

**Snohomish City Council Workshop Minutes
March 20, 2018**

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Council President Sanders called the Snohomish City Council Joint Workshop with the Public Safety Commission to order at 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 20, 2018, in the Snohomish School District Resource Service Center, George Gilbertson Boardroom, 1601 Avenue D, Snohomish, Washington.

MAYOR/COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT

Larry Countryman
Steve Dana
Karen Guzak
Tom Merrill
Linda Redmon
Jason Sanders, Council President
Lynn Schilaty

MAYOR/COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT

John Kartak, Mayor

STAFF PRESENT

Pat Adams, HR Manager/City Clerk
Debbie Burton, Finance Director
Glen Pickus, Planning Director
Keith Rogers, Police Chief
Steve Schuller, City Administrator

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSIONERS

BJ Meyers
Jan Lengenfelder
Donna Ray

2. **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

a. **Neighborhood Watch Redevelopment**

Chief Rogers introduced Public Safety Commissioner Donna Ray who discussed the community-based Neighborhood Watch Program.

Ms. Ray explained the Snohomish Public Safety Commission has the authority within its charter for coordinating Neighborhood Watch. The Commission felt the citywide Neighborhood Watch should be modeled after the successful Morgantown Neighborhood Watch which formed in 2010.

It is believed the best way to build Neighborhood Watch citywide is have a resource framework where residents can readily locate start up materials, gain access to resources and make a centralized connection to the Neighborhood Watch effort. The formation of a coalition increases the odds that, regardless of the individuals involved at start up, the structure is in place and will continue to run over the long term.

Ms. Ray indicated the first step would be the creation of a website. The website will be a resource for residents to understand the goals of a Neighborhood Watch and to obtain a "Start-Up" kit, which will provide step-by-step instructions on how to start a Neighborhood Watch. Over time, the Commission may want to map these neighborhoods on a City map, and also incorporate disaster planning features.

The vision is to have a citywide network that the Police and Fire Departments can tap into so if there are general crime, safety or disaster planning programs, drills can be organized and information easily disseminated throughout the network.

Ms. Ray discussed the website content, which is proposed to include the purpose of the Neighborhood Watch, including what it is and how to start a watch program with step-by-step instructions provided. The website will also include a resource list showing Police Department contact information (Snohomish Neighborhood Outreach Officer), a link to

the Snohomish Coalition of Neighborhood Watch Facebook page, current neighborhood watch contacts and other relevant information.

Ms. Ray is requesting the City Council approve the Neighborhood Watch website content. Upon approval, the website will be launched and the Tribune would like to write an article about it. Subsequently, the PSC will reach out to the community and get the Neighborhood Watches started and begin building the coalition. She would like a kick-off event in 2018, and is asking the City to assist the Commission by providing a media announcement.

Councilmember Schilaty commented connecting neighborhoods was a Council Goal a few years ago. She is excited with the idea of providing a simple format for neighborhoods to connect. She also thinks this may be an opportunity to assign Councilmembers to certain neighborhoods. This is not a reference to Wards. For example, it is a way to focus on the north end of town – Bickford - and to provide City representation to various neighborhoods within the City. She commended the Public Safety Commission for their hard work.

Councilmember Guzak asked if the Neighborhood Watch information would be hosted on the City's server.

Ms. Ray confirmed the information would be housed on the City's website.

Councilmember Redmon asked if Ms. Ray would be the contact person initially to assist in organizing the Neighborhood Watches. She also asked if maps identifying where Neighborhood Watches were established might divert crime to other areas in town where a Neighborhood Watch didn't exist.

Ms. Ray responded she will be one of the contacts. However, some of her fellow Morgantown Neighborhood Watch Captains will also be assisting as resources and will be included on the resource list. She further noted she hadn't planned on publishing a map.

Councilmember Dana asked if this effort is the renewal of a Neighborhood Watch program, or a first attempt at organizing this program.

Ms. Ray replied the City has not had a formal citywide program. They will be modeling this new citywide program after the Morgantown Neighborhood Watch, which is very organized and successful.

Councilmember Dana inquired, based on what the PSC has learned through their research, if there are there areas of town that make logical sense to be neighborhoods. Will there be a master list of neighborhoods, or will the PSC leave it up to the community to determine if they will self-identify as a neighborhood.

Ms. Ray stated they discussed trying to divide the map up into districts with the Commission. However, this has not been done. The idea behind a Neighborhood Watch is it should be comprised of a street or a couple of blocks. Initially, she would like to inform residents where they can go to begin their Neighborhood Watch efforts, and at a later time, determine if there should be districts identified.

Councilmember Guzak stated National Night Out was Block Watch centric and the Councilmembers would attend events at various Block Watches – there were four or five, with Morgantown being the largest and most successful. She noted their success came from high crime rates in the area. She supports having the Neighborhood Watch informational packets posted on the City’s website, as this has been a Council Goal.

Councilmember Sanders supports the community-based coalition and providing the resources necessary to create a successful Neighborhood Watch program on the City’s website. If citizens are given the proper tools, they will have positive results.

Ms. Ray noted the City may also want to consider Neighborhood Grants in the future. Any grant money awarded can be used for repairs and improvements throughout the neighborhoods, and the neighborhoods can decide how the funds are allocated.

Councilmember Dana asked about the national standard for Block Watch, and if this proposal is modeled after these standards.

Ms. Ray stated their program is in accordance with the National Sheriff’s Association guidelines for Neighborhood Watches.

Councilmember Guzak asked about the *Nextdoor* social media app, and if this would be a good method to connect neighborhoods.

Ms. Ray supports the app, but *Nextdoor* reaches out to many outlying areas. The Snohomish Neighborhood Watch program will have a dedicated Facebook page.

Ms. Lengenfelder discussed the Commission’s proposal to implement a web-based program for walkers/dog walkers, joggers, and cyclists to assist in reporting concerns they’ve encountered in the community related to pedestrian safety, crime, potholes and other concerns.

Councilmember Schilaty noted the ability to report concerns is currently available on the City’s website.

Councilmember Sanders thanked the commission for all their work on the Citywide Neighborhood Watch program, and indicated the Council is in agreement that the Public Safety Commission move forward with the proposed next steps in establishing the citywide Neighborhood Watch program.

b. Town Hall on Homelessness, Opioids and Addiction

Chief Rogers stated the Public Safety Commission (PSC) will host the upcoming Town Hall meeting on Homelessness, Opioids and Addiction. The PSC seeks Council input on how they wish to structure this meeting, so they can move forward with their planning efforts.

Mr. B-J Meyers indicated the PSC’s assumption is the Commission will assist the Council in hosting the Town Hall meeting. The Council’s focus would be to obtain citizen perspectives on what they view to be the problems related to homelessness, opioids and addiction in Snohomish. He sees the community using the Town Hall as a forum to inform the Council as to what the state of these issues are within Snohomish. Based on the information received at the Town Hall, the City can begin to identify and address the

problem. He noted the PSC has been discussing techniques to design the Town Hall to elicit opinions, experiences, and feelings from residents related to this topic.

Councilmember Guzak is in agreement with this approach, but feels there also needs to be some discussion related to what the police view as the homelessness problem, and communications on what services are currently available to the community. She would like to see a two-way dialogue.

Mr. Meyers expects this will be a large event which will require planning and management and best methods to facilitate managing information from a large group. He is considering breaking the large group into smaller groups to facilitate conversations with guided questions.

Councilmember Schilaty asked about the prior meetings on the topic at the Snohomish High School PAC. She felt it was very informative and provided resources. There were also residents who gave testimony. However, it wasn't very well attended. A format where citizens can break into smaller groups and provide the Council with feedback may be beneficial. The City has a problem, but she doesn't know exactly what it looks like in Snohomish. She likes the idea of a workshop format.

Councilmember Dana noted that a low turnout may be an indicator the public is not as concerned as the Council is about this topic.

Councilmember Sanders referenced an article in *Cityvision* Magazine, which outlines the work other cities are doing in this area. It is a nationwide epidemic, and the City should be looking for ways to partner with other cities and the county. If the City fights this alone, it will be difficult.

Councilmember Sanders explained as a community, this topic touches everybody. There needs to be an education piece to this forum. He would like resources available. He asked what the Council would like to accomplish.

Councilmember Dana asked if there is a directory of resources available. The City needs to have resources available to direct needy citizens ready to accept help.

Councilmember Sanders stated the Snohomish County Health Department is a wonderful resource. His understanding is representatives from the Health Department would like to attend.

Councilmember Merrill stated this is about figuring out what the City of Snohomish wants to build a framework around. One of the first things the City needs to do is an "ask" not a "tell". The whole idea of this first Town Hall meeting was to begin building and collecting information.

Councilmember Schilaty knows there is a nationwide problem, but as a first step, she would like to know what it looks like in Snohomish. She also supports an education piece as part of the meeting format.

Councilmember Merrill wants to know how these issues affect the residents on a daily basis and what their experiences are.

Chief Rogers stated Deputy Niebusch will attend and help facilitate the Town Hall.

Mr. Schuller said the City will need to come up with a venue and date. There has also been discussions that the Health Department will make a presentation, and there will be breakout sessions with education and other experts available.

Councilmember Sanders thanked the Public Safety Commission for their hard work.

3. **ADJOURN** at 5:55 p.m.

APPROVED this 3rd day of April 2018

CITY OF SNOHOMISH

ATTEST:

John Kartak, Mayor

Pat Adams, City Clerk