

June 9, 2006

Licton Springs Community Council Report for June

North Precinct Advisory Council Report for June 7, 2006

Tonight we got under way at about 7:10 p.m. Since it was a nice night and there was a ball game, the meeting attendance was a little sparse. Forging straight ahead, President Pete Rogerson introduced our guest for the evening, Sergeant Rich O'Neill. Sergeant O'Neill is the President of the Seattle Police Officers Guild. He is also a 26-year veteran of the Seattle Police Department and has served in numerous positions. (He is one of those people that has "done it all") He was quick to point out that the term "guild" was chosen because of the sometime negative perception held by "unions." The Guild functions much the same way as a union, but they do not go out on "strikes." The Guild (SPOG) is the bargaining unit for Seattle's Police Officers. In that respect, it functions just as any union would . . . but no strikes!

One of the issues pursued by the Guild is to increase and improve communications between the law enforcement community and the public. The Guild is not opposed to the establishment of an Oversight Committee that includes civilians. Mediation is another method of resolving issues that the Guild welcomes when issues arise between officers and civilians. The process brings both parties together in the presence of a neutral third party (usually a retired judge), to bring about some form of understanding and closure to the point of contention (not everyone goes away happy all of the time, but it works most of the time....such is life). Please note, 85% of Seattle's Police Officers have never had a complaint filed against them. (That's a very good average.)

The Police Officers Guild has been asking the City of Seattle (and the Mayor) for the same thing the North Precinct Advisory Committee has been harping about for years (and with the same results). MORE OFFICERS ON THE STREET! Here is the picture as Sergeant O'Neill painted it. In 1971 Seattle had 1,200 police officers; in 2006 Seattle has 1,200 police officers. WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE??? The population of Seattle proper has grown by over forty thousand and the suburbs by many thousand more. We still have the same number of officers trying to deal with a huge increase in their work load. (Remember, in the 70's there were few calls to respond to issues of domestic violence or things like gang related crimes....that has changed!) For a city of this size, we should have 1,400 to 1,500 officers ON THE STREET. Adding support staff that are not 911 responders does not address the problem of understaffing. (That has grown by leaps and bounds.) The City Council and the Mayor have been reminded of these shortfalls repeatedly and the results have always been the same . . . "well, we're studying the situation," or some other lame excuse for doing nothing. (Yes, last year

Seattle added 25 new officers -- that replaced the 25 that retired, net gain of zero!)  
Unfortunately, there are NO MINIMUM staffing requirements. (Go figure!)

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The following is a letter that will be sent to the Mayor and the City Council from NPAC addressing this ongoing problem of understaffing of our Police Department. Community groups (hello, Licton Springs), businesses, individuals and any other interested parties are encouraged to write the Mayor and (or) the City Council and ask them to increase the number of officers (911 responders). More than a few of the City Council members that have attended meetings at the North Precinct have said they were agreeable to the idea of increasing the level of police on the street.....but no results. (Remember the well attended GAIN meeting?) Some have stated there needs to be more study of the situation and a search for alternative policing methods such as "Geo-policing." (That's a fancy term for doing nothing.) So.....sharpen up those pens and start writing! (It seems that "letters" carry more weight than e-mails.) Note: plagiarism of the following letter IS ALLOWED!

NORTH PRECINCT ADVISORY COUNCIL  
Expanding Communication Between the Police and Community

Mayor Greg Nickels  
Seattle City Hall  
Post Office Box 94749  
Seattle, WA 98124-4745

RE: Request for Additional Police Department Funding in the 2007/2008;  
Mayor's Budget Proposal

Dear Mayor Nickels:

The North Precinct Advisory Council is composed of representatives from over 40 community groups and business organizations in north Seattle. The North Precinct Advisory Council is deeply concerned about the lack of sworn personnel in the current roster of the Seattle Police Department. Under its Charter, the City clearly has the duty to provide protection from criminals who prey upon our law abiding citizens. The current Seattle Police Department budget is inadequate, and has resulted in serious understaffing.

While we thank you for the additional 25 sworn officers that you added to last year's budget, we are nevertheless asking that you significantly increase the budget for the Seattle Police Department for the 2007/2008 Biennium. Please consider the following:

Under Article VI, Section I of the Seattle City Charter, public safety is the paramount duty of the City. While our police department is full of dedicated, hard working officers and personnel, we need to give them adequate resources to do their difficult job.

Based on staffing of other police departments in comparable cities, current SPD staffing is inadequate. Specifically, comparing SPD positions to similar U.S. cities with a population between 500,000 and 1 million, Seattle averages 2.2 officers per 1,000 residents. The median average for the other cities is 2.7 officers per thousand. Even with the addition of the 25 officers, the difference between SPD's level and comparable cities is nearly 235 officers.

The numbers indicate that SPD has done an outstanding job in dealing with felony I and II crimes. Our concern is with civility or quality-of-life issues that continue to plague our streets. These include public inebriation, loitering, panhandling, prostitution, trespassing, and general drug activity. These activities all reduce the livability of our city and our neighborhoods; they also seriously and negatively affect the lives of our City residents every day.

Another concern is for the police officers themselves. Specifically, the officers who respond to dangerous emergency situations are putting their lives in even greater peril due to insufficient back up from other officers. We are already asking our officers to face ever more dangerous armed criminals and gangs. It is totally unacceptable for them to do that without adequate back up.

Our nation is in a war against terrorism. Witness the arrests in Toronto this week. Terrorists' activities remain a potent threat to our City. We are asking our police officers to be our first line of defense against terrorist strikes, and to be the first to respond when an attack occurs.

In past years, cuts have been made to non-sworn officers participating in the CSO, crime prevention, victim advocate and similar programs. These police programs have historically had a positive impact, especially in our minority communities. They also allow patrol officers to stay on patrol longer and to get back on patrol more quickly after an incident has occurred where the non-sworn officers can assist. We urge you to reinstate the budget for these programs to pre-existing historical levels.

Finally, Hurricane Katrina has shown that we can not rely on state or federal resources in the event of a disaster, such as an earthquake. Our citizens deserve to have an adequate police and safety response to such a natural disaster.

Clearly we need more police officers. We are asking you to request funding for at least 50 new positions in the 2007/2008 Mayor's Budget Proposal. We are also asking that you also support the strengthening of laws dealing with public inebriation, panhandling and loitering. At the same time, we recognize and support the expansion of collaboration between the SPD and health, human and social services for outreach programs, including working with street populations, focusing on basic human needs before such persons offend or are arrested.

In summary, please live up to your responsibility as Mayor as set forth in the Seattle City Charter. We need more police officers, and therefore request that you add additional police officers to the budget of the Seattle Police Department, as well as funding for non-sworn officer programs.

Thank you for your consideration of these important matters.

Very truly yours,

Pete Rogerson, President

cc: Seattle City Councilmembers

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Department of Finance  
Milestones for the 2007-2008 Budget

As of March 16, 2006:

July 7, 2006 - Departments submit 2007-2008 Budget and 2007-2012 Capital Improvement Program to Department of Finance.

July through September 2006 - Mayor makes 2007-2008 budget decisions.

September 25, 2006 - Mayor delivers proposed budget, Capital Improvement Program, and budget address to City Council.

October & November 2006 - City Council budget deliberations; public hearings.

By November 22, 2006 - Full Council adopts Budget and Capital Improvement Program.

Other dates of interest:

September 19, 2006 - Primary Election Day

November 7, 2006 - General Election Day

For more information, please contact the City of Seattle Department of Finance.

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The Verizon Wireless HopeLine Program

This year the Seattle Police Department is honored to partner with Verizon Wireless' HopeLine Program for this year's Night Out. HopeLine began in 1995 with a commitment to provide voicemail boxes and emergency wireless phones to victims of domestic violence living in shelters. In 2001 it branched out into recycling and re-using donated phones. By the end of 2005 HopeLine had collected more than 2.5 million phones and donated more than \$1 Million to organizations engaged in raising awareness and prevention of domestic violence. HopeLine has grown significantly, and is now a multifaceted program that includes a successful phone recycling and re-use effort, financial support for national domestic violence organizations, community and corporate awareness programs, and partnerships with law enforcement agencies, professional sports teams, educational institutions and corporations nationwide.

The Seattle Police Department has been partnering with HopeLine for the last several years. The Seattle Police Department Domestic Violence Victim Support Team has forged a strong relationship between the Program and the Department. Begun in 1999, the Victim Support Team is a unique partnership between community volunteers and police. The program is designed to address the gap in services during the weekend to domestic violence victims between the time patrol officers respond to a call to the time advocates, detectives and prosecutors make contact with the victim for follow up. They provide a variety of services including, emotional support, domestic violence counseling, safety planning, information about the criminal justice system, help in identifying emergency needs and locating resources, transportation to a safe location, and transportation for pets of domestic violence victims to animal shelters. If you

would like additional information or would like to volunteer for this program, contact Dana Lockhart at 615-0890.

We are asking blocks that would like to participate by donating old phones and accessories, to designate one person who will be responsible for getting all the donations they collect to their local precinct. For those blocks that would like to make this a centerpiece of their Night Out celebration, donation boxes will be available at the precincts two weeks prior to Night Out.

The Seattle Police Department and Verizon Wireless would like to thank you in advance for your participation in this vital program. It is through the generosity of individuals and communities that we are able to assist victims and their families in breaking the cycle of violence they find themselves in.

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### Night Out Visits from the Fire Department

One of the exciting things at many Night Out events each year is the arrival of the local fire fighters and their fire truck. The opportunity for young and old alike to visit with the Fire Fighters and to see the equipment they use adds to the memory of Night Out each year.

Information on all registered Night Out events will be sent to the Fire Department. When not responding to calls, your local Fire Station will try to visit as many Night Out parties as possible. We are asking you not call your neighborhood station to request they stop by, since individual stations could easily be overwhelmed with requests that they cannot meet.

### Registering for Night Out 2006

Enclosed in this newsletter you will find the materials you will need for this year's Night Out Against Crime. Your registration form, master copies of the invitations to your neighborhood event and a master copy of your street closure signs are all included. This will be the only mailing sent out this year. All of the master copies that are enclosed can be downloaded from our web site.

#### Registration Form:

The Registration Form needs to be filled out and returned before July 24, 2006. When you mail in your registrations you will be mailing it directly to the Police Precinct that

serves your neighborhood. Like last year, all Night Out registrations will be handled by the Crime Prevention Coordinator in your Precinct. If you want to register on-line, you can do so at the Seattle Police Department web site at [www.seattle.gov/police](http://www.seattle.gov/police) and follow the directions provided. Upon receipt of this form, your block will officially be registered for Night Out. Registered blocks will be granted their street closure requests. Information on registered blocks is shared with the Fire Department so they are aware of streets that will be closed.

Invitations:

Master copies for two invitations are available in this newsletter. The first one is titled "Let's Get Together" and should be distributed to your neighbors as soon as possible. The second is titled "Event Reminder Notice" and should be distributed the week before Night Out.

Street Closure:

You will need to make at least four copies of the street closure sign which should be posted the week-end before Night Out.

Due to the large number of registrations received by Coordinators, you will not receive verification upon receipt of your registration. Unless it is returned, assume that it has been received and your block is registered.

Seattle Police Department

PO Box 34986 610 5th Avenue Seattle, WA 98124-4986

Visit the "Night Out 2006" website: [www.seattle.gov/police/nightout](http://www.seattle.gov/police/nightout)

August 1<sup>st</sup> - National Night Out Against Crime is an opportunity for individual neighborhoods to renew their commitment to the following: . . . .

Heighten crime and drug prevention awareness;

Generate support for, and participation in, local anti-crime programs;

Strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships; and

Send a message to criminals that neighborhoods are organized and fighting back.

Name of contact person for our group: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Is your group an active Block Watch? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If no, would you like information on forming a Block Watch? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

What type of activities are you planning for your "Night Out" activities?

Time Activities will begin & end: \_\_\_\_\_

Location on block where "Night Out" activities will occur?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are you planning to close your street? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If yes, Street Name & Hundred Block to be closed:

From: \_\_\_\_\_ (cross street)

To: \_\_\_\_\_ (cross street)

Please submit your completed registration to: Crime Prevention Coordinator Diane  
Horswill, North Precinct, 10049 College Way North, Seattle, WA 98133

FAX: 206-684-0742 Ph. 206-684-7711

E-Mail: [diane.horswill@seattle.gov](mailto:diane.horswill@seattle.gov)

Note: There is no meeting of the NPAC in July but you can all come to the Police picnic  
on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. It'll be a really great show.

Ken Thompson

