



City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53202

Meeting Minutes ANTI-GRAFFITI POLICY COMMITTEE

ALD. TONY ZIELINSKI, CHAIR

Ald. Robert Donovan, Vice-Chair

Ald. Terry Witkowski, Michael Miller, and Angelique Pettigrew

Staff Assistant, Linda Elmer, 286-2232

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Thursday, May 21, 2009

10:30 AM

Room 301-B, City Hall

Meeting convened: 10:38 A.M.

Present 4 - Donovan, Witkowski, Zielinski and Pettigrew

Excused 2 - Miller and VACANT2

1. Review and approval of the minutes of the March 23, 2009 meeting

Ald. Donovan moved for approval. There were no objections.

2. Department of Neighborhood Services update

Art Dahlberg, Commissioner, present for the department. Since the last meeting, the department mainstreamed how graffiti complaints are handled due to the increased volume. Ms. Sharon Blando from the department noted that the budget balance for graffiti removal is currently \$46,000 and that will probably be sufficient by utilizing volunteers. So far, 2009 is the highest number of complaints they've had since 1994 during the same time period. A vandal was arrested in April, which resulted in decreased graffiti vandalism for the next two weeks. The dept. has two new volunteers removing graffiti on the south side, which has helped quite a bit. The dept. has a number of volunteers who do cleanup. Ms. Blando previously provided members with her reports (Exhibits 2 and 3) and at the meeting provided a listing of clean-up efforts done by volunteers (Exhibit 4). At the suggestion of a volunteer, the dept. did re-send out a letter to area merchants about the sale of markers to underage individuals. Judge Russell Stamper sentenced a vandal fairly severely for marking one city light pole, which the city was supportive of. Ald. Donovan moved to send a letter of thanks from the committee, with a copy to all the other judges. There were no objections. The dept. will also reach out to the media with the information about the sentencing.

The taggers generally find out who is arrested and the sentence length via word of mouth. The dept. is applying for a grant through Keep America Beautiful to fund an educational component with students. The dept. had discontinued this service due to budget cutbacks. If they get the grant, it would pay for a jingle-writing contest and the winner(s) would have their anti-graffiti jingles played on a radio station for six months.

Ald. Witkowski recommended a press release and also working with the Safety Commission noting how bad graffiti is this year so far. There are a number of new

taggers out on the streets. Home Depot has not responded about donating supplies or money for graffiti removal. Home Depot was approached by the city as it had provided assistance to other communities. West Allis borrowed one of the city's cameras and was extremely happy with how it worked. Individuals from West Allis are willing to come in and provide a report - this will be added to the next meeting agenda.

Ald. Zielinski encouraged the dept. to talk to the police dept. to include marker sales as part of their underage sting operations.

3. Department of Public Works update

Paul Novotny appeared for the department. This dept. is also receiving more calls and is working on the backlog. They'll be caught up within a week if the numbers remain the same. The graffiti van has been updated so it can carry more supplies and be more versatile on what it can respond to. The cameras have also been upgraded. The dept. has 12-14 painters that remove graffiti, but those individuals have other job duties as well.

4. Municipal Court update

Kristine Hinrichs present for Municipal Court. Members previously received the department's report (Exhibit 1). There were no questions or comments from members.

5. Milwaukee Police Department update

Captain Eduardo Negron present for the department. The department has Operation Paintback, which has offenders removing graffiti, which has had positive results. Most of the graffiti vandalism is neighborhood-driven and the police dept. does communicate across shifts and between officers. An officer will also be assigned to coordinate graffiti efforts through the fusion center across districts and for those tags which are of particular concern, such as gang-related graffiti.

Officers in Police District 2 and Police District 4 have started issuing citations for violation of the parental responsibility ordinance and these citations will be tracked to see what the end result is and what snags the city encounters in enforcing this ordinance. Ald. Zielinski would like an update on this topic at the July meeting.

As of today, the dept. has issued 51 graffiti-related citations; 35 of those were to adults. Ald. Witkowski encouraged the dept. to attend any graffiti-related press conference.

6. Milwaukee Christian Center update

Roger Aponte present for the Center. In March and April, the Center cleaned 472 residential units and 109 commercial units.

7. Update from business improvement districts related to their graffiti levels and graffiti removal efforts

Judi Keller from the Mitchell Street Association noted that January is a bad month for graffiti. She is interested in the programs she heard about today and was wondering

if the city tracks if taggers go to bigger or smaller stores.

Dave Rotter from King Drive Business District said that although graffiti is up, it is not as bad as it could be. He thanked the city for its financial support.

Kristin Ameson from the Historic Third Ward Association was here to support the Milwaukee Christian Center and its graffiti removal efforts.

8. Set next meeting date and agenda

July 27th at 10:30 A.M.

*Meeting adjourned: 11:21 A.M.
Linda M. Elmer
Staff Assistant*

This meeting can be viewed in its entirety in the web-casting archives found at www.milwaukee.gov/channel25.