

2015
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT
COBB NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY COMMISSION
February 1, 2016

The Cobb County Neighborhood Safety Commission was created Sept 28, 1999 by resolution of the Cobb County Board of Commissioners. Its purpose is to help facilitate communication between Public Safety and the Cobb community.

During 2015, the NSC focused its efforts in four areas: Elder Abuse, Community Awareness, Active Shooter and raising the level of knowledge of all NSC members regarding public safety in Cobb. This report details the activities associated with those efforts along with other general activities.

Elder Abuse Task Force

The NSC created the Cobb Elder Abuse Task Force (CEATF) in 2009 with the goal of bringing together the various law enforcement and non-law enforcement agencies that help detect and deter elder abuse with those who provide services to the elderly. By 2015, over 50 different organizations have joined the task force representing entities from the local (cities and counties), state and national level. This year's efforts included:

- Conducted community presentations to a variety of religious, social and community groups raising awareness about what elder abuse is, how to detect it and who to contact if it is suspected. (CEATF has an anonymous tip line hosted by Marietta PD.) Most presentations were panel discussions with the Cobb Police (or a municipality PD), Sheriff's Office and either the District Attorney or Solicitor General's office participating. NSC members planned the events and served as facilitators.
- Assisted in planning and hosting table top exercise to train multiple agencies on unlicensed care facilities and how to establish protocol to handle detection and processing of victims.
- Expanded partnership with GBI to help craft legislation to close loopholes and to create an elder abuse registry
- Liaised with banks to discuss bank protocols used to detect financial abuse and issues with guardian/POA.
- Participated in the Aging by Design workshop raising awareness about elder abuse.
- Received award by Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) for its public/private initiative to help with the overall quality of life in the metro-Atlanta area.
- Helped develop CEATF website

CEATF has transitioned to the District Attorney's office but NSC members continued to provide support in planning task force activities and facilitating presentations. Vic Reynolds continues to be the chair of the CEATF, Barry Morgan is Vice Chair and Jeff Wood, secretary. NSC members continue as CEATF committee chairs.

2016 plans:

- Continue to assist in community presentations
- Help facilitate training sessions and discussions between financial institutions
- Continue work on elder abuse registry and liaise with other states to ensure compatibility to share data
- Assist in rollout to other communities
- Help advocate for elder abuse registry

Community Awareness

The Community Awareness committee developed a selection of panel discussions to raise community awareness on a variety of critical issues:

- Senior Safety
- Government
- Be an Educated Driver
- Protecting Our Children
- Domestic Abuse/Violence
- Mental Health

Each presentation was a panel discussion comprised of subject matter experts from the Cobb PD, Sheriff's Office, District Attorney's office, GBI, Senior Services, subject matter experts, etc. The panel discussions were shown on TV 23 and were made available for viewing on the internet. Audience members were invited to submit questions. Schools were informed about the timely, relevant topics.

2016 Plans:

Continue panel discussions on a variety of topics including:

- Code Enforcement
- Accountability Courts
- Animal Control
- Drug Awareness
- Mental Health.

Active Shooter

The NSC has been a strong proponent on raising awareness in the community about what to do when there is an active shooter. We have encouraged viewing of the video *Run, Hide, Fight* which is posted on the NSC website and available on YouTube. We have also encouraged viewing through PENS. The NSC organized a meeting among religious leaders in east Cobb to raise awareness of the issue and train the leaders. It continues to work with religious leaders in west and south Cobb to offer the same training there. Business members were encouraged to

- Establish a relationship with their local law enforcement
- Encourage viewing of *Run, Hide, Fight*
- Develop an emergency plan in the event of an active shooter.

2016 Plans:

- Conduct Active shooter training sessions in each precinct with a representative from Cobb PD along with the Precinct Commander present.

General Information:

The NSC had a moderate turnover of members creating a healthy mix of experienced members and new members with fresh ideas. With the arrival of several new members it was decided that 2015 would be a mixture of meetings at 100 Cherokee St and visits to precincts, 911, police training and the Sheriff's Office so that all members had a better understanding of public safety in Cobb.

The NSC members receive a monthly update from the Director of Public Safety and were encouraged to also meet periodically with the precinct commander in their respective areas. NSC members were also encouraged to attend their precinct's quarterly PENS meetings. They helped with a Public Safety Safety Blitz outreach event.

NSC also became aware of a new issue: Asian restaurant and other businesses being targeted for robberies. Members worked to raise awareness in the Asian community both within Cobb and throughout the metro area.

This year, the role of NSC was raised regarding whether it should assume the role of citizen oversight committee. Members discussed the concept among themselves and with their respective commissioners and unanimously confirmed that the role of the NSC is to liaise between Public Safety and the community, not serve in an oversight capacity. If that role is to change the directive would need to come from the Board of Commissioners. NSC members did participate in the Public Safety meeting to discuss Public Safety policies and procedures and supported the recommendation that a review from an outside, independent organization would be beneficial.

Final Notes

The NSC would like to thank Director Sam Heaton, Captain Destiny Davidson, Captain Dennis Thayer, Suzanne Pete and the other Public Safety officials who helped for their continued support throughout the year keeping us informed about Public Safety. They have all been very supportive of our efforts and we look forward to working with Director Heaton and the Dept of Public Safety in 2016. We also look forward to working with our Cobb Commissioners as their appointees to this Commission.

We will continue to strongly support the CEATF and hope to help other communities establish their own task forces to address this growing issue. We also look forward to providing more Community Awareness panel discussions on critical topics to the community. And we will continue to promote awareness for the need for each citizen and business to develop an emergency plan to deal with an Active Shooter as this issue, unfortunately, becomes more common.

Finally, as Chairman, I want to commend each NSC member for giving their time in attending meetings and in helping with one or more of the committees. Each member and each committee helped improve the lives of Cobb County citizens.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Hallacy
Chairman - Neighborhood Safety Commission