

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting

Agenda Item H-3

March 25, 2008

City Commission Chambers

405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Slesnick Donald D. Slesnick, II

Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.

Commissioner Maria Anderson

Commissioner Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera, Jr.

Commissioner Wayne "Chip" Withers

City Staff

City Manager, David Brown

City Attorney, Elizabeth Hernandez

City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman

City Clerk Staff, Billy Urquia

Chief Hammerschmidt, Police Department

Major Mark Ginn, Police Department

H-3 [Start: 11:20:18 a.m.]

Update on Police Patrol

City Manager Brown: This item comes as a request from Commissioner Cabrera, we have an update on the Police patrol as Chief Hammerschmidt has worked with staff to better utilize his resources, so we've put together a PowerPoint to explain to the Commission, and to the community, and the audience how the Coral Gables Police Department now is running their operations. Chief Hammerschmidt.

Chief Hammerschmidt: Good morning.

Commissioner Withers: Good morning Chief.

Chief Hammerschmidt: When we begin, I want you to understand what we are talking about here is strategies, and there are numerous strategies in law enforcement for patrolling communities, attacking crime, and things of that nature. What the City has done for a long, long time is use a zone patrol type of approach, i.e. you have a set number of zones, you assign one vehicle to each zone and in theory, -- and we have a PowerPoint, I think I can pull this up, move to the first slide. Within Coral Gables, the City was divided into twelve zones based on crime statistics as well as the geography of the City; seven of those zones were north of U.S.-1; five of them were south of U.S.-1; one of the issues in the south end is geography because as you know there are various areas where to get to from one place to another, you have to take a very securituous route to get there; there is no direct route because streets do not go through, what have you. For example, if you are on Old Cutler, and you are near Fire Station 3, and you get a call to Hammock Oaks you have to go either around on Fifty-Seventh Avenue, or around on Old Cutler

to get there; there is no route directly through. That coupled with the type of crimes that are occurring, the amount of calls for service dictate the size of each zone. If you go to the next slide; this is a map depicting the twelve zones that the City was using before that we were using. On the next slide, the advantage to zone coverage is in theory, it gives you a hundred percent (100%) coverage equal throughout the whole City, in other words you are guaranteed you have an officer in your zone all the time. Well, as I said in theory that's fine; reality is the minute we start handling calls for service that goes out the window, in other words, if I work in a zone and I get a call, and I'm tied up on that call for an hour or so, there is nobody else to patrol in that zone while I'm handling that call; if that call ends up involving an arrest, I'm going to be tied up for several hours transporting that individual, doing the paperwork and then getting back to my zone. If I'm on a call and there is a second call in my zone, we now have to take a zone car from another zone to handle that call; we don't hold calls, we make sure that they are handled as expeditiously as possible. So now, I've got nobody patrolling this zone, I have nobody patrolling this zone because I'm using that person to handle another call on this zone, and it starts compounding itself. So in theory it's great, but it's very inflexible, it doesn't allow us to be flexible enough to address specific issues when they arise. The other part of this is zone patrol is expensive because you have to guarantee putting somebody in that zone everyday, well we are faced with leave time, mandatory training, things of this nature, people get sick, so if we don't have enough people to put in the zones we are paying somebody overtime for eight hours to cover that zone. In addition, as I've said it's inflexible in that there is one officer there, it doesn't allow us to make adjustments on the fly. You move to the next slide – in addition, we may have a period of time where a particular zone really does not have a whole lot of activity occurring, that's a resource that in essence is there it should be available to us to use, and direct towards specific things that we need to address. You may have another zone where an officer has got all kinds of stuff going on in his zone, he's on his own; he is trying to handle it all by himself in that zone, that's his responsibility. It kind of handcuffs supervisors in trying to deal with these issues; when we have a citizen that complains about problems in their area, and we are asked to step up patrols, well it's kind of hard to step up patrols when I'm making sure I'm covering every single zone, where do I get the resources?- resources have to come through overtime to throw additional resources at it. If you move to the next slide, what we did, what staff looked at was several different approaches. The first thing we did not long after I got here to kind of institute more accountability on the part of our supervisors and our officers, was we went to a squad configuration; prior to that we worked on a kind of what they call a platoon configuration where I as an officer, I come in and each day I may have a different supervisor, that becomes very confusing. What's required by this supervisor might not be the same required by this supervisor. By placing the impetus on the supervisors and the officers we are creating a team approach, we all got to work together. So what we did we came up with a squad configuration; same officers, same supervisors, five days a week, same days off; before I might have a supervisor for two days, and the three other days might be a different supervisor; I won't work with the same people everyday because of hours adjust and shift and change and our days off are different; now you've got a concept of a team together. Once we had this for a while and personnel got used to the concept we instituted what we call area patrol. Go to the next slide, one more – what we did is divided the City in half, north of U.S.-1, south of U.S.-1; each squad has a sergeant and eight officers; each squad has either the north end or the south end; of those eight officers we may only have six working, one maybe in training the other one maybe on leave. We now have those officers patrolling what essentially is the same area, its just we are not confining them to a

particular zone. Each supervisor within their vehicle on their computers have GPS, which allows them to see where everyone of their units are at a given time, so they know where they are at, where they are located and basically what they are doing, if they are on a call, what have you; they are able to monitor how long they have been on that call, do I need to check what's taking so long. Within each area we've divided again a second time; for the north end we divided up north of Bird Road, south of Bird Road; in the south end its north of Kendall, south of Kendall. This way the supervisor can divide his people up and give them this is your area, you are from U.S.-1 to Kendall, OK, and cover that entire area. Where we are headed is the fact that to address crime everybody is concerned with coverage and visibility; visibility is a deterrent, but that deterrent is only a percentage. In addition you want to apprehend subjects when they are going places, you just don't want to prevent, when they do do things you want to apprehend them; when you are in the zone patrol configuration you are relying on a lot of luck; you are relying on that officer at the right place at the right moment while he is patrolling around. By going to a squad system with the area patrol we now take intelligence; intelligence is gathered from all of the crime reports that come through, and our intelligence analyst plots these; he is able to plot these on maps. If you move ahead it is going to be easier for me to go right to the maps all the way up to first set of maps that says crime reports. The map on the left is these are mock-ups; these are not real, as to what's current within the City. The map on the left what it is a map of the City with the plots, where there are different types of crime and there are different symbols from the type of crime that is occurring. The next thing that's done is the map on the right is, you ask the program to tell you based on a crime that is occurring, where should I have my attention drawn to for patrolling, that outlines a fairly big area, but then we have the analyst go into the reports and finds such things additional reports such as suspicious vehicles, suspicious people, and we plot those also along with on the crime reports finding out what was the direction of travel if we know it and things of that nature, as well as time of day, day of the week. If you go to the next slide; the slide on the left is just showing you the coloring of north and south areas. The plots show up as white dots on the map on the left; on the right we've now narrowed it down to two areas where our program and our analysis tells us if you put your people in this area between these times on these given days you have the highest percentage chance of apprehending subjects in progress, this is where your crimes occur.

Mayor Slesnick: Chief, before we have citizens call in scared, this is just a mock-up, right?

Chief Hammerschmidt: This is mock-up, we made sure we did that, I didn't want to alarm anybody.

Commissioner Anderson: You know what we could do also when we reprint, on the tape put these are not – on a little vile underneath it that way, because they didn't catch that, they'll think....

Chief Hammerschmidt: Now what this allows the supervisor to do, I have six people working; today I know from the intelligence provided to me that between one-three o'clock in the afternoon in this particular area, I have a burglary problem, and I don't only have burglaries but I have vandalism done to properties and things like that, I know if I put personnel in this area between those hours, I have a pretty good percentage that I will eventually run across these people. So today, I tell my squad OK, I assign three officers, I want you to be north of Bird

Road; I want two officers south of Bird Road, and I want one officer to be in an unmarked vehicle, and this is where I want you between one and three o'clock. Now the rest of the time I want you patrolling the south of Bird Road area, but come between one and three this is where you need to be, and I may have several of those during the day, and it may be a longer period of time, it maybe 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the afternoon, but now we are starting to focus in and direct our personnel to where they need to be at given times. We have done this for two months; the things that we have seen, we are not going to judge it one way or the other, just on the first two months because we don't even have the figures for March yet, but we have seen we've had an increase in the number of arrests for property crimes, as well as in progress; I can think of three specific calls, one of which involved Ms. Bolton's son who made a phone call to us, we happen to be patrolling and directed patrol in that given area, he noticed four individuals coming over a fence from a residence. When they saw that they were being observed because he used a cell phone to take a picture them coming over the fence, when they saw they took off running in all kinds of directions. Had we just been in a zone unit configuration, the odds of us catching even one of those individuals would not have been good, because by the time the unit would have gotten there from wherever they were, the only way he would have caught one of them was if he was right around the corner at the time it happened. Because we were in a directed patrol situation, we swarmed that area just like that and were able to apprehend all those subjects. We honored an officer of the Month for February because on the mid-night shift while working the unmarked car, he caught a subject breaking into vehicles; and then just this past Sunday we had another in progress burglary where the subjects were apprehended while we were in this. We are confident this works, by no means is it something that we look at that this is the way we are going to do business forever, because if we know one thing about our business we need to be flexible, and we need to adjust because the crooks adjust to us. I'll entertain any questions.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I have a question. I'd like you to clarify a matter for me and something I've heard out in public, I just want you to clarify for everybody that listening. First of all excellent presentation; one of the comments I've heard in public for the readjustment of these zones is the fact that we are doing this on behalf of a monetary situation, not so much on a crime prevention issues, and I just want you to assure the residents that, yes its assisting us with the financial situations in the City of Coral Gables, but by no means are we endangering residents, quite to the contrary; in you opinion, and I shouldn't be putting these words in your mouth, in you opinion this is going to assist in crime prevention throughout the City.

Chief Hammerschmidt: Absolutely. If we take tact that all we want to do is deter, all we are doing is deterring momentarily; if the subject doesn't fear that they are going to be caught they wait for their moment, they are very patient people, and its very easy in our City, the foliage is beautiful, but its tremendous coverage, I mean, drive around our City when it gets dark, and you drive through some of communities and it is dark, and its very easy for these folks to secret themselves in the bushes and wait for vehicles to pass by. I see a set of headlight coming down a street and I'm breaking into vehicles, all I have to do is duck and hide, and wait until it goes by to make sure its not a police officer, number one, and number two if it's a citizen they are not going to see me. So, our obligation is not just to deter; our obligation is when this is occurring catch these individuals.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Just a comment for myself; a commentary, is the fact is that I'm very cognizant of our budget in general; I think the City Manager is trying to understand the situation, those parameters that we have, but in my opinion one of the top services, if not the top service that a City Commission can provide for its residents is crime prevention and making sure we are catching the bad guys, so that the quality of life of our residents are ensured. So by no means would I ever want one to affect the crime prevention which is the most important element in my opinion of what we need to provide, and that's what I'm getting to, I just don't want anything to say that we are cutting here and we are cutting the zones for some reason.

Chief Hammerschmidt: In the other aspect the statistics is a telling thing for us as far as coverage goes, is for the first two months our response times have not been affected; we're within one second of what they were prior to January 7th.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Thank you very much.

Commissioner Cabrera: You know Commissioner its interesting, Vice Mayor, I agree that I would not want to see that, but it was part of the presentation, overtime has been reduced by three percent (3%), so I appreciate the fact that Chief made it clear that that's not the driving motivator. I've got some questions. Chief, where did this new strategy come from, where did you adopt this from?

Chief Hammerschmidt: This is a strategy that's used around the country and quite frankly the first place to use it was New York City; its referred to by different names, it came out of New York City it was basically referred to as.... my mind is getting cold.

Commissioner Cabrera: That's alright, you don't have to.

Chief Hammerschmidt: But New York City...

Mayor Slesnick: Is it the "comstat".

Chief Hammerschmidt: Comstat, that's it – comstat, and this is kind of a hybrid of that; I was part of the original institution of comstat at Miami-Dade, if there was one thing I learned that was it's a system that can work, but it's a system that can definitely be abused, and can be abused for purposes it wasn't intended for, I think we saw that in Broward County, and its made to understand that this system isn't meant to blame any of our personnel for crime issues that are occurring, and that's what occurred in Broward, that's why they had some issues with officers tinkering with reports and bending the way things really occurred. We've been very careful, our concern is, hey guys here's where you need to be.

Commissioner Cabrera: And was the driving force of this new strategy the fact that you evaluated the old system and saw that the old system has some shortcomings and therefore you felt very strongly about this new system, was that the catalyst for this process?

Chief Hammerschmidt: Quite frankly, when I first got here, I've always taken whether it was here or when I worked at Miami-Dade, when I was given a new assignment I don't change for

change, that accomplishes nothing; if something is working and there is no need to change it but you do have to take into account and be aware of all of the forces surrounding it and what can occur; I sat back for quite some time thinking the way we were conducting ourselves was inefficient, we could put our resources to better use and accomplish more. When I felt it was time to act was after watching around the county as crime started to creep up the last couple of years, and yet we hadn't been effective until this past year, and we new eventually we would be effective, we are no different than the rest of the country, and as the economy struggles we are going to have these issues, and we need to be prepared to be in a position to be able to deal with these things as they arise, you know, we are a very fortunate community, I've said this since I've been here, and stats that we do not have super serious crime issues, but if we don't stay on top of things and we loose that foothold that we have, its twice as hard to get it back.

Commissioner Cabrera: Let me ask you another question. What happens in this new system to the at-large units, and for those in the audience that don't know what the at-large units are, these are specialized units like the K-Nines, the motors, the bicycles, the vehicle – the accident folks that investigate and take reports for motorist accidents?

Chief Hammerschmidt: With all of those units have their particular uses; we may borrow a unit because we need to step up.... in other words we may say, you know what, this is an excellent area where we've got some problems going on, we could use some bike patrols back in here, just put a couple guys on bikes there during this specific time, but for the most part we try to leave them alone, they have their particular things to deal with...

Commissioner Cabrera: And theirs is different, right, theirs is different?

Chief Hammerschmidt: Yes.

Commissioner Cabrera: Just a different system altogether because it's so specialized.

Chief Hammerschmidt: Correct. K-Nines work citywide; when the number of units are working; we use those to supplement our areas, and we assign them accordingly, one north, one south if there is two working; or we put one at-large, and not only is – if you are the unit working say, an unmarked car today, and you are given that particular area to patrol during a given time, at roll call all the rest of the officers know when you are going to be in a particular area working something at a given time. So they know when you are unavailable and tied up doing this, and they also know I need to pay attention if he gets something in that area because there is a good chance I need to start working my way towards that area.

Commissioner Cabrera: I got to tell you, thank you Chief, by the way you did an excellent job presenting this morning; I originally brought this issue up because for the first time in my seven years as a Commissioner, I received complaints not about our Police Department's inability to do a good job, but the lack of visibility by certain neighborhoods of Police cruisers. So I brought it to the attention of the Manager and I brought it to the attention to all of you in a public meeting, and that's when the Manager decided that he would look into this and learn more about it. I want to say this, look, you are the law enforcement professional, you are our Police Chief, I would never ever question your knowledge, reputation, of the industry you have grown up in, so I never

want to politicize the work that the law enforcement department of our City does, and you will never get me to question it; the problem for me as a politician is that when my clients, my constituents come to me and tell me, gee, for the first time ever we're not seeing Police cruisers in our neighborhood and we're hearing about this new system that is out there that in our opinion is reactive rather than proactive, because the interesting thing is, and you said this earlier, you derive your criminal statistics and then you plot them on the City map, and you showed us that and that makes perfect sense, but to some it would be looked upon as a reactive approach rather than proactive approach for the simple reason that if there is a high criminal element in one area of our City that's where we are dedicating more resources than the rest of the City, and therefore the bad guys, the criminal element will eventually get onto this and move further south, or east or west, wherever we are. So, Chief my comments are more rhetorical, if you'd like to respond by all means, please understand that I'm not questioning your professional...

Chief Hammerschmidt: I understand.

Commissioner Cabrera: OK.

Chief Hammerschmidt: In reality what you are stating is the exact opposite...

Commissioner Cabrera: Is exactly what?

Chief Hammerschmidt: Exact opposite...

Commissioner Cabrera: OK.

Chief Hammerschmidt: We are being proactive in attacking problem areas. When you are in a zone patrol configuration you are reacting; you are reacting – you are patrolling in hopes of catching something or seeing something or preventing things, but in reality you are reacting just to the calls you get, and maybe I can make people understand this a little bit better; its not like seven days a week I've got an unmarked car patrolling this given area between one and three; it may change everyday, he may have two different areas, one at this part of the shift, and one at this part of the shift, all we are trying to do is be in the right place at the right time.

Commissioner Cabrera: In the same breath that I said politicizing the process, I know you are trying very hard to make all our citizens happy, I just want to make sure that when we decide to do something and we ask our Police Department to do it, it has their full support, and that we are not reacting to a complaint because somebody just wishes to complain; are you reading between the lines?

City Manager Brown: No, I'm not.

Commissioner Cabrera: Well, they've been some complaints about Police presence in the southern part of our City, and one of the things that we have done from what I understand, from my limited knowledge, is that we assigned a couple units to the southern area. If that's not part of the big scheme of things, if that's somehow conflicts with the process that's in place, I certainly don't want to politicize it.

City Manager Brown: I didn't ask the Chief to do anything different than he's already done.

Commissioner Cabrera: OK. I just want to make sure we're clear....

Chief Hammerschmidt: I will tell you that we have a little bit of advantage in the southern part of the City; we have some communities down there who have chosen to pay extra.

Commissioner Cabrera: Yes, they pay extra and they have gated communities.

Chief Hammerschmidt: They have patrols that vary from day to day, different times of day, what have you, that they are paying for specifically to be in their community; those are in addition to the units we have, and we are aware of when they are working, and the supervisors are aware of when they are working; that really allows for us to have a little bit bigger area for units to patrol as oppose to the northern part of the City where we don't have that advantage.

Commissioner Cabrera: Yes, and you know, the thing is, and you're right, you are absolutely right about those communities; the question then beckons and Chief we are not arguing, we are just discussing the policies; the thought that beckons then is, when some of these communities – no, all of these communities pay taxes like the rest of the City and in fact if you really want to get down and look at the communities most of those communities in my opinion, are what I call donor communities; their tax base, while its only twenty six cents (26¢) on every dollar, is a much higher percentage because the value of their homes are typically much higher, and so at the end of the process I could see them questioning, well you know, I pay taxes just like the good folks up in the northeast quadrant of the City that live in a fifty by one hundred lot, when I live in a five hundred by nine hundred lot, and I should have the same amount of Police presence, and by the way I'm paying for a security officer, maybe a Florida Highway Patrol Officer or Wackenhut Officer, or in fact one of our off duty officers.

Chief Hammerschmidt: And what we do to make sure they understand that we are getting into their communities because a lot of those folks are working folks just like everybody else...

Commissioner Cabrera: Oh yes.

Chief Hammerschmidt: ...so they are out during the day and don't see it, but when our regular patrol units go into those areas they specifically have to take a signal that we have a record of their being in those areas checking that area, and like I said, we are aware of when the off duty officers are working and not working in those areas, and we know when we have to absolutely have to get in there.

Commissioner Cabrera: That's got to be very helpful.

Chief Hammerschmidt: Yes.

Mayor Slesnick: I don't want to be redundant, but I'm going to be a little bit because it's just one of the more important issues and I wanted to express myself. First of all I know, Chief, I know that you've had thirty years more Police experience, and I respect that greatly and that's the

reason you were chosen as our Chief, and you are surrounded by a great management team who we all know personally and respect them for their years of experience, their knowledge, several of whom are here in the audience with you, and so therefore I do not make it a habit of second-guessing, and I'm not now going to second-guess, and I appreciate your presentation and the explanation of the system. I have to go back though Commissioner Cabrera's comments that the thing that I will say is just as a principle I believe in and have since I started my career with the Metro Dade Public Safety Department thirty five years ago, and that is visibility, and I'm not going to say any of us disagree, I just want to impress that to me visibility is critically important, and its critically important for our citizens peace of mind and even though we need to catch criminals, and that's peace of mind too, visibility is still important, and I think visibility in the south end is important. I always feel very badly when I go down to some of our gated communities and find out how much money they are paying extra for all the extra things; now they do that because of their own free choice, but I still feel as Commissioner Cabrera said that we owe them certain obligations they pay a lot of taxes, and I'd like to see to make sure that those communities see us and feel our presence and know we are there. There was one comment made to me, and I'm just going to go ahead and say it because it was part of these inputs we got from citizens after this was announced in the paper about the new system; they said that before this new system people were forced to stay in their zones and since then they are more free roaming they see more and more times with two cars parked together with officers talking, I mean is this handled in the SOP's of the department?- I'd like you to address that because that's a comment I got from several people.

Chief Hammerschmidt: This is placing the impetus on the supervisors, they have those computers, they know where their units are, if they see this occurring it is incumbent upon them to ensure their units, number one, are not congregating to one particular area in the City, but also not to be sitting for lengthy periods of time. For me to sit and say what they are doing at a given time, yes, will officers at times congregate for a minute and "BS" a little bit to kind of break the monotony, yes they do, other times they may be meeting to be conferring about something stuff, or in some instances you need to be careful if its our special enforcement folks, motor cycles plus our motors will team up with vehicles to do specific enforcement in a given area and they made be theirs kind of like a wolf pack effect. But yes, that's the one thing we've made our supervisors understand, its on your shoulders to ensure that this works, and will assure all of you whether its this or anything else that we do, we look at it, and we analyze it on a constant basis, and at some point if we find its not working we are going to find another way to do business.

Mayor Slesnick: Well, I appreciate you addressing that point, just want the people to understand that this is something that the department takes cognizance of, works on, and the supervisors, so that's the point. Now that we are talking about budget reductions, and budget problems, and you've been faced – you and your management team are faced with a real challenge, and we are talking about coverage and visibility, I mean, its easy for us to say visibility, hard for you to put; don't we come back to the point of number one, whatever happen to the reserve program to put some extra officers on the street?

Chief Hammerschmidt: We just recently completed the SOP and finally got it off and running, and we're working with a couple of candidates now, one of which happens to be a full time

employee of ours doing crime scene, whose been a reserve officer in Homestead, and wants to become a reserve officer for us instead, and I believe we have one other that's basically....

Mayor Slesnick: But what will their commitment be like....a shift a month?- or more than that.

Chief Hammerschmidt: I believe we ended up on settling on sixteen hours a month; Mark's been intimately involved in the SOP.

Major Mark Ginn: Good afternoon....

Commissioner Cabrera: SOP stands for Standard Operating Procedure?

Chief Hammerschmidt: Yes.

Commissioner Cabrera: Thank you.

Major Mark Ginn: The reserve program has been ongoing, the production of it, for a long time; we had a reserve program several years ago, it was discontinued because it wasn't operated properly, since then we have revised and gone through the standard operating procedure numerous times. It has been approved now, I think its ready to be finalized and produced and at least a few months ago we had between six and eight individuals that were interested in becoming reserve officers. Because of the requirements to meet same standards as Coral Gables officers, it's difficult to become a reserve officer unless you are retiring as a Coral Gables officer. I do believe we agreed to go to sixteen hours a month on that, if it's not sixteen it will be broken down to eight and we've discussed that with reserve officers in other departments, many of them volunteer far more than the minimum mandatory. When we say eight hours or sixteen hours, that's a minimum mandatory that they must meet, as well as all training requirements that a full time regular office would meet. But for example the individual that the Chief was speaking of, our crime scene tech sometimes is putting in thirty-two hours a month or more volunteering down in Homestead.

Mayor Slesnick: And this would be the dollar a year type.

Mark Ginn: This would be the dollar a year and that was one of the drawbacks that we had on previous SOP.

Mayor Slesnick: Let's say we bring three or four reservist into the family of Policing in Coral Gables and they start pulling shifts, do we have cars for them?

Chief Hammerschmidt: If they are not previous Coral Gables Police Officers they will ride with another officer. What that does for us is create a two-man unit so that when we get calls that require two officers, either for officer safety, or it's that type of call that needs additional personnel, it allows us just to send that one unit and not tie up all these other units. So it does provide us a benefit if they are a previous Coral Gables officer, I have the authority to sign off to allow them to ride on their own; the difficulty of someone working sixteen hours a month riding

by themselves they don't have that day-in/day-out experience, knowledge of the City, there is a lot that goes into before you put somebody out on their own.

Mayor Slesnick: Last question – mobile patrol. I know that, I guess its come to an end, since we talked about it, I haven't had any updates, and I know that it was pointed out and rightfully so that participation had come down a great deal over the years and the members of the mobile patrol who had sort of stayed static had gotten older, but the idea of having volunteers, other communities do that for the eyes and ears, and you said Chief, eyes and ears are important; is there any hope of returning some kind of volunteer program to put out?

Chief Hammerschmidt: Sergeant Nelson has recently took over operation of that unit have done a lot of things to kind of upgrade how it operates. Our intent is to continue on and try to do a little more recruiting in that area, that's not something that's easy; you have to find real willing folks who are willing to give of themselves to go out and do this, and fortunately to this point we've had some dedicated folks for a number of years but that dedication is waning.

Mayor Slesnick: How many cars do we have?

Chief Hammerschmidt: We have two.

Mayor Slesnick: Two – because just two cars on our streets and roaming – marked mobile patrol cars make a presence and they make visibility, and it seems to me that if we worked with Maria Rosa maybe we could get....a lot of people out there that may not know of the opportunity to be the eyes and ears. OK, that's all I have, and thank you again.

Commissioner Cabrera: I have one last question and then I'll close out unless some of my colleagues have anything else. Chief, when will you re-evaluate this new system since you launched it on January 8th, you are into it two months, and a few days, when will you look at it again and make determinations as you how effectively its running?

Chief Hammerschmidt: We look at the statistics and everything involved at the end of every month when we have all of that data accumulated, we look it for the month, and we look at it in an accumulated fashion since we began; hopefully we'll have a good idea come....I'd like to give it till June, give it a half a year and see where we stand and see where crime sits within the City.

Commissioner Cabrera: Well, from my end thanks again for taking the time and bringing some of your command staff out here to brief us, and I will say this once again at the risk of being redundant, the primary motivator for me was the fact that I was getting feedback from the electorate, and the electorate wanted to know why they were not seeing police cars in their particular neighborhood, so hopefully a lot of the same people that have voiced those concerns will watch today's meeting or read about it in the newspaper, or learn through others that have learned what we've learned today; appreciate it.

Chief Hammerschmidt: I want to make sure that the Commission understands when we do these presentations on some occasions we get a little reluctant because how do we make this presentation so that it is understood and are not revealing too much as to...

Commissioner Cabrera: Yes, and I agree with you. When I asked the Manager about it I wanted a macro look at this, exactly what you did, so people – you know, in the same regard, and I understand why you would do this, in the same regard though you have a population that I believe is highly educated, certainly sophisticated, and many are successful business people and just successful in their own industries, or whatever it is that they do, and so they almost demand to better understand the processes that we enter, and for you to get into details would be completely unproductive and I understand that, so I think your presentation I think hit the spot.

Mayor Slesnick: I am disappointed Chief, this wonderful presentation, this whole thing, not one mention of horses.

[LAUGHTER]

Commissioner Cabrera: We have, you know what, we've got four horses they are called segways, and they don't poop, you don't have any problems with pooping...

City Manager Brown: You don't have to feed them.

Commissioner Cabrera: You have to feed them; you've got horses we were going to take them to Dave's ranch up in the Carolinas so they could be fed, and it was going to be very, very expensive.

Mayor Slesnick: Chief, thank you; Deputy Chief thank you very much.

Commissioner Cabrera: Alright, good stuff; what's next on the agenda.

Mayor Slesnick: While he's here, Mr. Naue, I think it should be mentioned that not only do our officers serve and our management team serves the public, but they also give of their own time and volunteer ways, and tonight Mr. Naue becomes the Vice President of the Junior Orange Bowl Committee.

Commissioner Cabrera: Congratulations Chief, well done. (Applause).

[End: 12:03:31 p.m.]