

CUMBERLAND COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
APRIL 11, 2014 – 9:00 AM
CROWN EXPO CENTER
1960 COLISEUM DRIVE – FAYETTEVILLE, NC
SAFE STREETS SYMPOSIUM
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

PRESENT: Commissioner Jeannette Council, Chairman
Commissioner Kenneth Edge, Vice Chairman
Commissioner Charles Evans
Commissioner Jimmy Keefe
Amy Cannon, Interim County Manager
James Lawson, Assistant County Manager
Quentin McPhatter, Assistant County Manager
Rick Moorefield, County Attorney
Sally Shutt, Public Information Director
Candice H. White, Clerk to the Board
Press

ABSENT: Commissioner Marshall Faircloth
Commissioner Billy King
Commissioner Ed Melvin

The Board of Commissioners was invited to participate in the Safe Streets Symposium event. The purpose of the event was for organizations, agencies and individuals invested in the betterment of the community to come together to discuss how to make Fayetteville and Cumberland County a safer community.

The opening announcement was provided by Master of Ceremonies Dave Pauly, Professor at Methodist University, followed by the invocation provided by Pastor Mark Rowden, Clergy of Fayetteville to Stop the Violence. Stephen Stokes, Cumberland County Bar Association President, provided introductions.

WFNC Good Morning Fayetteville Host Jeff “Goldy” Goldberg provided opening remarks about crime in the community. A pre-recorded video by Fayetteville Mayor Nat Robertson and Cumberland County Board of Commissioners’ Chair Jeannette Council explained why the event had been organized and the hope for what could be accomplished.

Master of Ceremonies Professor Pauly provided an overview of the agenda and recognized the following speakers:

Greg Barnes, Fayetteville Observer Reporter, spoke about the universal problem of crime and shared examples of things that had worked elsewhere to help reduce crime through the use of well-defined strategies. Mr. Barnes stated two key principles were involved: dynamic leadership and collective impact.

Doug Peters, Fayetteville Regional Chamber President, spoke regarding the impact of crime on business which limits businesses’ ability to hire, grow, invest in our community and attract new talent. Mr. Peters stated livability of a community is the number one factor in business site locations. Mr. Peters also spoke about proactive measures businesses could take to help law enforcement through lighting, the installation and use of up-to-date video recording equipment, burglar alarms and security systems. Mr. Peters stated the Fayetteville Regional Chamber is working to leverage the collective strength of businesses in the community by building a culture of awareness and business community watches.

Tim Kinlaw, Cumberland County Schools Associate Superintendent of Auxiliary Services, spoke on the topic of crime in schools and stated the majority of youth crimes are committed by school drop outs. Mr. Kinlaw stated after school programs and student activities are effective but these are limited by the lack of parental transportation. Mr. Kinlaw stated it is more cost effective to put programs in place than fill jails and prisons, and the community has got to put money on the table to make it happen.

Timothy G. Gannon, FBI Special Agent, spoke about the FBI's involvement on the local level through the following priorities and programs: terrorism; counter-intelligence; cybercrime; public corruption; civil rights; organized crime; white-collar crime and violent crimes and major theft. Special Agent Gannon stated manpower is the key and he is a big believer in taskforces to address particular crime problems.

LTC Caroline K.M. Horton, Provost Marshall at Fort Bragg, spoke about civilian/military law enforcement lines of effort focused on the following areas: requests for assistance and/or warrants, policy reports and law enforcement testimony; law enforcement notifications to increase comprehensive law enforcement cross jurisdictions; joint local and federal agency training; and All Hazards Response Approach for emergency preparedness. LTC Horton recommended the establishment of Memorandums of Agreement and/or Memorandums of Understanding to expedite processes associated with warrants, reports and testimony.

Fayetteville Police Chief Herald Medlock stated that he took ownership of the crime problem in Fayetteville and stated he is accountable to citizens who are accountable to one another. Chief Medlock stated as of December, 2013, there was a 6.2% decrease in overall crime in Fayetteville and he will deliver double digits in 2014 beginning with a 10.1% reduction in the first quarter. Chief Medlock shared efforts of Fayetteville Police Department and stated the momentum has to be maintained. Chief Medlock stated ten red light cameras will be installed next week and the number will be expanded over the next nine months.

Cumberland County Sheriff Earl "Moose" Butler stated combating crime is about working together, sharing resources and committing personnel because a community cannot arrest its way out of crime. Sheriff Butler stated crime is down in the county and he is not proud of having to build an extension onto the detention center. Sheriff Butler stated even though the courts are full and understaffed, they are running more efficiently than any other section of State government with what they are given. Sheriff Butler stated the Sheriff's Office is nationally accredited, has been reaccredited six times and is working on an additional accreditation for the jail which has already received one accreditation. Sheriff Butler outlined agencies and programs the Sheriff's Office works with and stated the community must take time to provide for young people.

Cumberland County District Attorney Billy West spoke regarding the number of staff in the District Attorney's Office and the number of cases handled, and stated his office has one of the best records in the State of moving cases through the courts. District Attorney West shared some of the strides his office is making through partnerships and programs such as the jail accelerated program, GPS program targeting repeat offenders and Stop the Violence Program. District Attorney West stated the State crime lab can take up to two years to return tests on blood or drug evidence which means a defendant is free to return to the community and recommit the same crimes. District Attorney West stated counties that have their own crime labs can receive the results of drug and alcohol tests in thirty days or less, and asked the Fayetteville City Council and Board of County Commissioners to have an open mind to this.

District Court Judges Toni S. King and Edward A. Pone advised they were standing in for Chief District Court Judge Elizabeth Keever who was unable to attend. Judge King spoke to the handling of violators from the judicial perspective in a holistic approach fostered by programs such as Sobriety Court programs and Juvenile Court. Judge King expressed appreciation to local businesses for hiring ex-offenders. Judge King stated there is a need for collaborative efforts in grant writing to secure funding for specialty programs.

Chief Superior Court Judge James F. Ammons stated judges see the cost of crime and the consequences of crime from the bench. Judge Ammons stated the judicial system works, is fair, impartial, just and although not perfect, runs as well as any human system can. Judge Ammons stated the judicial system cannot fix the crime problem but can provide a means to obtain justice. Judge Ammons stated most youth he sees lack the three "Rs": restraint, respect and responsibility.

Deborah Teasley, Southern Regional Area Health Education Center President, spoke about mental health first aid through community education and programs. Ms. Teasley stated outcomes can be improved if mental health issues are recognized in the early stages, which also makes a difference in reducing crime.

Pastor Anthony Faison of Second Chance Ministries offered a prayer of thanks as lunch was served followed by a video of Community Watch leaders speaking about crime in their communities and some of the efforts they have undertaken.

Dr. Darl Champion, Greater Fayetteville United, provided a back brief of Greater Fayetteville United and how it fits into the overall public safety initiative. Dr. Champion stated the purpose is to provide a platform to bring issues to the forefront and bring people together to solve community problems. Dr. Champion spoke about social capital and stated the best investment Fayetteville can make in its future is in its youth.

Lisa Jayne, Operation Ceasefire of Fayetteville and Cumberland County, stated the Operation is a project of the U. S. Attorney's Office to reduce gangs and gun violence. Ms. Jayne spoke to the importance of individuals involved in the core group and provided information about intervention notification "call ins", fugitive surrender, suppression efforts of the Violent Crimes Taskforce and Safety Day as a community outreach prevention day.

Sharon Stevens, Crime Prevention Specialist with the Fayetteville Police Department, stated crime can occur when there is a law that can be broken, there is an offender willing or determined to break the law, there is a target or victim and there is an environmental element of place. Ms. Stevens spoke regarding continuums or models of crime and stated without proper staffing and support, efforts to combat crime will be futile.

Attendees were organized into breakout sessions designed to answer the question, "What is the one thing that can be done to make the community safer?" Master of Ceremonies Professor Pauly distributed a survey and provided closing remarks.

There being no further matters of business, the meeting/event adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Candice H. White
Clerk to the Board