



PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
4:00 PM August 1, 2019
Police Department Training Room

COMMITTEE

1. ROLL CALL

Members present: Mayor Scott Korthuis and Councilors Brent Lenssen, Gary Bode, Mark Wohlrab and Gerald Kuiken

Staff present: Chief Mark Billmire, Chief Michael Knapp, Lieutenant Jeremy Bos, City Administrator Mike Martin, Support Services Manager Holly Vega

2. ACTION ITEMS:

A. Approve minutes from July 11, 2019 meeting.

The July 11, 2019 meeting minutes were approved.

3. INFORMATION ITEMS:

A. Lynden School District parking request on Main Street

The Lynden School District submitted a written request to restructure the front of the old middle school to provide for a bus loop. The Committee agreed to forward the request to Public Works, noting possible safety concerns regarding traffic visibility, crosswalk usage and sidewalk placement.

B. Interim Public Defender contract

The previous public defender was not able to meet the criteria in the latest contract amendment. The Committee recommends approval of the Public Defender Interim contract with Sharon Westergreen at the August 5, 2019 council meeting. All current court cases would be transferred to the Interim attorney, and the City will be advertising statewide for a permanent public defender.

C. Budget amendment for 2 new police vehicles – 2019 budget

Councilor Lenssen expressed that the PD is falling behind in purchasing vehicles, and needs to plan to purchase 2 vehicles every few years. Mayor Korthuis believes there is funding in the 2019 budget to purchase 1 vehicle; advised to check with the Finance Director to confirm, and proceed with purchasing a vehicle without delay.

D. Update on Fire and Police staffing inside fairground during NWWF

Lt. Bos advised the patrol schedule will be similar to the last several years. The Sheriff's Office will also have deputies present on Friday and Saturday. Chief Billmire advised the Fire Dept. schedule will be staffed with a combination of fulltime and volunteer personnel. Several other fire districts will be present, and additional staff for special events.

E. Lynden WATCH update

Councilor Wohlrab gave an update on the Lynden WATCH program, noting the membership is continuing to grow. He arranged for a booth at the Raspberry Festival, which attracted additional followers.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

1. **ACTION ITEMS:** None.

2. **INFORMATION ITEMS:**

A. Monthly report

Chief Billmire presented the monthly report for July, noting a large number of motor vehicle accidents. Overtime hours were down, and volunteer hours were up again. Testing for new volunteer recruits resulted in 3 out of the original 15 candidates moving forward.

B. Assistant Chief position discussion

Mayor Korthuis, Chief Billmire and City Administrator Mike Martin have discussed the Assistant Chief position and propose to include it in the 2020 budget. The A/C position would take over the Fire Marshal duties as well as the training officer responsibilities.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

1. **ACTION ITEMS:**

2. **INFORMATION ITEMS:**

A. Organizational Survey

Chief Knapp provided a detailed memorandum on the organizational overview and needs assessment of the Police Department. Notable items include the staffing of administration and operations, urgent vehicle fleet and equipment needs.

He proposes the immediate promotion of a Sergeant to a new position of Lieutenant of Administration. There is a lack of administrative staff to monitor the processes and steer the department during a critical time. The operations side is understaffed to fill the current shift schedule.

There is an urgent need to replace several vehicles, as there are not enough emergency vehicles for every officer, nor any vehicles available as backup. The department is lacking essential ballistic equipment, as well as a surveillance system. Chief Knapp points out there is a lot to ask for, and suggests a 3-year plan, prioritizing items that jeopardize the safety of both citizens and officers.

B. Monthly Report

The new monthly report was designed by Sgt. Russ Martin. There was an increase in vehicle prowls, which was discussed further by Officer Scholten.

C. Officer Scholten's presentation on vehicle prowls

Officer Josh Scholten presented information on the vehicle prowls reported since January 1, 2019. He spoke about patterns and provided a map showing where the crimes have occurred.

3. ITEMS ADDED:

A. Speed limit on Northwood Rd.

Councilor Lenssen inquired on the status of the traffic counters on Northwood Rd. Councilor Bode advised he would follow up with Public Works.

Meeting adjourned 5:24pm.

Next Meeting Date: September 5, 2019



Holly Vega, Police Support Svc Mgr.



Scott Korthuis, Mayor