

NOTES
Mayor Swisstack's Transition Team
Public Safety Team Meeting
Thursday, April 24, 2008
9:00 a.m. – RRRCC Conference Room

Paul Caputo opened the meeting by remembering Greg Trujillo. Seven of the eight team members were present. Five residents attended.

It was noted that mental health training for law enforcement and the fire department is outstanding and an example from last weekend was cited to show how well the departments responded. No one was injured and the person was taken into custody without incident.

Paul Caputo stated that all sworn officers in DPS should be able to answer "basic calls" if the need arises. He indicated that most contact with law enforcement tends to be negative {tickets, crime, fire, etc.}. He stated that special programs should take a "back burner" to providing more officers on the street. Special programs are those which tie up sworn officers {i.e. keeping them off of the streets} and include, Kasey Says, SROs, and such.

The following was discussed:

- The Governing Body needs to decide the priorities of the budget for public safety.
- Define Public Safety. Are adjustments necessary in departments with DPS and the Fire Department? Key Performance Indicators can be used.
- Educate the public about funding and the use of a bond or public safety tax to fund necessary personnel and equipment.
- Within the Fire Department-
 - What core elements are needed?
 - The team should support more stations.
 - Work with other agencies to obtain funding for more fire stations
 - Equipment upgrade is essential.
- Community Policing-
 - How does the department help residents?
 - What are the programs to prevent escalation of criminal activity?
 - Will ancillary programs reduce the need to have more officers on the street?

- Within DPS-
 - Move Animal Control, Code Enforcement and dispatch from DPS. {Chief Boone explained that funding isn't available at the current time to start a new department or departments. This is what would be necessary if those departments are moved from DPS right now.}
 - The joint powers agreement partners aren't contributing to the cost of the communications {dispatch} center.
 - Sacrifices may have to be made to get public support for a tax measure. Some ideas were to change the shift structure, implement a PSA program and have trained civilians as technicians who are supervised by sworn officers.

A network of community programs is needed to supplement public safety. A Citizen's Advisory Board is in place. A task force may be formed to accomplish goals.

Final Report Recommendation: Make sure that DPS and the Fire Department are included in the planning process from start to finish. It is not acceptable that developers are deciding where to put the police and fire stations in new developments. Funding new stations is critical.

Each team member was asked to provide a report based upon their area of expertise. These reports will be combined to provide the basis for the Final Report to the Mayor.

Public Comment:

- regional issues – communications, unions, most union employees live in Rio Rancho; taxes and bonds should be looked into; continued support & review of a strategic plan; have a dedicated attorney in the department
- had no idea there were so many fire and rescue calls in one week

It was decided by the Chair that Public Safety is too big for just four meetings, so a fifth team meeting will be scheduled.

Next meeting:

Thursday, May 1st, at 9:00 a.m. at RRRCC