

# **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE Minutes**

## **Thursday, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023**



*The meeting was called to order by Councilor Elm at 6:05 PM on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023 in Government Center Room 204.*

### **1. ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Tylor Elm, Mark Johnson, Mike Herrick

ABSENT: Nick Ledin

CITY STAFF PRESENT: Chief Vollbrecht, Lieutenant Trone, Nikki Holmberg

VIRTUAL: Mayor Paine (left at 6:11 PM), Chief Alexander, Councilor Van Sickle, Dawn Landgreen (resident), Mary O'Neill (resident)

OTHERS PRESENT: Shelley Nelson (Telegram), John Ramos

### **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

#### **2.1. Public Safety Committee (Meeting held June 15th, 2023)**

**MOTION by Johnson, second by Herrick, and carried to approve the minutes from June 15, 2023.**

### **3. COMMITTEE ELECTIONS**

#### **3.1. Election of Chair**

**MOTION by Tylor Elm, second by Mike Herrick, and carried to elect Nick Ledin as Chair of the Public Safety Committee.**

#### **3.2. Election of Vice – Chair**

**MOTION by Mark Johnson, second by Mike Herrick, and carried to elect Tylor Elm as Vice-Chair of the Public Safety Committee.**

### **4. RECURRING BUSINESS**

#### **4.1. Police and Fire Department Updates**

Chief Vollbrecht states the Fire Department will be fully staffed next month. Their newest hires will be doing training with Lake Superior College once they start. Chief Vollbrecht briefly discusses some recent training the department has been doing.

Chief Alexander states there has been one conditional offer of employment to a candidate who currently works in probation and parole; his swearing in ceremony will be next week. The Police Department is still down 3 Police Officers. There is a current hiring process open. Chief Alexander is currently working on the 2024 budget. The department has increased bike patrol over various areas of the city.

### **5. OLD BUSINESS**

#### **5.1. Homeless encampment update**

The police department has not been made aware of any vandalism to the previous encampment area. There were new encampments forming around railroad property; the railroad has been contacted. CRS Jen Stank has been in contact with residents who lived at the encampment and a couple of them

have accepted more permanent housing.

**MOTION by Mike Herrick, second by Mark Johnson, to receive and file. No action.**

### **5.2. Engine Braking on HWY 2/53**

Chief Alexander states the police department has been in contact with state patrol regarding engine braking in the city. The department is working on a brochure to include information about engine braking and this will be distributed once complete. State Patrol is conducting a traffic enforcement day later this month and the Superior Police Department will be participating. Lieutenant Trone has been in contact with the commercial vehicle inspector as well. Councilor Van Sickle will reach out to Public Works to clean up signage in the area. Resident Dawn Landgreen expressed her concerns about semi-trucks and others speeding in the area. Dawn Landgreen also states the lights for the crosswalk on 39<sup>th</sup> Ave E are not working; Lieutenant Trone will reach out to Public Works.

**MOTION by Mike Herrick, second by Mark Johnson, to hold Engine Braking on HWY2/53 in committee.**

*\*Resident Dawn Landgreen exits the meeting*

## **6. NEW BUSINESS**

### **6.1. Permanent Installation of a speed sign on East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in Itasca**

Councilor Van Sickle states it would be beneficial to install a permanent speed sign on East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in Itasca to remind drivers to slow down. Other communities such as Iron River and Ashland have similar signs. There was discussion amongst the councilors present that a permanent speed sign may be helpful in various neighborhoods of Superior. Lieutenant Trone states there are different levels of speed signs with various price ranges.

**MOTION by Mark Johnson, second by Mike Herrick, to approve the installation of a permanent speed sign and explore different sign options for locations throughout the city which are to be determined, refer to Public Works.**

### **6.2. Fireworks Enforcement**

Chief Alexander states the Police Department estimates there were 65 verbal warnings and 7 citations involving fireworks around the 4<sup>th</sup> of July this year. An extremely large quantity of fireworks was seized by the Police Department from one seller; the value is estimated to be over \$100,000. Councilor Elm discusses the option of putting a fireworks tab on the city website for citizens to report issues and to provide information about lighting off fireworks in the city. Councilor Van Sickle would like the committee to look at policies around fireworks during the busy season. Resident Mary O'Neill expresses her concern about the increase in fireworks this year as it lasts from May to October throughout the day and night. Lieutenant Trone states there is no specific ordinance regarding days and times fireworks can be used but only certain fireworks are allowed in the city. Lieutenant Trone states he will work with Captain Winterscheidt to come up with ways to educate the community on fireworks use.

**MOTION by Mark Johnson, second by Mike Herrick, and approved to hold Fireworks Enforcement in committee.**

*\*Resident Mary O'Neill exits the meeting*

**6.3. Purchase request for turnout gear by Chief Vollbrecht**

Chief Vollbrecht requests the approval to purchase 10 sets of turnout gear for a total of \$40,500 from Fire Safety USA. A number of the current sets are nearing their NFPA recommended expiration date of 10 years of service.

**MOTION by Mark Johnson, second by Mike Herrick, and carried to approve the purchase request by Chief Vollbrecht for turnout gear. Will send to Common Council.**

**6.4. Purchase request for Ford Lightening by Chief Vollbrecht**

Chief Vollbrecht requests the approval to purchase a Ford Lightening EV for a total cost of \$106,174. The Fire Department was awarded a grant in 2022 to purchase a hybrid F-150, but there is still no build date on the truck so it will likely be canceled. The grant from 2022 must be used by the end of 2023.

**MOTION by Mike Herrick, second by Mark Johnson, and carried the approve the purchase request for Ford Lightening by Chief Vollbrecht. Will send to Common Council.**

**7. ADJOURNMENT at 7:17 by Councilor Elm.**

*Submitted by Nikki Holmberg*