

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item H-6
June 10, 2014
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Jim Cason

Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.

Commissioner Pat Keon

Commissioner Vince Lago

Commissioner Frank Quesada

City Staff

Interim City Manager, Carmen Olazabal

City Attorney, Craig E. Leen

City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman

Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Police Chief, Dennis Weiner

Public Speaker(s)

H-6 [Start: 4:40:08 p.m.]

Continued discussion regarding deployment of police.

Mayor Cason: On to Item H-6.

Police Chief Weiner: Morning Mayor, Vice Mayor.

Mayor Cason: Afternoon.

Police Chief Weiner: Evening – hopefully the last item for you all. This is actually revisiting our last discussion, we wanted to come back with some additional detail and answer some additional questions if you should have any. The first document I'd like to refer to is our Response Time Report. We provided the last meeting that our average response time was 4 minutes and 7 seconds. We were asked to take a look at the south end response times. After doing some significant analysis and vetting the calls for service in the south area to make sure that we are

really assessing emergency response calls, we had an adjustment to those times that resulted in south end response time average year-to-date to be 4 minutes and 53 seconds. So it's slightly more than the citywide average; and when you consider the restricted limitations on thoroughways with regard to roadways, access to that area of the City, it would be somewhat expected to see that as a result.

Mayor Cason: And I understand also that under P-1 are heart attack calls that may or may not be responded to by Fire Department before you get there, so is that correct?

Police Chief Weiner: That's a good point. So when we did look at the priority calls in the south end, a significant portion of those were medical type calls where we have a dual response specifically of fire and police and we were measuring police response. So there is a good chance that fire was on the scene, and we've referred to two cases where we've removed those from calculation where fire was either on the scene and slowed us down or they were actually on the scene ahead of us with Pinecrest in one particular case and they had already handled the call and so those two calls were taken out of the calculations.

Commissioner Lago: Chief quick question. I went over the meeting, I'm going to ask you the same question I asked you when we had our own meeting this past week. Zone 10, Zone 11, Zone 12, response times, you've given me a time you are going now from 8:53, 10:54, and 13:10 in regards to the responses. You are saying that now what are we looking at? - because I'm looking at my package and I don't see a revised document, maybe I have too many documents in front of me, which is probably the case.

Police Chief Weiner: I did hand out one before; I have an extra one here. This is the only report that was generated specifically by zone.

Commissioner Lago: So the zone times haven't changed or they have changed?

Police Chief Weiner: The zone times – we did an assessment on Zone 10, 11, and 12. What we did is we took those specific calls for service that were in this report the 15, the 17, and the 18, for each of those zones. We had staff pull those calls for service. We went through each of those calls for service to determine that each of them were actually an emergency response, and based on the analysis we actually identified several in each zone that really didn't qualify as emergency responses.

Commissioner Lago: What do you mean they don't qualify?

Police Chief Weiner: So in the e-mail I sent out yesterday, I believe it was yesterday, so in Zone 10, for instance, there were three calls regarding police dispatched initially as a routine, and in one case it was stepped up to priority. So the original call came in as a routine call so there was no emergency response enacted at that point. During a routine response, additional calls came in or some element changed that had dispatched elevates the call status to priority. So to take that call from beginning to end isn't a true priority response call because the first three minutes of it was a routine response.

Commissioner Lago: Let me ask you another question. When you look at Zone 10, Zone 11, and Zone 12 for May, April, March, February, January, December, November, October, September, we are going backwards, are we looking at the same times?- or are we looking at – how is the response time?- are we in the same time?- or what is the issue?

Police Chief Weiner: Same time as what?- what's the measurement we are comparing to?

Commissioner Lago: I don't want to get pigeon-holed on - are at 4 minutes, we are not at 8 minutes and 53 seconds, at 10:54, or at 13:10. What I want to make sure is if you are telling me that for this month our actual numbers are more in the 4 minute range, that makes me very happy, especially in Zone 10, 11, and 12, but I'm not going to be happy if it's just the month of May. I need to make sure it's the month of April, March, February.

Police Chief Weiner: The calculations that resulted in the updated e-mail yesterday were actually year-to-date, so January through the end of May those are the calls we pulled out all those calls for those three zones and reviewed them, assessed which ones were mistakenly identified as an emergency response, and then recalculate, so from year-to-date, so from January 1st to May 31st for argument sake, the average response time, for instance, in Zone 10 was 4:17, and Zone 11 was 3:59, and Zone 12 was 6:47.

Commissioner Keon: When you say you pulled out the emergencies and the ones that weren't, was it because they were medical emergency as opposed to police emergencies?

Police Chief Weiner: We kept the medical emergencies in it. The ones we pulled out were ones that influenced whether or not it was a priority response, so in other words, for instance, when let's see, so in Zone 12, for instance, we excluded two calls due to police being slowed down by fire, so fire was already on the scene. They gave us the Code that hey, it's no longer an emergency response, so we slowed the response down so we don't endanger the public unnecessarily, and so to count that call in the calculation it would skew the actual emergency response times because those calls were not completely emergency response.

Commissioner Keon: I see.

Mayor Cason: And there were so few in that “P” category?

Police Chief Weiner: Yes Mayor. There are so few in the sample that it skews the actual average when we have those in there.

Commissioner Lago: I just want to and I’ll be the one to put it out there. I just want to make sure that we are not playing with numbers, because – again, I’m telling you the same thing I told you face-to-face when we met this week and said it before, when you are dealing with Zone 10, Zone 11, and Zone 12, these individuals pay a lot of taxes and God forbid something happens in someone’s home and then they’ll come to me and say, at a Commission meeting you had a document in your hand that said that we have a response time of 13, but following Zones 1 through 9 have response times of 7, 3, 4, 3, 5, 4. So again, I’m not grandstanding, same thing I told you the last meeting, same thing I told you when we met in private, I’m going to tell you the same thing again, if you are telling me that the numbers have changed now and that they are much better numbers because you removed some numbers, I want to be clear. I don’t want to find out later that we took out certain important calls that were in the best interest of getting these numbers. I just want to be clear because when you presented this document to me on City of Coral Gables Police Department letterhead. Here’s the document, here’s the information, these are the right documents, these are the right numbers. We are proud of them, now all of a sudden we are basically cutting the times down by more than 50 percent and that worries me because someone’s going to come to me and someone’s going to ask me and I don’t have any knowledge. I don’t have any experience in regards to this, I don’t have any documents in front of me, I don’t have any phone calls, I don’t have any data, I don’t have any backup, I have nothing, and I live in the world of numbers and backup information something that’s tangible, quantifiable. I don’t have any of that, so again, not saying I don’t trust you. I hate to say that. It hurts me to say that, but I just want to be clear that you gave me a document that had completely different times and now you are telling me you’re extrapolating information saying this doesn’t work. This does work, and now we are down to from 13:10 in Zone 12, now we are down to 6:47, which by the way when you do the average it’s still almost 3 minutes less than the average and that’s disconcerting, because I’m going to have to see somebody who lives in Zone 12, and they are going to tell me, why is my response time less?

Commissioner Keon: I would think we would expect, would not be a surprise and I don’t think there is anything wrong with our saying that it would not be surprising that when the only, the primary access to Zone 11 and Zone 12 is Old Cutler Road. So, we should know that particularly going south that after 4 o’clock in the afternoon, from 4 to 7 in the afternoon we ought to know and accept that we are going to have longer response times, and I don’t want us to – I mean I

would rather just say due to the conditions and the roads and the amount of traffic, you know we are not as likely to – we are not going to reach an area along Old Cutler Road as quickly as we are going to reach maybe something along Segovia or along Granada or whatever. Because even if there is somebody in the Zone and it's because of the nature of those roads, it's a one lane road, two lane road, one in each direction that are backed up bumper to bumper during certain hours. We need to acknowledge that, that it is, and that's not anybody's fault, that's not anybody to blame. It is an existing condition that does affect how we police and maybe the further down. Maybe we can look at an interlocal agreement with Pinecrest you know to also help us answer calls that are further south, and you know for us also maybe to help them as it borders them. I don't know the answer.

Mayor Cason: We have interlocal agreement with Pinecrest?

Police Chief Weiner: We have interlocal agreement with Pinecrest.

Commissioner Keon: Yes. I don't know the answer, but I don't want us to – for fear of being you know open about what things are. I don't want us to try and rearrange numbers. Now I truly accept, I would think it's perfectly acceptable for you to say from 4 to 7, Monday through Friday, we will have slightly delayed response times because of the conditions of Old Cutler Road.

Police Chief Weiner: I do concur with that. I do believe that the egress and access through that area is a logistical challenge for the Police Department. Having said that, in the interest of being entirely transparent, we listed in here which calls and why we acted them out, so we weren't trying to forge number.

Commissioner Keon: I understand.

Police Chief Weiner: So if the Commission doesn't agree with a particular call being x'ed out of the calculation, we are more than happy to put it back in. Having said that, it did reduce because there is such a small sample, those couple of occasions did skew the response times. Now we vetted what we believe – first of all we've had an additional two weeks now to look at the data and to refine the data. So you asked us originally if we were given two weeks to provide initial set of data and since that meeting we were able to take that same set and review it again and refine it and now we are back with some adjustments. That's all part of the process just being given more time to work it through. Having said that though, the response time in Zone 12 is higher by 50 percent than the average for the City because the City's average is extremely good, and so even in Zone 12 the response time is extremely good.

Mayor Cason: Can you put that in the context of the kinds of events that you responded to and also how does that relate to the fact that some of these have their own guards, does the guards get there first and take care of whatever it was?- they do have private...?

Police Chief Weiner: A significant number of those priority calls are medical calls and so that is typically what we respond to. I would say a good portion of the time. If you look at the crime in the south end of the City, it's virtually non-existent and so when we are talking about emergency responses for crimes in progress, you'd be hard challenged to find those occurring and so that is typically what we respond to medical; and we have very limited – we have a medical response capability, it's nowhere to the extent that the Fire Department and the rescue units have, and so we are limited in what we can do when we get to the scene. Its basic lifesaving, CPR and that kind of thing.

Mayor Cason: And generally have you found that the local guards have gotten on the scene for these medical, somebody's gotten there?

Police Chief Weiner: We didn't have the time to analyze exactly which units were the first ones on scene, but if we were to go back the next two weeks and look at those, we could come back and tell you what percentage of those first on scene were the officers working off-duty in those communities. Now I would find it surprising if there was an off-duty at the time when a priority medical call came in that, that officer didn't respond first.

Commissioner Keon: You would expect that they would.

Police Chief Weiner: I would agree that I expect that they would.

Commissioner Lago: They are expected even when they are working the night shift or working for...

Commissioner Keon: But I don't think we should ever compromise that guards that are hired regardless of who they are...

Police Chief Weiner: We don't factor that into our...

Commissioner Keon:...but I don't think we should ever as a Commission should ever expect that it is a private guard that ever would take the place of one of our sworn officers.

Police Chief Weiner: What I would say for the record is that we do not assign officers working off-duty primary responsibilities in those areas.

Commissioner Keon: Right. No.

Police Chief Weiner: Those primary responsibilities are still under patrol.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I think the key is that if you see there is a problem, you need to mitigate it with something. I remember years ago before we had a South Fire Department, they parked a fire vehicle down at Gulliver's field there so they would have easy access up and down to provide services to that area there. So if there is a problem, you see a problem then you have to come up with a solution and we look to you for that solution.

Mayor Cason: I think that's the bottom line. This is not a high crime area and some of them are medical calls, fire gets there, they are the ones at any rate they have the paramedics by and large, and again if you that for some reason crime picks up and we need to have a faster response time to catch the people or whatever. I think looking at those outside of the context of what's going on there wouldn't be fair to you.

Police Chief Weiner: So what I would like to do is also talk about the changes in our patrol resource allocation since June 2nd. OK. So this slide depicts resource allocations for patrol pre-June 2nd, since June 2nd and then if we were to implement the new unit that we are trying to do, criminal investigation division, strategic investigations unit. So if we look at the numbers here, the second column in, which has the minimum daily staffing, those are the minimums that we would work from in each of those periods that we've designated. So prior to June 2nd with very limited exception go below 9 and 2, and so 9 and 2 are 9 officers and 2 supervisors. Typically in walk units, including the supervisors and covering zones, so those on occasion we would get down to that level, but that it was not the routine resource deployment. The routine resource deployment was basically between the 9 and 2, and the more our regular average resource availability, which say for instance on the mid-night prior to June 2nd was 19 and 3. So it means if no officers took off that evening, there were 19 officers scheduled and 3 supervisors scheduled. So from that number we worked down on who would like a night off, so if they put in for vacation and they are going to be off for a week that would be one officer that would not be available for that period of time? If an officer called out sick that would reduce those numbers, but we would go below the 9 and 2. Now I think maybe within this last six months there was one or two shifts that we may have gone below that and that was around the holidays.

Commissioner Lago: Just a quick question so I can be very, very clear in regards to prior to June 2nd. So how many people would you have in the day and at night dressed as police officers, not in plain clothes...?

Commissioner Keon: In marked cars.

Commissioner Lago:....in marked cars patrolling our streets.

Police Chief Weiner: OK. So we have available on the day shift 24 officers and 7 supervisors. Now whether or not every one of them was in a uniform depending on what they were working on for the day. So if we are trying to find burglars we are not going to be out there in uniform, but I can tell you that there was sufficient coverage to make sure that we have our outstanding calls for service response times intact. Since June 2nd – June 2nd we had – we typically did our shifts three times a year, June 2nd was our second one for this year and it actually allowed us to – every time there is shift re-bid we have an opportunity to redeploy resources and make adjustments, cover people that have been transferred out of uniform patrol that have created holes. So one the bid is closed, if we transfer someone that's a hole that's created or someone gets long term sick there is a hole that's created. At the re-bids we have to take that opportunity then to reallocate so we can close those to help with overtime, it helps with matching staffing to workload that kind of thing, and so since June 2nd we've reallocated and we've prioritized zone coverage based on what we've been hearing from the community. What we've been hearing from the Commission and now our current minimum staffing is 12 officers and 2 supervisors and that's a number that we will not go below for coverage, same as we wouldn't go below the 9 and 2.

Commissioner Lago: So with that being said, starting June 2nd if we implement and we are both in favor of this new procedure, we'll be manning all 12 zones?

Police Chief Weiner: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: We'll be manning all 12 zones with uniformed police officers in marked police cars.

Police Chief Weiner: Well not necessarily, not necessarily. We are going to have an officer in every zone, but if there is a zone that's being hit with a certain crime we are going to put that officer in the best position to solve the crime – very typical vehicle burglars in Zone 3 for instance. The best way to catch a vehicle burglar is not by driving up and down the streets in a marked unit because they hide in the shadows at night and they watch for the marked units. So if we have those we typically it's very difficult for us to catch them. If we put officers out there in unmarked units it's easier for them to catch them. So if we are trying to catch vehicle burglaries in Zone 3 it would likely have an unmarked vehicle if it's available. That's the kind of assessment that we go through. It doesn't mean that that vehicle is not available for answering calls.

Commissioner Keon: I understand, I understand that and I know that in your world of policing you feel that you've adequately covered a zone if there is a police officer in there even if they are not in a marked car and from our vantage point with consideration for our residents who don't view it the same way you do, every one of those zones residents want to know that there is an officer in a marked car that gives them a sense of comfort in the community, so until we deal with that issue of fear of crime it is hard for me to approve something that doesn't leave a marked car in every zone on each shift at least one, at least one, and then – because I understood that when we, last year when we increased the fire fee so that it would pre-empt the dollars for us to add seven additional officers to the police department, it was my understanding that it was largely for patrol; and I mean it was largely so that we could create these new units that would give you additional personnel so there would still be an officer patrolling in a marked car that was clearly identifiable to every resident that it was a police officer and then the additional ones would absolutely go to staff the units and really from talking to you and the information you have shared with us. I do believe those units are very beneficial to our City and that we should employ them and we should have them. I'm only asking how you can do that and still – what do you need to be able for now until we really start to address some of these issues?- what can you do that allows one marked car in every zone that's clearly identifiable as a Coral Gables police officer and then staff your units?- ho many people do you need?- what do you need to do that?

Commissioner Lago: If I could just interject. I support Commissioner Keon 110 percent. If you need additional resources for the SIT team, if you need additional resources to achieve the goal, I want to have one marked vehicle in every single zone 24 hours a day.

Mayor Cason: Can you address the trade-offs because that can be done I'm sure, but the trade-off between catching bad guys and people saying I didn't see a car last five minutes I looked out the window, because a lot of these crimes take place at night when nobody is awake anyway, they are not going to see him. You have more during the day when – during the day a lot of times, at least when I walked around everybody in the house was working. So they are certainly you could do it, but what is the trade-off from your perspective?- crime is going down, you are catching more bad guys, can you walk and chew gum?- and in the sense of doing both without one losing the other, because I think in the end we want...

Police Chief Weiner: I think the best way to look at it is first let's look at the day shift because you bring up good points. People like to see marked units and we could have, we've had coverage in marked units in zones that still get people saying we don't see our officer in the zone. So it's really a matter of happenstance that the person is looking outside the window when the police car goes by, they could be in their kitchen, they could be in their living room....

Commissioner Keon: Absolutely.

Police Chief Weiner:...and so there is always that challenge, right....

Commissioner Keon: But we could assure them that there is.

Police Chief Weiner: And so we could run a period of time where we make sure there is and then we'll probably still hear some of that concern...

Commissioner Keon: I know.

Police Chief Weiner:...but if you look at the day shift for instance...

Commissioner Lago: Chief, Chief, let me just interject for one second. I agree with you what you are saying, but when you give me this chart here, 9 and 2, it doesn't allow me the ammunition that I need when I speak to the residents because they tell me, Vince, I don't see any police. I'm a stay-at-home mom, I'm walking around with my child, so what ends up happening is, I'm not doubting that it's been done before, but when you are telling me you are manning 9 out of 12 zones with a marked vehicle it doesn't give me the ammunition I need to...

Police Chief Weiner: I'd like to address that. So those are the minimums and the minimums are what we won't go below without very few exceptions, I can't say I guarantee we won't do it because sometimes things....but the more typical staffing is to the right column and when you are looking at the column on the right, I can tell you that by and large we are getting a marked car in every zone when the staffing allows for it. So we are isolating minimum staffing when it occurs, typically it has only been occurring on weekends and since we've reallocated since June 2nd we've got more resources working weekends. So the likelihood that we are going to get down to those levels is significantly reduced. So what I'm saying is the likelihood of a marked unit being in a zone is higher today than it was a month ago, OK?- and so we've allocated the resources across the week better to allow us to better meet the concerns of the citizenry. Now at the end of the day, we are not really fighting crime per say, because our crime rates are very low. What we are fighting is the fear of crime and the fear of crime the best way to fight that in my estimation, is through better communication to the community. To actually educate them on what risks we are experiencing, not what they believe we are experiencing, because they are two different measures, and so long term what we'd like to do is really get at the problem through better communication with the community, empower the community, provide us with more feedback on a regular basis so we can better react to their needs, but by limiting my ability to put an unmarked vehicle in a zone for an evening to try to catch someone that's victimizing people it's

difficult for me in the morning when we get all the calls coming in, people calling in that they've been victimized to say, we are doing what we can when I don't believe...

Commissioner Keon: What I'm asking you is, what I would rather see is that you have the ability to put an unmarked car in a zone as an additional resource to the marked car in that zone so that the people not only, they may not see the unmarked car, they are not aware it, but they have the comfort of knowing that there is a marked car in that zone. So that's what I'm asking you. It's not that you don't have the freedom to do whatever, I'm asking you what the resources you need for right now to be able to put these people, to have a marked car in every zone and still allow you to be able to move people around because I'm sure the unmarked car isn't in every zone either. Maybe there are two zones, maybe there are three zones, you tell me.

Police Chief Weiner: The strategy that a resource...because from a resource position we could put a marked unit in every zone, we could put a marked unit in with unmarked units. The strategy that we've been using is that if zones 2 and 3 are being significantly, experiencing significant vehicle burglary activity. What we've been doing is pulling the marked units out of those so we've been doubling up in other zones to try to make sure that we don't get hit in those zones and then we put saturation unmarked vehicles in there, maybe 4 or 5 units into that area trying to actually catch the criminals. Because what we want to do at the end of the day is take the criminals off the street so we don't have the problem happening every night, and so that's the strategy that we've been using, so we actually strengthen areas where we don't want the activity to occur and then we focus our unmarked resources where we know they are going to be experiencing the criminal and try to catch the criminal and take them out of the neighborhood.

Mayor Cason: Where are you with – something you brought up a couple of months ago about the importance of this strategic communication plan, because you'll give us some e-mails and some quick e-mails and say that somebody did something and we are on the lookout for them, but you don't say that when you catch them, and you gave us last time some information about the...succession meaning catching the bad guys, I think you need a lot more of we caught them, so that people are aware that these undercover operations are worthwhile and that they are actually getting results.

Police Chief Weiner: Thank you Mayor because we've been working on a strategic communications plan for a couple months now since I first in front of the Commission a few months, and that plan has been pretty close to presentation, but because of the more current situations...we want to talk about the Manger and I decided to move that presentation up to July. So it is a work in progress and not that we are slowing down on building our capacity to have that interaction with the community. It's just that we haven't been able to present it to you yet, and so we are working on social media. We are working on better communications through more

traditional media. We are working on staff being more in the community more regularly and all those things are going to help us. As a matter of fact, tonight I have a group I'm speaking in front of to talk about the issues that we are talking about the last few sessions here. So that information flow into the community is really is going to drop down the fear of crime. If you look at any statistical measure the Police Department is performing very well. In the last year we've been keeping criminals off the roads longer than we had been before, because now we follow them through, we actually track them through the entire criminal justice system and we get them more significant penalties and so that gives us breathing room because we are not out every two or three weeks trying to catch the same person. Which is what was happening, and that cycle is almost unsustainable because we are spending tremendous effort to catch people that are stealing coins out of cars and they are very challenging to justify that kind of resource.

Mayor Cason: And one of the key things is that people get panicky, obviously. If crime happens to you it's a crime wave on your street and people go out and start sending e-mails all over the place and everybody gets hyper and then you come in and you explain at a crime watch meeting and then they get, OK, I didn't realize that, and that's why I think it's so important to give the successes back to the community in a way that you'll come up with using social media and other ways, so that people understand that you just see the front end of it that crime has occurred, but you don't see the other side, it's really important.

Police Chief Weiner: We have a lot of open-ended cases because we weren't able to show the results of our efforts historically, and I think with some of the changes with leadership in the City there is a little bit of a different philosophy of being more transparent about what's happening. So our hope and expectation is that we'll be able to give more regular feedback into the community about successes, about our progress on different cases and that kind of thing, and I think that's really important in having everybody kind of take a deep breath and say, OK, they've got control of the situation. Because otherwise we've had an occurrence which will go viral in the community and they'd be no police response. It would be quiet, and people would kind of fill that void with their own, I guess, rumor-milling, not so much rumor-milling but taking one incident of five people reporting on the same incident and all of a sudden we've got five separate incidents and we weren't able to correct that situation.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I think it's not only informing when you take care of a case. I think it's also informing, like we talked last night, the technology that you have that you are utilizing now. I found it really, really interesting everybody talked about it last Commission meeting, but when they read the license plates that is amazing, and when the citizen hears that they understand that we are out there trying to prevent these things from happening. So I think the outreach to our community needs not only to be the solving of crime, which is a good thing, but also the

proactive stances that we are taking to enhance their quality of life and those are great, great things.

Commissioner Lago: Chief let me ask you a quick question. Post June 2nd to meet the goals of the, I guess, whether we are going to distribute, if it passes today, if the Commission approves it, where are these individuals going to be coming from?- from what different teams to meet the different daily staffing and also the SIU team, the proposed SIU team?

Police Chief Weiner: So the personnel, the pay slots are already allocated in criminal investigation. We just have to fill those positions with bodies, and some of those bodies would come from. I believe it would be three from uniform patrol, specialize enforcement would have two, so its three from specialize enforcement, three from uniform patrol, so as a percentage of the entire resource allocation, if we can bring that slide up one more time, we talk about the – should we staff it?- you’ll notice it has zero impact on the minimum which is the zone coverage, but we also still have significant resources on any given day before people would put in for time off, so if on a Wednesday two people take off on the day shift we are still going to have 21 people out there on patrol, so we’ll still have significant resources in the field.

Commissioner Lago: So let me ask you a question. How many – you said three from patrol and two from specialized?

Police Chief Weiner: Three from specialized.

Commissioner Lago: Three from specialized.

Commissioner Keon: What is specialized?

Police Chief Weiner: Specialized enforcement division....

Commissioner Keon: What’s that?

Police Chief Weiner: That’s the accident investigation of cars, crash investigators, marine unit, bicycle unit, boaters...

Commissioner Lago: Traffic.

Police Chief Weiner: Traffic – yes.

Commissioner Lago: How many individuals do we currently have in traffic right now on a daily basis?

Police Chief Weiner: So when you talk traffic you are talking motors, we have, I think we have eight motors.

Commissioner Lago: How many of those motors are going to be taken to specialize of that three?

Police Chief Weiner: One or two.

Commissioner Keon: Two?

Police Chief Weiner: One. Yes just one.

Commissioner Lago: So we are going to lower it to seven?

Commissioner Keon: How is it not two?- could you say that again.

Police Chief Weiner: Because the one officer that he was counting it was actually he was offered a position in the detective property crime unit or one of those other units, not for...

Commissioner Keon: Oh.

Commissioner Lago: And the other two positions are going to be coming out of?

Police Chief Weiner: The other two bicycle...

Commissioner Lago: How many bicycle patrol men do we have right now?

Police Chief Weiner: We've got three.

Commissioner Lago: So we are going to be left with one.

Police Chief Weiner: But we can train more people on bicycle, so the thing about the bicycle patrol is almost any officer covering a zone could be trained for bicycle, and so there is an opportunity there.

Commissioner Keon: Can you train them to do that? (Laughter)

Police Chief Weiner: You can train almost anyone except....

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: That picture I don't even want to put in my head. I don't want to put that in my head. (Laughter)

Commissioner Lago: Let me ask you a question. If you are going to take one off motor how do you expect that to affect the motor pool?

Police Chief Weiner: The motor unit?

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Police Chief Weiner: So that's a good point because the motor unit typically does traffic enforcement other than their escort details. So we've become very specialized over the last five or six years and we've really...the department into segments, and those segments haven't communicated very well, so we are taking down a lot of those walls, even matrix suggested combining those two divisions, so as we get closer and closer to that becoming a reality, the communication is improving between the officers between those divisions, but also the workload is becoming more, I want to say, even across the space. So just because we only have, at full staff we only have 10 motors anyway, but if we have work for 15 people to do traffic enforcement, we are not just relying on 10 motors, every officer on patrol, every officer in uniform, every officer that's doing undercover work if they see a significant traffic violation they are empowered to make that stop and they are expected to, and so it's a misnomer to say we are limiting our traffic enforcement by the number of motors we have that's not the reality.

Commissioner Lago: And in regards to the three that are coming from specialize can you break that down for me?

Police Chief Weiner: Break it down would be one motor...

Commissioner Lago: I'm sorry, patrol, I apologize.

Police Chief Weiner: Do you know what shifts?- two midnights and a day.

Mayor Cason: OK. Thank you. Any other questions? I think you guys are doing a great job, crime is going down, in spite of what some people might say, crime is going down. We are at highest number of authorized police that I think we've ever had. You've got a number of people in training, we are working to make it more attractive to hire people and I think that with your strategic communications plan you can tell people that we are actually catching people and what

you are doing with the State Attorney to keep the really bad guys you are tracking them and making progress to the extent you can continue to pass that information out to people. A lot of the fear will go down whether or not they see a patrol car or not, and you've told us that you will do your best to keep patrol cars out there, but at the end of the day you want to get people in jail, you want to get them off the street and I think you are the best to determine the mix for an appropriate incident what you use, but I think we all agree that to the extent that you need more technology, there are license plate readers, there are cameras and other things out there that I'm 100 percent to give you what you need in terms of the equipment to keep the City in a very privileged position in terms of crime.

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Mayor, can I ask for something if it's OK with the Chief and the City Manager as well. The Justice Advocate Program, I think it would be useful if we could have a vote from the Commission supporting it because it would be useful when I go to court if I ever have to go or when Judge Reyes goes with the Chief to be able to say that the Commission supports the program, has expressly supported the program, that might help us get the judge to treat it even more seriously.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: Can you talk a little bit more about the program?

City Attorney Leen: Forgive me, I'm sorry about that.

Police Chief Weiner: I have briefed some of the Commissioners and the Mayor on the program. I could certainly have an opportunity to speak, I think in terms of the amount of time that's allowed. I can give you an overview of the program and then if you want more specifics I can dive into it, but basically what we do we hire our counsel Izzy Reyes' firm to handle high valued cases, in what we consider high valued cases, are people that show a likelihood or history of victimizing the City of Coral Gables and its residents. So where we find someone that we have been trying to catch for three weeks, we finally catch him, we don't him back out in two weeks trying to catch him again. So if we think he is going to re-victimize our residents we put them into the program and what that does is it makes sure that at every juncture of the penal justice process that the interest of the City and the residents are conveyed in the courtroom and it's been a huge success, we've seen a lot of heavy sentences come down on crimes that would have otherwise maybe been released on their own recognizance or something much less serious; and so we've seen vehicle burglars with 18 months in state prison, we just had a commercial burglar take a 4-year plea and so he's off our street for 4 years, and so those are success stories that we are seeing every day from that program.

City Attorney Leen: If I may. It was the Chief's idea and he came to me and we talked about it and we've been a strong supporter of this for a while, and I know that the City Manager is a

strong supporter of it too, and what we are doing is – this is a very innovative program where the State Attorney does their job and we are supportive it, but we actually have our own attorney or paralegal, depending on the case, and it could even be the City Attorney in the right case, and we will go to court and make sure that the victim is able to go there and help them go there so they can speak to the judge and be supportive of them. We send in an attorney or a paralegal to go and speak for the City, and to explain why this is a high value criminal in the sense that we devoted a tremendous amount of resources. We don't want the person just put right back on the street to do this again and like the Chief said, we've gotten tremendous results from it and we are going to continue supporting the program. I think – we get tremendous value for really the very small amount of money we pay to do this, but I think it would be useful to tell the judge that the Commission itself is a big supporter of the program.

Mayor Cason: OK.

Commissioner Keon: I'll make a motion.

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Keon makes a motion and Vice Mayor seconds it.

Police Chief Weiner: One more point before you go, I think it's important. I think the goal of the program really is to change the calculus of the criminal and so what's happening is through the defense...and the defense attorneys, what they are seeing now is that their cases are very tough if they have Coral Gables as one of the interested parties, and so the message that will get out to the criminal is that you don't want to be committing crimes and get caught in Coral Gables and so it's a tough case, so that's the message we are trying to get out.

Mayor Cason: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Thank you very much.

Commissioner Keon: I want to make the motion that we support...

Mayor Cason: We've got the motion.

Commissioner Lago: What are we voting on so I know?

City Attorney Leen: To support the program, just a statement of support.

Commissioner Lago: Did we clarify what we want or no?

City Attorney Leen: Well the program is in place based on...

Commissioner Lago:...at least for me it doesn't. We are going to clear things up and we are going to vote on things, we are going to vote?

Commissioner Keon: No, no, go ahead, keep talking, we can do that at the end, go ahead.

Commissioner Lago: I just need to know. So are we going to man with uniform police officers every zone?

Mayor Cason: That's a different issue.

City Attorney Leen: I'm just talking about the Justice Advocate program, very limited program, I'm sorry.

Commissioner Lago: I'm looking here at agenda item, it says....

Commissioner Quesada: This is something else; this is something that Craig asked us to...

Commissioner Lago: I know you haven't had lunch yet, I know you are in a haze; it's a fog right now you are low on carbs.

City Attorney Leen: It's useful for me to be able to tell the judge or Judge Reyes to tell the judge that the Commission approves the program.

Mayor Cason: So we have Commissioner Keon made the motion, the Vice Mayor seconded it.

City Clerk

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Commissioner Quesada: Yes

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Yes

Mayor Cason: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Cason: Thank you very much.

Commissioner Keon: I feel pretty strongly about for the time being that we have marked units, you know and I really would – I know I've spoken to you about it so many times is having officers stop and talk to residents when they see people on the street when they are patrolling. If you see somebody stop and say hello, stop and talk to them, don't just keep riding by.

Police Chief Weiner: That would be great and going forward I would encourage that more and when I'm out in the community I roll down my window and I do talk to people. I want the officers to do the same and I know a lot of them do, but I think it's important that they take each opportunity to make a connection with someone in the community.

Commissioner Keon: Right – because one resident maybe in the kitchen and they don't see somebody, but if there is somebody on the street and you stop and say hello to them, they will say to the other neighbor, you know I saw officer so and so, he stopped and said hello, and they can say, Oh wow, I never see anybody. Oh but I know they are there because you told me they are there, and so that's really the point I would like to make, they need to make their presence known and that is by stopping and talking to people in the neighborhood. OK. I did want to bring up one thing because I know when we spoke that you had told me that the City's travel policy makes it – affects your ability to send more than two people...

Police Chief Weiner: Well it's not that it affects my ability so much as it adds another layer of administration to the process and slow down the process, and we typically will send more than two people to training because we are 191 sworn plus our civilian. So it's an administrative burden on our training unit because they have an additional tracking responsibility to make sure that – we can't make any arrangements for travel for training until we get approval and sometimes that means we miss windows for better pricing waiting for responses back and the timeliness is a factor, and we go through five or six layers of scrutiny inside the department to approve those and I would just request, I've already talked with the Manager about maybe revisiting it at some point.

Commissioner Keon: To revisit that travel policy.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: We can revisit it, but I think it's good that there is some sort of limit. If you are going to be sending a good number of people you want to make sure that there is coverage and they understand how...

Commissioner Keon: Well I'm assuming that that's what they do internally.

Interim City Manager Olazabal:....but it may be more than two.

Commissioner Keon: That's why I'm sure they are doing that internally or I would hope they are doing that internally before they get to that point and I don't know how much it slows you down, but if it really affects your ability to have a well-trained force. I mean I just think it's something that you can discuss. OK. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Alright Chief, thank you very much.

[End: 5:28:28 p.m.]