

**Washington Shores Vision Task Force  
Meeting Minutes, April 2, 2009**

A meeting of the Washington Shores Vision Task Force was held on Thursday, April 2, 2009 at approximately 2:15 p.m. in Conference Room "R" of City Hall.

**Members Present**

Toni Hardaway  
Mary Maxwell  
Epsie McCleese  
Thelma Montgomery  
Ezzie Thomas  
Michael Arrington  
Hilda Johnson  
Lyvonne Thompson

**Members Absent**

Lee McElroy  
Alexander Smith  
Willie Sherman  
Harry Rucker  
Tess Kassye  
Ralsont Nembhard  
Deborah Wiggins  
Emma Scott

Macene Isom  
Jesse Ivory

**Staff Present**

Jason Burton, Chief Planner, City of Orlando  
Michaëlle Pierrette, Planner, City of Orlando  
Colandra Jones, Planner, City of Orlando  
Connie Baldwin, Orlando Police Department Lieutenant  
Darron Esan, Orlando Police Department Sergeant  
Paul Riordan, Asst Manager of Communication, Orlando Police Department  
Timothy Johnson, Permitting Services Division Manager, City of Orlando  
Cynthia Wilson, Aide to Commissioner Samuel B. Ings  
Commissioner Samuel B. Ings

**Guests**

Richard Reep  
Corey Mcknight

**Introductions**

**OPD discussion**

After the introduction of Public Safety personnel, the Task Force Meeting began with Lt. Baldwin inquiring of specific incidents or needs to be addressed with the members of the Task Force. Ms. Hardaway expressed her concerns involving presence of and the neighborhood relationship with law enforcement officials. Lt. Baldwin states that sometimes individuals, from all professions, have the potential to behave inappropriately. The community's help is needed to identify these individuals as well as any inappropriate incidents so that Internal Affairs of OPD can investigate and deal with alleged lack of professionalism. The Neighborhood Patrol Unit promotes the strengthening of communities through the development of positive relationships with its residents. They are in the neighborhoods interacting and developing a first name basis to form relationships with individuals. This rapport will assist in the crime fighting process, thus creating a pleasant and ultimately safe community.

The Internal Affairs process goes as follows: The complaint goes to the Chief of Police; he/she then reviews it and decides whether or not it goes forward for investigation. The length of the investigation can vary but it has to be completed within 180 days from the point that the Chief reviews it.

Ms. Maxwell raised a concern with the current substations in her community. These smaller offices don't meet the overall needs of Washington Shores; a larger police presence is needed to initiate programs for the youth and their parents. The Lieutenant states that the selecting of locations for substations is subject to budgetary constraints and is in the realm of the Commissioner and this group. The crime prevention division would sponsor such programs and participation would be voluntary, not court ordered. Secondly, these existing small offices are actually "Pace offices", not substations. They are for officers to write reports, interview people, etc. and such not be used as their main office.

Sergeant Esan, in charge of the area's neighborhood patrol unit, states that those pace offices are donated by OHA (Orlando Housing Authority) and specific apartment complexes and those organizations are responsible for the facilities' upkeep. Technology solutions solve a portion of crime problems, but these solutions can't replace the eyes of residents. No one knows who belongs to a neighborhood better than the actual neighbors.

Ms. Thompson clarified that the 15 developments under OHA are required to have meetings with management and police. Sergeant Esan says he requires bi-weekly meeting between his officers and management. His squad is paired off to different sections of their regions, with approximately 10 officers to 15 sites. Sergeant Esan requires his squad to interact with the children of neighborhood via baseball activities and bike rides. During the past 6 months, his unit has become more involved with the neighborhood via bike rides and informal activities. He also encouraged the residents to assist in the crime fighting effort to get drugs and guns off of the neighborhood's streets. He explained that a police and community partnership will help decrease property and violent crimes. Sergeant Esan also recognized that he is aware of a small handful of property owners which are contributing to the crime problem in the neighborhood. This unit is actively working through state law, City ordinances, and Code Enforcement to rid the community of these individuals that refuse to stop aiding in criminal activity.

Task Force Members also expressed concerns with the Washington Shores Shopping Center and the amount of outdoor alcohol consumption. Residents don't even feel comfortable using that shopping center. The Task Force had a consensus that drinking in the plaza or adjacent park should not be overlooked by the police. There should be zero tolerance for any misconduct in that area. Ms. McCleese thinks that the Washington Shores Park should be relocated all together.

Sergeant Esan clarifies that if there is a problem with onsite officers, call into dispatch and ask for a supervisor so that a supervising officer can be sent out to handle the situation instead of another officer. Dispatch is available to serve citizens every day, all day.

Communication supervisors are also available if there is a problem with how calls are handled. The communication center is open for tours if the Task Force should want one. Officer Riordan states that if there is every a situation where there is uncertainty as to whether or not to call 911, call just in case and let dispatch decide on the relevance, both 911 and the non-emergency line (321-235-5300) are being answered by the same people-they are trained to triage the calls. Discretion is not a problem in case a person wants to remain anonymous.

Mr. Thomas stated that there has been a crime displacement from Parramore into Washington Shores and he is glad to have noticed an improvement by the police within the last couple of months. Though Orlando was listed as one of the most dangerous cities in the U.S.; current statistics state that crime in Washington Shores is down 31% compared to the same time last year. Through valuable resources and helpful information from the federal government, OPD has been able to combat crime throughout the City.

Task Force Members also asked to have code enforcement officers go through and cite property owners for not maintaining their property. Sergeant Esan offered to coordinate with them.

Other issues arose regarding security cameras and code enforcement violations. The members of OPD distributed their contact information and also explained, under Florida Statues, City of Orlando emails are public records. If any anonymous tips or sensitive information need to be forwarded, it is best to call them directly or the Crime-line (1800-423-TIPS). Lieutenant Baldwin reiterated that their purpose is to enhance the quality of life through working relationships with the community. Communication between the police force and the neighborhood is key for its success.

Commissioner Ings stated that in regards to the possibility of a Washington Shores Police substation the issue at this point is funding. His office is working on identifying several funding sources. The creation of such a substation would provide the community with a more intricate involvement with OPD, via communications, programs and more. At some point he would also like for the Task Force to meet at the Friendship Missionary Baptist Church to take an onsite tour of the Washington Shores Shopping Center plaza to garner input on the crime and development issues there.

### **NING.com network**

Staff went over the creation of the Ning.com social network site created for the Washington Shores Neighborhood. It will be a means of keeping the Task Force, staff and all of the Washington Shores community connected. Available on the site are means to create forum topics, blogs, events as well as post pictures. This site has the potential to be a great tool to spread the word and keep neighbors informed on a wide variety of issues; and best of all it's free. The website is [www.washingtonshores.ning.com](http://www.washingtonshores.ning.com).

**Meeting adjourned at 4:15pm**