

City of Derby
Board of Aldermen / Alderwomen

First Ward

Barbara L. DeGennaro
Thomas J. Donofrio
Stephen M. Iacuone

Second Ward

Joseph L. DiMartino
Arthur T. Gerckens
Ronald M. Sill

Third Ward

Carmen T. DiCenso, President
Peter M. Olenoski, Jr.
Tony Staffieri

Board of Aldermen/Alderwomen Special Meeting Minutes
Aldermanic Chambers, City Hall
1 Elizabeth Street, Derby, CT
July 12, 2017

1. Call to Order.

Mayor Dugatto called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Dugatto Led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call.

The following Board members were present: Barbara DeGennaro, Thomas Donofrio, Stephen Iacuone, Arthur Gerckens, Carmen DiCenso, and Tony Staffieri. Ronald Sill, Joseph DiMartino, Peter Olenoski were absent.

4. Public Portion.

Mayor Dugatto read the following statement on behalf of Jim Gildea:

July 12, 2017

Members of the Board of Aldermen,

I am writing this letter in advance of the security and vandalism discussion that will be occurring this evening. I have a Derby Board of Education meeting and I am on unable to attend.

I would like to focus my thoughts and comments on 2 specific areas. The Derby Train Station and Osborndale State Park.

They are both properties within the boundaries of Derby that fall under State control. The train station CDOT and Osborndale (DEEP). That said on two different occasions I have reached out to the police on vandalism or potential vandalism that was occurring on those sites.

In each case, I was told by the police that they were state owned properties and I certainly felt as if they did not want to address the reasons for which I was calling. Being on the Connecticut Commuter Rail Council, I say with complete confidence that the State entities that own those properties would have no issues with the Derby Police Department increasing patrolling in those areas, addressing phone calls that may come in from residents, and taking a more proactive approach in those areas.

In addition, it is fairly common knowledge that the train station is a site for loitering and drinking. The fact that we have vagrancy, loitering and vandalism going on at Osborndale or at the Train Station which is right next-door to the Police Department is both surprising and disappointing.

As someone who has lived in this City all of their life, I take great pride in being a resident here. I am protective of the City and all of its properties. I believe that we need to treat all those properties within the boundaries of the city of Derby as ours. That means, in my opinion that we should be increasing patrolling in all areas within the City and equally as important, treat all the properties as if they are our own, even those that may be State owned.

Jim Gildea

Art Gerckens: 374 Hawthorne Avenue – stated that he has an issue with Item 6 Executive Session. He feels that it's a weak clause and catch all. The public came out and should be able to part of the discussion.

Mayor Dugatto commended the police department who watches over the city and the public works department who fixes everything in the city and she called out to the city to be vigilant and if they see something they should call the police or make a report on the city's website.

Barbara DeGennaro – stated that executive session is on the agenda so if they do need to discuss if there will be undercover work or installation of cameras in areas they do not want the public to know about. This is similar to the security measures for the tax office.

Carmen DiCenso thanked everyone for coming as the meeting as this is a citywide problem. Three or four concrete benches on the green were damaged and flowers were ripped out. The fountain at the walkway was damaged due to grease being added. This is over \$8,000 in damages. He is concerned with the monument repair and that it will be vandalized once the fencing is removed.

Jamie Cohen – stated that he is in charge of the renovation of the monument on the Green. He stated that public works especially Mr. DeFala have been very helpful. He would like to see the entire area illuminated so that the police patrolling the area or anyone driving or walking by could see if anything was happening. However, they do not have funds available for that at this time.

Tony Staffieri – stated that the damage is escalating on both sides of town and something needs to done. We have to take charge and take the city back.

5. Vandalism and Security Issues on Derby Green and other locations citywide. Discussion and Possible Action.

Mr. DiCenso asked the Chief if a walking beat would be available. Chief Narowski stated that it would not be available.

Chief Narowski addressed the Board and stated that his department researched the reporting over the past three and a half years and that there were only 5 vandalism incidents on the Derby Green. He stated that they handle approximately 15,000 calls for service per year. They received 84 vandalism incidents citywide which includes police department cell block vandalism and domestic issues such as tire slashing. There has only been a .15% increase in vandalism since 2014. There is no pattern to the vandalism. Lighting is one of the key things they are looking at, as well as environmental design. He said that this is the first he's heard about the problem and he was taken back that this is even an issue. There may be an problem with the vandalism not being reported to the police department. The police prepared a zero % increase and have numerous officers out and they are already short staffed. He has presented CCTV options to various boards three times as this issue is cyclical and comes up every 3 to 5 years. Studies show CCTV does not reduce vandalism. He discussed a landmark case in Baltimore where a homicide occurred and the city was successfully sued for providing a false sense of security. There are also minimum standards in order to prosecute. An entry level system is \$25,000 and right now he has a \$40,000 problem where they could lose their 911 system and he feels that should be funded first.

Chief Narowski handed out the following document.

Do cameras stop crime?

What has been learned in Chicago

February 20, 2011|By Steve Chapman

If you want to be on TV, don't go to Los Angeles or New York. Come to Chicago, where your wish is certain to be fulfilled. In fact, you couldn't avoid it if you wanted to, thanks to the nation's most extensive network of police surveillance cameras. Anytime you walk out your door, you may find an audience.

This is one of Mayor Richard M. Daley's proudest achievements, but the estimated 10,000 devices now in operation are not enough for him. He once expressed his intention to keep adding cameras until there is one "on every street corner in Chicago."

His obvious error is to assume that if some cameras are good, more are better. Daley's policy also rests on a plausible but unproven assumption: that cameras reduce crime by deterring criminals and helping nab those who aren't deterred.

If you are going to spend millions buying, installing and monitoring this technology, you had better be able to show it yields some positive results in practice. Given the experience in this country and abroad, skepticism is in order.

The government of Britain, where cameras are ubiquitous, concluded they have had "no overall effect" on crime. Researchers at the University of Southern California looked at two neighborhoods in Los Angeles and found no visible benefit from this sort of surveillance.

Even in the studies that show cameras help, the question arises: compared to what? Any funds spent on this gadgetry cannot be spent on beat cops, probation officers, laboratory gear or jail cells. The challenge for enthusiasts is to show the technology outperforms other options.

On those issues, the jury is still out. But the latest discoveries, from Chicago, are bound to encourage the spread of surveillance video in law enforcement.

Nancy La Vigne, director of the Justice Policy Center at the Urban Institute in Washington, has directed a study of the impact of cameras in Chicago, Baltimore and Washington, D.C. Her preliminary findings, due to be finalized and published this year, are that they can indeed curb crime — and at a bargain price.

Her team of researchers looked at two high-crime neighborhoods on Chicago's West Side, Humboldt Park and West Garfield Park. In Humboldt Park, she told me, they found "a significant decrease in total monthly crime numbers," including property crime and violent crime. They found no evidence that the cameras merely pushed crime into other areas. In

West Garfield Park, on the other hand, they saw "no impact," possibly because there were fewer cameras.

On the cost-effectiveness test, though, La Vigne says the cameras were a solid success. For every \$1 of costs, they yielded \$4 of societal benefits (reduced crime, savings in courts and corrections, less suffering for victims), despite their failure in West Garfield Park.

In Baltimore, where cameras are concentrated in downtown and monitored actively 24 hours a day (as distinct from the more passive approach in Chicago), La Vigne found the impact on violent crime was even greater — and the benefits exceeded the costs by 50 percent. (In Washington, which deployed only a small number of cameras, they found no effect.)

All this may confirm those who see this technology as an unmixed good. But La Vigne herself worries that too much will be made of these results.

"I'm sure there are diminishing marginal returns," she says, meaning that each extra camera achieves less than the one before. "I'd expect very little impact on low-crime areas." If we have cameras on every corner, many of them will be the functional equivalent of potted plants.

Even if cameras have benefits, they narrow the scope of personal privacy, which should not be sacrificed without a compelling reason. In a crime-infested neighborhood, the loss may clearly be modest compared to the dangers of violent perforation. In more tranquil locales, the burden of proof should be on the supporters.

When cameras are used, common-sense restrictions are in order. The American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois recommends that police show probable cause that someone has committed a crime before they use facial-recognition software or conduct nonstop video tracking of an individual. Another proposal is to delete images after seven days unless there is reason to think they document a crime.

The ultimate question is not whether cameras work. It stands to reason that they can work when used wisely — just as a hammer works for certain tasks. But not everything is a nail.

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Chief Narowski said that they will be doing more community outreach and part of his strategic plan is to allocate patrolmen downtime.

Ms. DeGennaro said there are a lot of kids hanging around the Green and community center and that seeing a police car go by and a cop walking around is a deterrent to the kids who are hanging around. Chief Narowski said they only have two officers on the road. He feels the department should be more civilianized so more police officers are available doing police work.

Mr. Staffieri asked if there were cameras in the cars. Chief Narowski said the police department has a body worn camera program not cameras in the vehicles.

Mr. Gerckens said he was led to believe this was an emergency situation and based on the numbers, he's here for two reported incidents.

Mr. Staffieri said they are looking for a solution. Chief Narowski said they have funding in place for community outreach. They do not have funds for overtime. He discussed all the costs associated with CCTV. The state hasn't even set their budget so they do not know what funding is available.

Ms. DeGennaro stated that the issues that came to subcommittee were brought up by Commissioner DeFala and that these damages may not have been reported to the police.

Mayor Dugatto said the lights on the Green are slated to be replaced with LED lighting. She will also have Leslie look into grant funding. The kids need a place to call their own. They have no place to go.

Mayor Dugatto asked Dr. Conway was they were able to identify the individuals on their cameras and he said they were able to.

Mr. Gerckens doesn't understand why Derby is on the news, articles are being written and citizens are calling for curfews...all for two incidents. He feels this is a disservice to the city.

Mr. DiCenso said \$8,000 is \$8,000 no matter how many incidents. Mr. Staffieri also feels that because this is a community issue and all the citizens should be aware of the problem.

Mr. O'Connell said their biggest issue is the groups of kids gathering around the community center intimidated families with young kids trying to enter the building. Lighting in the alleyway between the community center and the store would also be helpful.

Dr. Conway said it would be \$16,000 to add a camera to their existing infrastructure. Their cameras are used more as a tool for after an incident has occurred, not as a deterrent.

Mr. Iacuone said the easiest place to start is through lighting. Chief Narowski said that the UI Company has a "Light the Night" program.

Mr. Staffieri asked the Mayor to move forward with replacing the lighting on the green sooner than later.

Mr. Gerckens said that helps with one problem, but he's concerned with the kids harassing the patrons of the community center.

The Mayor discussed the basketball court on Caroline Street. Mr. Gerckens said he thought that was important, but the same sub-committee who brought it to the full board, tabled the issue.

~~6. Executive Session, if necessary-Vandalism and Security Issues on Derby Green and other locations citywide-security strategy~~

7. Adjournment.

Mr. Staffieri motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Gerckens and the motion carried at 8:04 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Terri Kuskowski

These minutes are subject to the Board's approval at their next scheduled meeting.