

## **Proceedings of the Public Safety Committee March 14, 2012**

Members Present: Councilor Mick MacKenzie  
Councilor Warren Bender  
Councilor Dan Olson  
Councilor Denise McDonald

Others Present: Police Chief Chuck LaGesse  
Fire Chief Jim Rigstad

Councilor MacKenzie called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. and noted that roll call had been taken by sign up.

Approval of Public Safety meeting minutes of January 11, 2012

*Motion by Councilor Olson seconded by Councilor and carried to approve Public Safety meeting minutes from January 11, 2012.*

### **Matters to be considered**

New Business

1. Referred from February 7, 2012 City Council meeting: Review of Police take-home squad program.

Chief LaGesse talked about this program which began about two years ago. He also explained some of the pros and cons of a take-home squad program. Chief LaGesse stated that because of budget constraints, the program is minimally used now. We were not able to purchase any new marked squads last year. The squads that were in the program have been put back into the daily fleet. Currently three vehicles are now being used as take home squads, and those are older squads that were due to leave the fleet to be sold at auction, but officers opted to keep them as take-home squads. There are some benefits to this program.

*Motion by Councilor Olson, seconded by Councilor Bender and carried to receive and file the review of police take-home squad program.*

Old Business

None.

## **Standing Agenda Items**

### 1. Fire Department Update

Chief Rigstad told the committee about several residential fires in February. The department responded to 216 medical calls in February. Chief Rigstad talked about some frequent calls that the department has been dealing with. He also told the committee that a ladder truck caught a tree branch on a recent run and will need some extensive repair. Chief Rigstad talked about the fire instructor course that is now required for someone to take their certification exam. The state is no longer funding this course, and the cost will have to come out the fire department budget.

*Motion by Councilor Bender, seconded by Councilor Olson and carried to receive and file the Fire Department update.*

### 1. Police Department Update

Chief LaGesse talked about the recent officer involved shooting. He noted that all officers are now back to work, and that the Division of Criminal Investigation was brought in to investigate this incident, and though we have not yet got the report back, Chief LaGesse does not have any concerns with the use of force that officers used in the incident.

The 11<sup>th</sup> **annual Citizens' Academy begins on March 21<sup>st</sup>**. We have 22 participants this year. Chief LaGesse expressed his appreciation for those that attend the academy, as it is a large commitment of time, especially for those that work during the day.

Chief LaGesse talked about a grant through Emergency Management that will provide new software for our department and computer aided dispatch for the Communications Center, and a Port Security grant that we will purchase new radios for officers and vehicles, as well as new equipment on the tower connected to the Communications Center.

A testing process (oral interview and physical agility) to establish a new hiring list will take place for new hires on May 5<sup>th</sup>.

Chief LaGesse talked about current staffing levels in the department. We are currently working short staffed with no one in the Asst. Chief position and no Investigations Captain, with Captain La Lor currently on Administrative Leave. Chief LaGesse explained where our union negotiations are at this time. There are budgetary concerns and Chief LaGesse said we could possibly have to reduce our staff by three, depending on the outcome of the current union negotiations which are headed to arbitration.

**Councilor MacKenzie asked about Officer Babic's status. Chief LaGesse explained** that Officer Babic pled to a criminal charge of misdemeanor theft. He was sentenced to 80 hours of community service and a period of probation

*Motion by Councilor Olson, seconded by Councilor Bender and carried to receive and file the Police Department update.*

*Motion by Councilor Bender, seconded by Councilor Olson and carried to adjourn the Public Safety Committee meeting at 5:35 p.m.*

*Respectfully submitted:*

*Donna Swanson  
Administrative Assistant  
Superior Police Department*