

March 12, 2007

Licton Springs Community Council Report for March

North Precinct Advisory Council Report for March 7, 2007

The March meeting got under way at about 7:10 pm. The special guests for this meeting were Deputy Chief John Diaz (Operations) and Deputy Chief Clark Kimerer (Administration).

After the usual introductions, Chiefs Diaz and Kimerer gave us a rundown on the Mayor's newly announced plan to hire a significant number of new police officers for the City of Seattle. In addition to the new officers there will also be some revision to the existing times and manner in which those officers are deployed. This new "plan" has been referred to as Geo-Policing in past reports. It is now being referred to as "Neighborhood Policing." Throughout the evening it was pointed out that this major up-tic in the proposed number of officers on our streets has been due in large part to the input and demands coming from the letters, e-mails, and phone calls originating with citizens like YOU! Now is NOT the time to sit back and take a breath....KEEP THE PREASURE ON!

Here is a short recap taken from the SPD website: www.seattle.gov/police.

The Mayor says: "The Neighborhood Policing plan is the most significant change in our Police Department in more than 30 years. The goal is simple: make policing, stronger, faster and smarter in every neighborhood in the City. We'll do this by adding 154 patrol officers and fundamentally changing the way they're deployed. The outcome is clear: officers will be where they're needed, when they're needed."

On March 7, 2007, Mayor Greg Nickels released the Neighborhood Policing Staffing Plan, which outlines the City's long-range plan for staffing patrol services. The initiative adds 154 new patrol officers -- 49 have already been added since mid-2005 and another 105 will be added between 2008 and 2012. The Plan expands the City's patrol force, providing a faster, stronger and smarter approach to protecting Seattle's neighborhoods: faster response time regardless of the time of day, day of the week, or season of the year; stronger police presence when responding; and smarter use of patrol resources to focus on persistent problems that can affect quality of life in the City.

Read the Plan's Executive Summary - Acrobat PDF. Read the entire plan - Acrobat PDF. The Mayor's Plan still must be approved by the City Council. (It is not expected to be a hard sell.) The plan is not without its problems, however.

One of the major hurdles to be cleared is the problem of recruiting. Seattle is only one of a number of cities that are in the market for individuals willing to start careers in law enforcement. Finding, sorting and processing the number of individuals required to meet the final request is not going to be an easy task. Finding the money to support these individuals on a continuing basis is also going to be a challenge.

An article in the Seattle PI covers some of the other issues raised. "The State of the City." We need more Police by reporters Hector Castro & Levi Pulkkinen: seattlepi.nwsource.com/local/306375_policing07. You might want to read this if you haven't already done so.

Everyone in attendance was in agreement that this is an issue that has been on the "back burner" far too long. A correction is long overdue.

In addition to the good news delivered by the evening's guests, Captain Mike Washburn had some interesting news about the North Precinct. There are going to be some "improvements" made to the existing facilities (paint, furniture, work on the building and grounds). Also as part of the Mayor's plan, the bicycle fleet is going to increase in size (very effective in the University District). There was also a "first" in the Precinct last week. There were NO fatalities recorded last week (in the North Precinct).

Next month there is a good chance we are going to have as our guest Council person Peter Steinbrueck. Most of you must know he has been a long time supporter of the quest to get more police on our streets. Now that he has declined to stand for election again, this might be an interesting meeting.

See ya next month.

Ken Thompson