

CITY OF LYNDEN

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Steve Taylor, Police Chief

(360) 354-2828



Public Safety Committee Meeting Minutes

Online (Microsoft Teams)

4:00 PM September 09, 2021

Call to Order

Roll Call

Members Present: Mayor Scott Korthuis and Councilors Mark Wohlrab, Brent Lenssen and Gerald Kuiken

Staff Present: City Administrator John Williams, Chief Mark Billmire, Lieutenant Jeremy Bos, Lieutenant Russ Martin, HR Manager Kim Clemons, Support Services Manager Holly Vega

Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of July 1, 2021 meeting minutes

The minutes from the July 1, 2021 meeting were approved.

Items from the Audience

Scheduled/Unscheduled

None.

Committee Items

2. Budget Request Review for Fire and Police

Chief Billmire noted 3 requested items for the budget.

1. A new command vehicle, F150 crew cab
2. Refurbished LifePak 15 for the backup ambulance
3. Hurst Combi Tool for Engine 75

Mayor Korthuis noted these items are penciled into the budget.

Police Department requested 2 fleet vehicles and 2 additional employees. Mayor Korthuis referenced a meeting with Chief Taylor and supports 1 additional employee for next year and suggests looking at a population-based system of adding employees. Councilors expressed the need for flexibility within that system and staying proactive.

3. Vaccine Mandate Implications and Waiver

Chief Billmire advised the potential impacts are unknown at this time until October 18th when employees are required to provide either proof of vaccination or exemption waiver. The County could pull the City's EMS License if unvaccinated employees are sent out on calls. Waivers would likely have various levels of review on a case-by-case basis.

4. Staffing Vacancies at Fire and Police, Civil Service Hiring Lists

Councilor Lenssen suggests always having an active hiring list at both Fire and Police to fill vacancies. Chief Billmire supports that and suggests amending the civil service rules to allow the list to be active for 1 year instead of 6 months, and an opportunity to extend the list for an additional year.

There is one vacancy at Fire, 7 candidates are scheduled for Chief's interviews tomorrow. Police has one anticipated vacancy and currently open for lateral officer applications, closing September 15th.

5. Public Safety Overtime - July - August 2021

Fire Dept overtime was high (643 hours) in August due to being down 1 firefighter, and 3 career firefighters tested positive for COVID and were out for an extended period.

Police overtime in July was at 276 hours and 199.5 hours in August. An officer was also out in August with COVID.

Fire Department Items

6. Fire Monthly Report - August 2021

August was a busy month with 205 total calls, 47 transports, and 75 overlapping calls. Aid was given 26 times, aid received 12 times, 3 of which no Lynden units were available. COVID response calls ticked up significantly to 13. Fire prevention, inspections, and public education have all decreased due to increased COVID rates.

Chief Billmire received 40 rapid COVID test kits from the County, which are 90-95% accurate, providing results within 15 minutes. The cost is about \$25 each.

7. Career & Volunteer Hiring & Recruitment Update

Discussed earlier in Item 2 and 4, Mayor Korthuis informed that 5 part-time positions are penciled into the 2022 budget to help Chief Billmire manage the schedule and fill shifts. The money allocation would be moved from the volunteer pool of funds to the new part-time positions. Volunteer participation has declined recently, and several current volunteers are candidates for the part-time positions. A civil service hiring list should be available in approximately a week.

8. NWWF Fire/EMS Review

Personnel from outside agencies worked along with 6 volunteers from Lynden during the 10-day fair. There were over 200 contacts for mostly minor incidents, 3 BLS transports and 2 ALS transports.

9. IAFF Local 106 - Contract Negotiations Update

Good progress has been made, about 90% complete. A few financial/benefit items remain to work through but expect to be finished in a few weeks.

10. Fire Station Renovation Update

The renovation is still on schedule. There was one hiccup with the alerting system, but the sub-contractor is playing catch up and shouldn't affect the mid-October completion date.

Police Department Items

11. Police Monthly Report - August 2021

Lieutenant Martin presented the monthly report for August, noting a busy month as well. Most of the increased statistics were Fair related, including assaults and accidents. Vehicle prowls on the east side of town were unrelated, investigation is going well though.

The Fair went very well with no major incidents. Sharing the command post with Fire and Security allowed for better communication and coordination.

The new detective vehicle is in service, which replaces the last Crown Victoria in the active fleet. Vehicle 51 is expected to return to service after being out for repair.

Added Items

12. City Administrator John Williams advised that our current public defender has accepted a position as a judge. An interim contract with North County Public Defense will be on the September 20th City Council agenda.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:48 p.m.