three outcomes, 1) did not happen 2) violation for policy 3) criminal act/violation of the law. Consideration is given to officer's personal file when discipline is being meted out. Examples of civil rights violations that typically border on criminal acts are Excessive Force, and Sexual Harassment. There are not specific guidelines that prohibit officers from discussing information that is readily available via Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

The Police Department is broken up into departments; Administration, Records, Youth Services with 19 officers, 1 Sargent and 4 officers per shift, there is a total of 29 uniformed police officers. Within the Mt. Pleasant Police Department the Captain is the Internal Affairs person, who

investigates infractions; when there is a concern relative to a criminal offense another department is asked to assist.

The Fire Department is made up of a Fire Chief, who is the Emergency Manager, a Fire Lieutenant, and teams consisting of three firefighters and a Sergeant. There is one team made up of a Sergeant and four firefighters. There are also 18 paid, on-call firefighters who respond to alarms and one clerical staff person.

The question was asked about the type and amount of training the officers obtain relative to human rights, cultural competency and diversity. If there is a need, due to an issue that arises, then arrangements can be made to send the officers to a specific training. There is no regular pattern of training; the last official training was 2009. The department is currently in the process of scheduling training. Civil rights training is inherent in daily work and is "the mode in which we operate and encompasses so many other things."

One of the goals of the department is to have the make-up of the force be reflective of the community (i.e., that the demographics of the force match community demographics). This is sometimes difficult due to the lack of turnover within the department. When there is an opening they typically have 150 applicants for 1 position. Most officers will retire from the department. The question was asked about the five departments working together, and the response was that the detectives meet together weekly. The departments work closely together collaboratively.

A question was asked about the Tazer Policy. The response given was related to the Department's Use of Force Policy. There are multiple layers/levels of force ranging from hands off to deadly force. Methods, levels and policies have changed over time. Ability, opportunity and jeopardy, are components of the formula that is used to determine which "tool" the officer will use in any given situation. "This is an ever changing and evolving field." "The guys with the guns are just people. Training is about creating muscle memory responses in a threatening situation." The Tazer Policy requires that an investigation happen every time the weapon is deployed, part of the process is the review of the data contained in the computer of the weapon.

There was discussion regarding the Incident Report that the HRC had received. Mistakes were made on the part of the Department, (by the Lieutenant who should have been following up on the initial complaint), additional error was due to directional confusion (i.e., two houses with same address on opposite ends of the same street 109N v. 109S), mistaken identity issue, (officer had very little information regarding the suspect for which he was looking). An apology was issued to the subject on the day of the incident. Laura Gonzales mentioned the concern of the complainant about the Police Officers' questioning about the state issued (Michigan) ID. A question was raised about investigation regarding the interactions between officers and citizens. The Department process was again outlined; once a citizen complaint is filed the Shift Supervisor evaluates the complaint and makes a response. The Supervisor responds to the citizen regardless of the outcome. If the Supervisor determines that a disciplinary action beyond counseling is required then the complaint is passed on to the Administration who conducts and investigation.

System changes that have resulted have been to set in place a new records management system that will assist in the tracking and following up of the complaints "to make sure that things don't fall through the cracks."

The discussion was wrapped up with an invitation to consider the Human Rights Committee (HRC) as allies and to take advantage of the resources the Committee provides. Director Feldhauser provided his contact number for members to have access to him whenever needed (989.506.8686). Kathie Grinzinger encouraged the HRC to continue the dialogue and to keep meeting.

5. Approval of Minutes of October 1, 2012 Meeting:

A motion to accept the minutes as corrected was made by Amy Shawboose and seconded by Maureen Eke. The motion was unanimously supported by the committee members.

6. Old Business:

a. Incident Report Form: Laura Gonzales

Based on the discussion with the guests tonight the Incident Report from GR will be closed. According to the report from the guests the complainant expressed her concerns. A motion was made by Maureen Eke and seconded by Amy Shaboose. The motion was unanimously carried by all members present.

6. New Business:

1. Dickens Parade

Raquel Fruh asked the HRC to discuss the Dickens Parade at this meeting because it will take place before the next HRC meeting. A motion was made by David Ling and seconded by Maureen Eke to approve the spending of up to \$50.00 for materials for this event. The motion was unanimously carried by all members present.

7. Announcements:

None, due to time constraints.

8. Adjournment:

The remainder of the agenda was tabled by a motion made by Amy Shaboose and seconded by Maureen Eke, due to the length of the discussion with the guests. The motion was unanimously carried by all members present. Tonight's meeting was adjourned at 7:09 p.m. by a motion by David Ling and seconded by Raquel Fruh. The motion was unanimously carried by all members present.

Submitted by Elizabeth Husbands, Secretary
November 19, 2012