

Lakeview Crime Prevention District Meeting

March 22, 2018

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Location: St Dominic Rectory Meeting Room

LCPD vice-chairman, Jeb Bruneau, called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM and announced that Brian Anderson was not able to attend because he had a previous obligation. Roll was called. In attendance were: Reid Raymond, Val Cupit, Jeb Bruneau, Freddy Yoder, Joe Landry, and Ann Leblanc. A quorum was established with six members attending. Nancy Lytle and Martin Landrieu were also in attendance but arrived after roll call. Also, present were LCPD Commander Rene Benjamin, LCPD accountant Larry Jacobi, and LCPD attorney Richard Bordelon. There were also approximately twenty-five to thirty members of the public in attendance as well.

Approval of minutes: Jeb Bruneau called for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 22, 2018, board meeting. Copies of those minutes had been circulated to the board members earlier. The motion to approve those minutes was made by Ann Leblanc and seconded by Freddy Yoder. The motion carried with all in favor and no opposing votes.

Public Interest Agenda:

Crime Prevention Report & Statistics: Sgt. Benjamin reviewed the Crime Prevention Report (attached) covering the month-to-date crime stats in Lakeview for the month of March. He stated that the day before, on March 21, a resident arrived home from the store to drop off two bags. She entered her home and upon returning to her vehicle, observed two or three subjects at her vehicle who fired at the victim. No one was injured. Detectives were on the scene for about two and a half hours. They recovered a lot of evidence and were hopeful of closing the case in the near future. Detectives Sgt. Roy Guggenheim and William Torres, were working the case overtime and were both present at the LCPD meeting. They reported that they were trying to track the car down, and that they had even chased it earlier in the same day as this meeting but that it got away. They had developed suspects in the case and were trying to link them to the location of the crime. The detectives were hopeful that it would be done very shortly. They then asked for questions and a member of the public who was present at the meeting asked if it was true what the news reported that the suspect lived in the neighborhood. The detective responded that he did not know where the news got that information from. That

same citizen also asked if it was true that the gun that was used was stolen from another vehicle. The detective responded that they believed that these suspects are auto burglars and that it is very likely that it was stolen from a vehicle, but it is not known yet for sure. Freddy Yoder stated that he has the same car, an Audi, and he informed the detective that the car has the capability of being tracked through GPS to its exact location to the owner of the vehicle. The detective thanked Freddy for the information. Sgt. Benjamin announced that certain high-end vehicles and particularly Audis have a key-fob in the glove box that is placed there by the factory. The owners frequently don't know of this, but that the criminals do know and they are targeting Audis for this reason. A concerned citizen recently took a picture of the license plate of the suspect's car. That citizen was in attendance at the meeting and explained the circumstances of how he came to take that photo.

Sgt. Benjamin then introduced the new Quality-of-Life Officer who covers the Lakeview area. Officer Nigel Daggs announced that he would be working with Sgt. Benjamin. He explained to those at the meeting what constitutes quality-of-life issues and shared his contact information.

In response to a question about what was being done, to prevent such incidents, Sgt. Benjamin responded that decoy cars, and increased patrols were being used. Placement of crime cameras throughout Lakeview and particularly in zone 'J' was also discussed. He also added that a meeting was scheduled with the neighborhood schools to discuss protocols for communications and lockdowns.

Upon completion of the discussion of this particular crime, Sgt. Benjamin then began to review the statistics in the attached crime report. These crimes included six auto burglaries where all six vehicles were unlocked. Four of these incidents involved four black males on bikes. One of those subjects was apprehended after being struck by a car while fleeing the scene. The suspect survived, sustaining a broken leg. He was found in possession of stolen items and a warrant has been issued for his arrest.

So far, property crimes were eleven this month compared to thirteen last month, or twenty-three percent reduction. Overall crimes this month compared to last month were a fifteen percent reduction. He also reviewed the year to date crimes in the report. He stated that sixty percent of the property crimes that occur in Lakeview involve vehicles that are either burglarized or stolen. Overall crime is down sixty-one percent for the first three months in Lakeview.

Financial Report: Larry Jacobi reviewed the monthly financial statements (attached). He reported that one hundred and eighty-two thousand dollars had been collected in March which was about five hundred and seventy thousand dollars less than was collected for the same period last year. He explained that last year's collections were an aberration with more collections occurring in that year than in any other years past. Larry Jacobi reported that he believed that the overall financial situation is fine. The LCPD has approximately two hundred thousand dollars in the bank after all the patrols are paid for through the end of March, enough to pay for eight cycles, or about four months of patrols. All other budget line items are in line with what was budgeted. The average patrol per hour is running thirty-six dollars and eighty-seven cents, and that thirty-six dollars and sixty cents is what had been projected, or about one percent higher than was budgeted. Larry Jacobi was not concerned that LCPD was out of line in any budget matter as of this time. Larry Jacobi reported that the annual audit had started and should be completed by the first of June. There were no questions from the board or from the public for Larry Jacobi.

Jeb Bruneau noted for the record that board members Nancy Lytle and Martin Landrieu had arrived at the meeting during the previous reports. He then asked for a motion to amend the agenda to add a technology committee report item to the agenda. Ann Leblanc made the motion to amend the agenda to add a technology report and Val seconded the amendment. The motion carried with all in favor and no opposing votes.

Technology Report:

Jeb Bruneau informed those at the meeting that LCPD was on pace to have between one hundred & one hundred and fifty cameras throughout various parts of Lakeview by the end of the year. LCPD president Brian Anderson presently has meetings set up with the city of New Orleans to discuss the possibility of tying in those cameras to the live-stream camera system of the city. He added that it was not a definite deal and that the board would have to approve it but things are being done by the LCPD board regarding cameras and other technology. He pointed out the recent purchase of four thermal vision scopes. Sgt. Benjamin provided a report about how these scopes work, and how they were being implemented by the patrolling officers. Sgt. Benjamin reported that they were actively being used to thwart auto burglaries and was thankful that the scopes were provided by the board. In response to a member of the public who inquired if the board was doing enough to reduce crime, Sgt. Benjamin pointed out that ninety percent of the auto burglaries that occurred last year, the

cars were unlocked. Of the fifty-two cars that were stolen last year, forty-eight had the keys in them. He added that there is no amount of cameras and technology that can eliminate crime when citizens are leaving cars unlocked and leaving keys in vehicles. Sgt. Benjamin added that having video of criminals who are wearing hoodies and whom you cannot identify entering unlocked vehicles does not do any good. Cars that are unlocked, or that have keys in them are luring criminals to our neighborhood. If criminals found no unlocked cars or vehicles with no valuables or keys inside of them in Lakeview, they will go elsewhere. He concluded by asking the public to call 911 when they see something suspicious.

Board Attorney Richard Bordelon reminded the board members that financial disclosure forms (form Tier 2.1) were due in to the Ethics Board by May fifteenth, adding that it is a responsibility of each individual board member to have theirs in on time. Board members were also reminded that the Ethics online course must also be completed by the end of the year by each board member.

Board member Freddy Yoder addressed the members of the public. He acknowledged that one crime is too many and that he understood how traumatized those affected by the recent crime were. He pointed out that in 1998 when the LCPD was created, there were five hundred and fifty-one such crimes and that now there was one. In 1997 when many were fleeing the area because of crime, there was a handful who decided to stay and fight the crime and to fight for the community that they love. They wrote the legislation that created this crime prevention district. Since that time, it has gone down by over five hundred percent. But the one that happened yesterday was too many and that we, the LCPD board will continue to work to reduce it to zero. He added that he doesn't know where else he could go that he would love as much as he loves Lakeview. When we have so many cars that are unlocked, there are many things that we can all do that will help ourselves and we have to do those things, but we have to help ourselves first. We've come a long way from five hundred fifty-five serious crimes to one, so we are getting there and we will continue to fight.

Public Comments:

A member of the public asked about the schedule and the locations of the LCPD meetings. Members of the board reviewed that information as well as sources such as the LCPD website where that information could be found.

A discussion was held about social media and how the board can use it to best communicate with the public.

Jeb Bruneau asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Freddy Yoder and seconded by Ann Leblanc. All were in favor of the motion, with none opposed, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:14PM.