

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Monday, July 19, 2021 at 6:30PM

Present: Chair Trustee Kristina Sayas, Trustee Thomas Michalski, Trustee Katy Cornell, Committee Members, Mr. John Schindler, Ms. Margaret Thew, Mr. John Oliveri and Ms. Barbara Decker.

Members Excused: None.

Also Present: Village Manager David De Angelis, Police Chief Jim Gage and Lt. Jason Kubiak.

1. Call the meeting to order

The meeting was called to order, at 6:30p.m., by Trustee Cornell.

2. Review and approve minutes from September 10, 2020.

Trustee Cornell entertained a motion for approval. Mr. Oliveri indicated that there was an error in the minutes identifying him as the member commenting about an informal survey of residents, concerning stop sign issues, under item #3, paragraph three, of the minutes. Chief Gage indicated that he would check his notes and make the correction to the proper committee member. Mr. Oliveri made a motion to table the approval of the minutes until the next public safety committee meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Schindler and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Informational review of how the police department responds to traffic complaints and the authority of the Public Safety Committee to assist in those efforts.

Trustee Sayas recognized members of the public that wished to speak regarding traffic issues.

Ms. Laura Vandeloo of 1745 Highland Drive. Ms. Vandeloo indicated that she has noticed an increase in speed and cut through traffic on Highland. She appreciated the police department's enforcement efforts, but asked if there was a way to decrease speed and cut through traffic. She suggested possible placing four way stops at Gebhardt and Highland and at Juneau Boulevard and Highland Drive.

Mr. James Stark, 15200 Westover Road. Mr. Stark indicated he has lived in Elm Grove for three years and has complained of excessive speed and cut through traffic on Westover Road. He further explained that the police department was not responsive to any of his requests, over the last few years, for speed enforcement in his neighborhood.

Trustee Sayas thanked the members of the public for their comments and closed any further public comment.

Chief Gage reviewed how the department respond to traffic complaints:

- The department receives a complaint and there is an attempt to narrow down when the worst violations are occurring.
- Officers are assigned to follow-up on the complaint and monitor traffic and enforce any violations.
- In cases where the reported behavior does not match with the officer's observations, a traffic monitoring system may be placed in the area to retrieve objective traffic data over a period of time.
- After reviewing the data, officers may be assigned to monitor for violations at targeted times, based on the data, or the data may be used to explain to the complainant that the speed of vehicles may not match the caller's perception of vehicle speeds in the area.
- In cases of moderate to excessive violations, officer may be involved in strict speed enforcement, subject to other calls for service and the department's portable speed feedback trailer may be deployed in the area.
- This is all done with the goal of deploying available resources to the areas that need it the most.

Chief Gage went on to say that the Committee can help these efforts by reviewing and approving various traffic calming implements in identified chronic problems areas:

- Approval of traffic feedback signs, based on traffic data.
- Approval speed humps, based on village draft policies on the installation of speed humps. Chief Gage explained speed humps would not apply to Highland Drive due to the policy and the fact that is a through roadway and collector street.
- Approval of roadway traffic calming designs, specific to roadway characteristics and in concert with any Department of Public Works roadway projects.

Chief Gage also reiterated that stop signs, based on numerous traffic study results nationwide, are not seen as an effective tool to combat speed offenses.

Chief Gage then specifically addressed data related to Westover Road, indicating that over an approximate eight day period, only 0.8% of vehicles exceeded an 8 over speed tolerance. Specifically, out of 2,250 vehicles, only eighteen vehicles were in excess of the 8 over

tolerance. Chief Gage recognized that this information did not match with Mr. Stark's perception that several cars exceed the speed limit, in excess of 40 to 50 mph, daily. Having said this, Chief Gage indicated that he would reevaluate the area once school opens, in Fall, to see if the data changes.

Regarding Highland Drive, Chief Gage indicated that while there were enforceable violations on Highland Drive, it is probably not as bad as most would think. In general, residents tend to equate high volumes with high speed, but that is not always the case. Having said this, Chief Gage relayed the following information to the Committee:

- From a period from June 24, to July 15, 2021, 243 traffic stops were conducted village wide.
- 79 stops were made on Highland. 70 of those stops resulted in citations
- Of the citations on Highland, 38 were for 11 to 15mph over, 24 were for 16 to 19 mph over, 2 were for 20 to 24 mph over and 1 was for 25 to 29 mph over.
- Approximately 22% of the Highland stops were Village residents.

There was committee discussion to place speed feedback signs on Highland Drive, specific to data supported locations. Chief Gage thought four signs would cover Highland Drive appropriately. Mr. Schindler felt that four signs may be too many and with all the recent, similar sign deployments, may lose effectiveness over time. He suggested starting with two, to be placed in areas supported by data. Mr. Schindler moved and Tom Michalski seconded the motion to add two speed signs at this time and to review if others were needed later. Motion carried 6-1 with Mr. Oliveri voting no.

Trustee Sayas thanked the Chief for his explanation and asked that the vehicle data, stop sign information be included with the minutes. It was also discussed that the speed hump policy should come back to the committee for review and final recommendation to be approved by the Board of Trustees.

4. Discuss Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services marketing and personnel recruitment needs and take possible action.

Chief Kastholz described for the committee the department's current level of staffing and the recruitment efforts to date noting they have lost five members and gained five members over the last three years but the average age of the members is 46. He further described the requirements to be a firefighter with the level of not only schooling to be a firefighter 1 but also the ongoing duty company and training commitment going forward. He identified this is a nationwide problem not only for fire but EMS as well. He indicated that we need to again look at the long term solutions going forward whether they are consolidation, contracting for service or some hybrid this is an issue that goes beyond just marketing.

Dr. Robinson indicated the problems are the same with the EMS department but even more so because training is so much more extensive with paramedic level certification being 2000 hours plus ongoing training and testing requirements. He also discussed the aging of our current paramedics as well as the ability to maintaining staffing. He stated that perhaps having sleeping quarters may allow us some extra levels of staffing by bringing in people from further away than our current response radius. There is also the possibility of only running basic level service and not paramedic by doing an intercept program or some other hybrid. The possibility of having public safety officers who could do both fire, ems and non sworn police work was also discussed.

After some discussion Mr. De Angelis made the suggestion this issue be referred to the Administrative and Personnel committee for further discussion as the issue of continued service and recruitment is more of a personnel and funding issue than one of public safety at this point in the discussion. Mr. Oliveri made the motion to send this to the Administrative and Personnel Committee to discuss and review the services and staffing going forward, seconded by Ms. Cornell. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Other Business.

Trustee Sayas asked Chief Gage were we were with signage at the RR crossings and he indicated that CP Rail has not been very responsive or helpful on the issue, but that he has discussed and forwarded signage options to the Department of Public Works, with the suggestion that any posting occur outside of the CP Rail right of way.

6. Adjournment

Mr. Oliveri made the motion to adjourn and Mr. Schindler seconded, motion passed unanimously at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James P. Gage
Chief of Police