

January 29, 2013

To: Honorable Mayor Gayle McLaughlin and Members of the City Council

From: Public Safety and Public Services Standing Committee

SUBJECT: SUMMARY of the Meeting of the Public Safety and Public Services Standing Committee, Thursday, January 24, 2013, at 11:05 a.m.

Present: Chair Booze and Councilmember Bates

Absent: None.

THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETING IS AS FOLLOWS:

1. **RECEIVE:** a report about the staffing levels in the Fire Department was presented by Fire Chief Michael Banks. Chief Banks stated there are several positions that remain unfunded. Staff is incurring a great deal of overtime and he would like to increase staff to reduce the amount of overtime, specifically the Deputy Fire Chief position. Chief Banks stated that his number one priority is to fill lower-rank positions to reduce overtime on line staff. Councilmember Bates directed Chief Banks to work with the city manager and the human resources director form a schedule of accomplishments and goals for filling positions.

Jackie Thompson, Battalion Chief Byron Berhel, and Naomi Williams gave comments. Ms. Thompson commended the Richmond Fire Department for the services they provide. Battalion Chief Berhel read a letter from the Richmond Fire Management Association requesting the City of Richmond staff the fire department to a level to increase the safety of fire staff and the citizens of Richmond. Chair Booze requested that Chief Berhel and Chief Banks work together to come up with a timeframe to fill positions that will be discussed in the mid-year budget. Ms. Williams stated that just as it is important for the Police Department to be fully staffed, it was equally important for the Fire Department to be at full staff.

2. **UPDATE:** the Public Safety Committee on the status of the direction given to Mr. Carl Adams at the November 15, 2012, meeting, regarding clean-up of his property at 000 8th Street was given by Code Enforcement Director Tim Higarras who reported that the property was cleaned.

On motion of Councilmember Bates, seconded by Councilmember Booze waived the administrative fines.

3. **DISCUSS & PROVIDE DIRECTION:** to staff regarding Vehicle Abatement Fees and a Repair or Demolish Structure Notice received by Rebecca Westbrook was presented by Code Enforcement Director Tim Higarras and Attorney Trisha Aljoe. Ms. Aljoe stated that \$3,900 in fees is owed to the city. Mr. Westbrook stated that there was a buyer for the property; however, Contra Costa County has placed a lien.

Odell Westbrook gave comments. Councilmember Bates recommended that staff work with Mr. Westbrook and the buyer to learn specifics of the lien. The item will go back to the full Council with a recommendation from the Public Safety Committee.

OPEN FORUM/PUBLIC COMMENT

Naomi Williams announced that the NAACP Richmond Branch's Freedom Fund and Membership Awards Banquet will be held on Saturday, February 2, 2013, at the Richmond Auditorium. Tickets are \$60, call 918-6955 for more information. She also announced that the City of Richmond Black History Celebration will be held on Friday, February 8, 2013, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Richmond Memorial Auditorium, tickets are \$15 and may be purchased from the Richmond Senior Center; call (510) 307-8085 for more information.

Jackie Thompson urged the Public Safety Committee to seek the installation of disabled-friendly doors to the public bathrooms within the City of Richmond. She also reported that dumping was continuously occurring on Stege Avenue and 37th Street and Cutting Boulevard. Ms. Thompson also reported that there has also been an increase in gun fire in the area.

There was no further business and the Public Safety Meeting adjourned at 12:13 p.m.