

Black Panthers Host Town Hall Meeting to Discuss Third Ward Murders

Written by Eryn Roberts

Wednesday, 10 August 2011 14:45



In the wake of the Third Ward murders, seven murders in 45 days, The Black Panther Party hosted a town hall meeting on Monday night at Emancipation Park, the site of one of the recent murders, to discuss a progressive action plan on how to move forward.

Community activists and leaders, including Quannel X and Councilwoman Jolanda Jones headed a panel alongside officers of the Houston Police Department.

“This kind of crime can only flourish in a community that has demonstrated to the world that it lacks a love for itself and one another,” said X. He asked for the community to organize and mobilize.

The Houston Police Department is asking for public assistance in recent leads to the homicide cases.

HPD officer George Munich, assistant chief of criminal investigations, updated the statuses of the homicides in police District 10, which encompasses Third Ward. “There are three female victims,” Munich said. “At this time we don’t have any proof that the killings are related or the work of any serial killer. What we do know is the women were out alone late at night between the hours of 1 a.m. and 4:30 a.m. Two of the women had gun shot wounds to the head one had head trauma. The ages of the women were 43, 29 and 55. We believe two of the victims were killed at different locations than their bodies were found in the Third Ward.” All three cases are still open with no witnesses and no suspects.

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There have been four male victims. One victim threatened others with a gun in a house and was shot by someone else in the house who also had a gun. That case is still open. "One victim was stabbed after an altercation with another male at 4:30 a.m.," Munich said. In another case the "suspect shot two males, one died. The known suspect was arrested and charged." In the final case an unknown suspect shot a victim who was walking down the street. The case is still open.

The police assured that investigators are working diligently on the cases. They pleaded for the help of the community to help solve these cases. Call 713-308-3600 or report crime anonymously to Crimestoppers at 713-222-TIPS.

"It's time for us to challenge the no-snitch policy," X said, and called the policy "madness."

"It's easy to keep your mouth shut when you let somebody else get killed, gunned down, but if they ever kill someone you know, let's see how the no snitch policy works then." "It's time for us all to challenge the no-snitch policy."

Citizens openly expressed their distrust of the police after years of police brutality and intimidation by the men in blue. The people expressed frustration about the lack of follow through from police when they do give them information.

The HPD officers encouraged attendance at the Positive Interaction Program (PIP) meetings from citizens. PIP started under former Police Chief Brown. Every station has a PIP. PIP meetings for the South Central Station take place the third Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. at the station. You can meet with the captain of the patrol station and staff to talk about problems in your neighborhood.

PIP is a mechanism for the police to relate to the community and vice versa. The free flow of information is crucial and can help foster a better understanding of each other's needs and expectations.

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HPD said “We have to start somewhere with trust, why not let it be here?”

The meeting also encouraged citizens to join community patrol groups.

Captain Green from the Department of Inner City Emergency Response (IN-CERT) is asking for different organizations and churches to encourage people to patrol the community. They are trying to recruit people to undergo the Community Emergency Response Training (C.E.R.T.).

They have divided Third Ward into quadrants and need squads to patrol each. For more information on training contact IN-CERT at 832-496-1039 or visit their Web site at www.in-cert.com.

“You protect what you love,” Green said. We all need to take responsibility for our community and work together with the police department to reclaim our community. {jcomments on}