



MINUTES
SPECIAL COMMISSION FOR SAFE COMMUNITIES - REGULAR SESSION
THURSDAY, June 27, 1:00 PM.

The Special Commission for Safe Communities convened in regular session in the Government Center Boardroom at 1:00 PM, on June 27, 2024. Chairperson Denton called the meeting to order.

Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Scott Denton	Chairperson	Present
Cathy Lust	Commissioner	Present
Kaitlyn Selman	Commissioner	Present
Jay Shannon	Commissioner	Present
Timothy Harris	Commissioner	Present
Aron Klein	Commissioner	Present
Ryan Bertrand	Commissioner	Present
Elizabeth German	Commissioner	Absent
Christopher Cashen	Commissioner	Absent

Staff Advisors Present:

Aaron Veerman, Staff Liaison

Commissioner Shannon arrived after rollcall was completed.

Public Comment

Public comment was provided in-person by Surena Fish. No emailed public comment was received.

Approval of Minutes

The following item was presented:

Item 4.A. Consideration and action to approve the Minutes of the May 23, 2024, Regular Special Commission for Safe Communities Meeting.

Commissioner Lust made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Bertrand, to approve the Item as presented.

Chairperson Denton directed the Staff Liaison to call roll:

AYES: Denton; Lust; Bertrand; Selman; Harris; Klein; Shannon

Motion carried.

Chairperson Denton noted it is now a full commission with nine commissioners and welcomed new Commissioner Bertrand, who was present. He provided an opportunity for Commissioner Bertrand to share information about himself.

Regular Agenda

The following item was presented:

Item 5.A. Presentation and discussion by Asst. Chief Veerman on the current status of gun violence in the Bloomington-Normal area.

Since the last meeting, Bloomington and Normal combined had seven recorded incidents of street level gunfire.

- Four of the incidents were in Bloomington:
 - A vehicle in Miller Park was damaged by gunfire.
 - In another incident, one person was injured by gunfire and a person of interest has been identified.

Chairperson Denton inquired if there were any serious injuries or fatalities during these incidents. Asst. Chief Veerman advised the injured person was transported for medical attention; there was no word on extent of their injuries. There were no fatalities during any of the incidents.

Item 5.B. Presentation and discussion by Chairperson Denton on FOID cards and the conditions and process for revocation, recent supreme court decision on domestic violence and gun ownership, and the impact of these on recent gun violence in the Bloomington-Normal area.

Chairperson Denton read a report by Sheriff Dart out of Cook County regarding the revocation of Firearm Owner Identification (FOID) cards. Statewide, approximately 112,000 people have had their FOID cards revoked. Of those 112,000, approximately 84,000 people (75%) have not turned in any guns after having their FOID cards revoked. The number of revoked FOID cards has been trending upward.

Chairperson Denton mentioned the recent Supreme Court ruling that upheld a federal law barring individuals with restraining orders against them to own guns. He said Commissioner German had been to a meeting with county board commissioners from other areas asked her about this commission and the recent death (and active investigation) of a local teacher.

Asst. Chief Veerman mentioned the Supreme Court ruling to overturn the ban on bump stocks. Bump stocks allow a handgun or rifle to turn into a rapid-fire weapon. Chairperson Denton inquired if bump stocks are still illegal within Illinois; Asst. Chief Veerman noted that the federal ruling would overturn that state ruling.

Chairperson Denton mentioned that the Department of Justice came out with some financial initiatives that the City of Bloomington could look into. The United States Surgeon General declared gun violence a public health emergency and published some guidelines states can use, including red flag laws and enforcing the gun laws that already exist. He reminded the commission members that the commission avoids politics and does support the Second Amendment.

Item 5.C. Presentation and discussion by the commission on the progress the commission has made since its inception.

Chairperson Denton reminded the commission that the charter states the commission is expected to give a progress report to the city council at around six months. Asst. Chief Veerman has had discussions with the City and Chairperson Denton's understanding is a

member of the commission will give a short, verbal presentation to the city council. Discussion was opened up by Chairperson Denton for commission members to add to the list of items to be included in the report. The following items were mentioned:

- Organizations the commission has heard from and want to lend support, including Project Oz and YWCA.
- Bloomington Police Department (BPD) has been ahead of the curve in trying to prevent gun violence.
- PATH's work locally, even after the state funding was reallocated.
- Status of the R3 Grant. R3 zones were reset and not as many schools are covered as had been.
- Residential and vehicle burglaries, as a means for illegally obtaining firearms.
- Secure firearm storage and education.
- The commission has been trying to get a feel for the landscape regarding gun violence, including suicides, and how this area compares to others.
- Moms Demand Action as community outreach.
- Use of technology, including license plate readers (ALPR).
- Not at a point for making recommendations to city council yet. That will be toward the end of the year.

Item 5.D. Consideration and Action of Approving the topics to be presented during the status report for the Special Commission for Safe Communities to be presented at a future city council meeting.

The following items from the list in Item 5.C. will be included in the six-month progress report given to the city council:

- Organizations the commission has hosted for meetings
- Project Oz and YWCA, their activities and continued need for grant funding
- PATH and its situation
- Procurement of guns through residential and vehicular burglaries
- Safe storage of guns
- Community outreach programs
- Supreme Court decisions as discussed in Item 5.B
- Successful use of technology, such as ALPR and public safety cameras

Commissioner Shannon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Bertrand, to approve the list of information to present to city council.

Chairperson Denton directed the Staff Liaison to call roll:

AYES: Denton; Lust; Bertrand; Selman; Harris; Klein; Shannon

Motion carried.

Chairperson Denton will circulate the list of topics to Asst. Chief Veerman and he will circulate it to the commission members.

Chairperson Denton and Commissioner German will present the report to the city council. A date for the report was tentatively scheduled for the next Committee of the Whole meeting but was not confirmed.

New Business

Commissioner Lust mentioned the commission has not yet gathered information on domestic violence and emergency restraining orders that involve persons with firearms. She also asked what happens if BPD receives a call regarding someone being a threat to themselves or others - would BPD confiscate any firearms the person had. Asst. Chief Veerman replied that action taken would depend on an individual situation.

Commissioner Bertrand mentioned some people with active restraining orders may still acquire additional weapons.

Chairperson Denton will reach out to State's Attorney Ericka Reynolds to see if an Assistant State's Attorney David Rossi would be available to speak at a future commission meeting regarding domestic violence and restraining orders in a general sense and as they relate to firearms.

Commissioner Member Comments

Chairperson Denton mentioned a domestic violence in Bloomington from a previous year that resulted in the deaths of multiple family members. He also stated gun violence is trending in the wrong direction in this country based on reports and news he has read.

Commissioner Bertrand mentioned the leading cause of death in the United States involves firearms.

Commissioner Selman inquired if any youth had agreed to come speak at a future meeting. Commissioner Harris indicated he has one youth willing to speak to the commission.

Commissioner Shannon asked if the release was available to email out to people willing to come speak at the meeting.

Chairperson Denton stated 30 minutes will be dedicated at a future meeting for any youth(s) to speak.

Asst. Chief Veerman will attach a release to the next agenda.

Adjournment

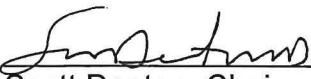
Commissioner Shannon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Bertrand, to adjourn.

Motion carried (viva voce).

The Meeting Adjourned at 1:41 PM.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

ATTEST



Scott Denton, Chairperson



Aaron Veerman, Staff Liaison