

**TOWN OF WEDDINGTON  
SPECIAL PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2013 – 10:00 A.M.  
MINUTES**

The Public Safety Advisory Committee of the Town of Weddington, North Carolina, met in a Special Session in the Town Hall Council Chambers, 1924 Weddington Road, Weddington, NC 28104 on January 8, 2013 at 10:00 a.m., with Chairman Michael Smith presiding.

Present: Chairman Michael Smith, Vice-Chairman Michael Carver (Left at 11:35 a.m.), Gene Melchior, Douglas Sabo, Cathy K. Brown, Werner Thomisser and Town Administrator Amy S. McCollum

Absent: Pamela Hadley

Visitors: Tom Grommersch, Karen Grommersch, Anna H. Griffin, Chris Sutton, Judy Johnston and Ken Evans

**Item No. 1. Open the Meeting.** Chairman Michael Smith called the January 8, 2013 Special Public Safety Advisory Committee Meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

**Item No. 2. Oaths of Office for Douglas Sabo and Cathy K. Brown.** Town Administrator Amy McCollum administered the Oaths of Office to Douglas Sabo and Cathy Brown. Mr. Sabo and Ms. Brown introduced themselves to the Committee.

**Item No. 3. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman.** Mr. Werner Thomisser nominated Mr. Michael Smith as Public Safety Chairman. All were in favor, with votes recorded as follows:

AYES: Thomisser, Brown, Sabo, Melchior, Vice-Chairman Carver and Chairman Smith  
NAYS: None

Mr. Thomisser nominated Mr. Michael Carver as Public Safety Vice-Chairman. All were in favor, with votes recorded as follows:

AYES: Thomisser, Brown, Sabo, Melchior, Vice-Chairman Carver and Chairman Smith  
NAYS: None

**Item No. 4. Determination of Quorum.** There was a quorum.

**Item No. 5. Deletions to the Agenda.** There were no deletions to the agenda.

**Item No. 6. Approval of the August 7, 2012 Regular Public Safety Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes.** Mr. Thomisser moved to approve the August 7, 2012 Regular Public Safety Advisory Committee Meeting minutes. All were in favor, with votes recorded as follows:

AYES: Thomisser, Brown, Sabo, Melchior, Vice-Chairman Carver and Chairman Smith  
NAYS: None

**Item No. 7. Old Business.** Town Administrator McCollum advised that the defibrillator has been installed and several staff members and Town Councilmembers have been trained on how to use the equipment. The

Committee thanked Providence VFD for helping the Town select the equipment and provide training on how to use the defibrillator.

**Item No. 8. New Business.**

**A. Update from Weddington Deputies.** Chairman Smith reported that he had a meeting with Deputy Chris Black and Captain Cody Luke. He advised that the Weddington Deputies will begin assisting the State Highway Patrol with accidents in Weddington. He stated, “Any fatality or injury accidents will still be handled by the State Police. The State Troopers are still going to handle accidents and whoever is closest will handle. Citizens were waiting a long time for the troopers to respond. In order to assist the public, the Sheriff has decided to train deputies in how to handle accidents. This will be implemented County wide. They feel like there will be no interruption in service on routine calls.”

Deputy Black - Since we are going to take over property damage wrecks, we can go ahead and do the report and get the car off the road. If we are answering a call in Weddington, we are not going to abort the call to handle the accident.

Chairman Smith updated the Committee on the hours that the Weddington Deputies work. He advised that one deputy works Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Another deputy comes in on Tuesday through Friday and works the hours of 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Friday through Sunday we have one deputy that is working 12 p.m. to 12 a.m. He stated, “We are getting coverage during the busiest times. Their monthly reports are being posted under the Public Safety tab on the Town’s website. The deputies are dedicated to Weddington but there are times that they may have to leave the Town for emergency reasons.”

Chairman Smith advised that he and Deputy Black were going to meet to develop a schedule for the radar trailer so that the trailer is in use at all times. He stated, “Special requests would probably take precedence and override a schedule. A form is on line to fill out to reserve the radar trailer.”

Deputy Black explained information that they receive from the radar trailer.

**B. Presentation by Mike Carver – Updates for School Safety.** Vice-Chairman Mike Carver discussed that the Weddington Church has a preschool and academy. He stated, “It is a safe sanctuary environment and there is training and protocol that protects the children. There are no protocols for active shooters. The church has put together a group of law enforcement members of the church to work with the school on upgrading the security for the children. There is discussion of hiring off duty officers as well.”

Chairman Smith – I spoke with Deputy Black and Captain Luke and they assured me that they work closely with the schools and there are security plans in place.

Chairman Smith spoke regarding a 6 minute video that he has regarding an active shooting. Town Administrator McCollum will add this video under the Public Safety page of the Town website.

**C. Discussion and Consideration of Working with Neighboring Towns’ Public Safety Committees in Regards to Common Issues.** Chairman Smith advised that he has been approached by other towns to begin communicating and sharing information relative to public safety issues. He stated, “Public safety issues do not stop at the town line.”

The committee discussed having joint meetings. Town Administrator McCollum informed the group of the legal requirements for open meetings. Vice-Chairman Carver felt that the minutes from other towns could be reviewed to see if there are any common issues. The Committee advised that they are interested in pursuing the concept. Chairman Smith will first see if the Public Safety Chairmans can meet to try to organize and see how this idea would work. Chairman Smith discussed the email system that he uses to

share information with residents regarding public safety issues and that Wesley Chapel shares information with him to give out as well.

**D. Discussion of Possible Partnership with Wesley Chapel for Upgraded EMS Service.** Chairman Smith stated, “This is not with any particular fire department but with other municipalities on exploring getting additional EMS coverage. You can wait a very long time for an ambulance. We would bring in all the fire companies to discuss. It is about providing the best EMS that we can provide to the citizens. I am not happy with it and I think it could be better.”

Chairman Smith discussed what happens when you call 911.

Mr. Thomisser questioned what the objective was and discussed how much an ambulance costs. He stated, “There is an EMT at the fire department and EMS is run by Union County. I had the opportunity to work with the Town in getting the ambulance that is located at the Wesley Chapel VFD.”

Chairman Smith advised that he is just trying to get the facts on EMS and to explore the possibility of contracting with Union County to make sure that the Town has round the clock coverage much like the Town does with the deputies.

Mr. Sabo asked that the Committee find out the average response time for EMS. Mr. Thomisser advised that he had statistics that the Town was provided by the EMS Director.

Everyone on the Committee was in favor of researching further except Mr. Thomisser. Chairman Smith explained that he would contact the fire departments to bring information to the Committee.

**E. Discussion of Speed Limit Concerns for Weddington Woods.** Mr. Chris Sutton discussed a speeding concern he has in his neighborhood Weddington Woods. He advised that residents in his neighborhood drive carelessly. He stated, “They are actually doing the speed limit which is 35 mph. It is not posted but according to State law if a State road is not a certain length they do not post a speed limit so it defaults to the State minimum of 35 mph. I have addressed my concerns to NCDOT requesting a traffic study to have a posted speed of 25 mph. I do not look at Weddington Woods as being unique. There should be no residential area in Weddington that is not 25 mph or less. It is an unreasonable expectation for a driver to drive 35 mph on a dead end cul-de-sac road.”

Mr. Sutton discussed other neighborhoods that have a posted speed limit of 25 mph. Mr. Sutton does not think that the deputies can help at this time because if people are going 35 mph they are within the law. He stated, “Once the speed limit is changed and is posted differently and the observation that the drivers are going over 25 mph then maybe a deputy can come out and help regulate that.”

Mr. Sutton was invited to a meeting that the Town has scheduled with NCDOT on January 14 to discuss Town transportation issues.

**F. Discussion of Dangerous Curve Concerns – Antioch Church Road.** Mr. Tom Grommersch spoke to the Committee regarding a dangerous curve on Antioch Church Road. He discussed the numerous accidents that have occurred on Antioch Church Road. He felt that 45 mph was extreme for the road conditions and the volume of traffic and people are not following the speed limit. He felt that reducing the speed limit to 35 mph with additional enforcement will help the situation. Ms. Anna Griffin also spoke of the dangerous curve. She spoke about how the road was designed as a rural country road and she discussed the numerous accidents that have occurred in that location.

Mr. Grommersch and Ms. Griffin were also invited to the NCDOT meeting to share their concerns.

**Item No. 9. Public Comment.** Mr. Ken Evans encouraged the Committee to come to the Providence VFD Board Meetings. He stated, “I am not a fan of the EMS service. I think to get the 24/7 coverage that you want and to be able to perform in a timely manner you should look at the idea of having paramedics assigned to the volunteer fire departments in the area.”

Ms. Judy Johnston also invited the Committee to the Providence VFD’s meetings. She stated, “Former Public Safety Committee Member John Houston was there every month to stay informed of the fire department. It was also my understanding that this Committee was to meet on an as needed basis on the direction of the Council. I am curious if that has changed and it is now being self directed.”

Chairman Smith advised that when Mr. Houston resigned he asked that a liaison still go to the Board meetings. He stated, “I fully agree. I would like to create liaison positions in several different areas. I want to have a meeting with the Committee to determine and refocus on how we want to meet. I would like to resume it on a more regular basis. I think we can be very productive if we are headed in the right direction. There have been some growing pains and we are trying to work through them. I want to be available for any of the citizens that have issues.”

**Item No. 10. Member Comments.** Mr. Melchior discussed that he thought the Committee was meeting as needed by Town Council. Chairman Smith advised that the Town Council was not asking for the Committee’s help on anything and mentioned that the main reason for this meeting was to swear in new members, approve minutes and to elect the Chairman and Vice-Chairman. Chairman Smith felt that there were issues that the Committee could deal with for the Town Council and work with the appropriate agencies.

**Item No. 11. Adjournment.** Mr. Melchior moved to adjourn the January 8, 2013 Special Public Safety Advisory Committee Meeting. All were in favor, with votes recorded as follows:

AYES: Thomisser, Brown, Sabo, Melchior and Chairman Smith  
NAYS: None

The meeting adjourned at 11:47 a.m.

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Michael Smith, Chairman

Attest:

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Amy S. McCollum, Town Clerk