

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

May 11, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m.

Members Present: Deb Groat, Tracy Richardson, Dan Fogt

Others Present: Mayor Gore, Terry Emery, Battalion Chief Ropp, Chief Golden, Holly Zweizig

Approval of Minutes: The minutes for the meeting on April 14, 2015 were approved.

Agenda:

Additional Police Personnel: Mr. Fogt said he put this item on the agenda because the Committee had discussed it being an item for next year's budget. He said he would encourage the City to honor any request or if there is any money to start a Resource Officer at the beginning of the school year, rather than in January. Mayor Gore said when this first started the City received a COPS grant. He said then the grant ran out, so the City funded it and when we came into financial hardship we went to the schools and said someone has to help pay for this. He said they helped pay for it for a period of time and then the schools hit hard times, and asked if the City could pick up the tab, which we agreed to do. Mayor Gore said he is in support of another resource officer, if we can afford it. He said with today's issues, and the way children are behaving these days, it does not hurt to have a police presences in the Middle School.

Chief Golden said there is a COPS grant coming and an SRO grant coming as well, but we can only apply for one. Mr. Emery asked Chief Golden to explain the moving forward and then we can report back to the Committee regarding the steps we are taking.

Chief Golden said that we need to have another resource officer. He said that we have discussed having a Community Oriented Police Officer. Chief Golden gave a hand out to the committee giving details on duties/expectations for the Community Oriented Officer. Mayor Gore said if the grant money is not available, then we should proceed with or without the grant. Mayor Gore said he was in favor of starting the new officer in September and not at the beginning of the year after the budget is passed.

Mrs. Groat said she would like to see the Community Oriented Officer and another Resource Officer position filled even if we do not get the grant money.

Mrs. Richardson verified they are looking at having an additional resource officer, and the one we have right now is primarily assigned to the high school. Chief Golden said he is mostly at the high school or the Stem school. He said if we get this additional officer he or she would be assigned to Bunsold, but also rotate through the schools. Mayor Gore said he has lunch with Ms. Mankins on Thursday and will talk with her about it.

Mrs. Richardson said the Community Oriented Police Officer to go around and work with the different communities is a great idea.

Mayor Gore said we need to keep developing activities for our youth so they will be more constructive and less destructive.

Legalization of Marijuana Movement in Ohio: Ms. Zweizig thanked the committee for inviting her to speak tonight. She passed out a handout explaining the legalized marijuana overview as of May 2015. She also passed out copies of the three initiatives for everyone to review. Ms. Zweizig went through the handouts page by page. (See attached, handouts). She said number 20 deals with the elections, further down it discusses the annual fees associated with these growing facilities, and costs for permits for growing it at home. Number 25 addresses selling marijuana accessories.

Ms. Zweizig is currently collecting different legislation from different cities and states. She has attached a copy of the information that was in front of the City of Hamilton, Ohio. She said that we have a federal organization to scan and make sure that the medicine is safe. She also placed in the folder a copy of the Using Marijuana as Medicine and Ohio brochure.

She said the City of Hamilton wanted to get ahead of the legislation by having language banning the sale of marijuana within City limits.

Mayor Gore asked how long the signatures were good for. Ms. Zweizig said she was not sure, but this is more about how much money people can make off of it, rather than the safety of our citizens. Mr. Fogt said they can carry over the signatures for a long time. Mrs. Richardson asked if there was anyone in Union County that is collecting signatures. Mayor Gore said there was someone a while ago. Mrs. Richardson asked if the Coalition is not supporting this, who is. She is hesitant to put information out against it because it could entice more people to support it. She asked what the City Council can do. She said we need to be prepared for any legislation that could be come before Council. Ms. Zweizig said if there is anything that the coalition can do to help, they will. Mrs. Richardson said that maybe this committee of Council is the group that starts looking at these things. Mrs. Groat said the January president might want to do another Ad Hoc committee like we did with gaming and gambling. Mr. Fogt said it is something that we should start on now since it could be on the ballot in November. Mayor Gore agreed and said we should have something in place, which could always be amended at a later date, but be ahead of the vote in November. Mrs. Groat said asked if the suggestion is to have this committee study and draft legislation. Mr. Fogt said he would at least get started on this with the administration. Mayor Gore said this would be something Mr. Aslaner could get started on and then the President could give this to, a committee, probably Public Affairs.

Mrs. Groat said that is why she was thinking Ad Hoc because Public Affairs can only do so much. Mayor Gore said that it needs to start now to be ahead of the November elections just in case. Mrs. Groat said our next step should be to consult with Mr. Aslaner, and then get with the current Council President. Mayor Gore suggested Mr. Fogt be the one to take this to the President of Council to appoint a committee to research the topic.

Mrs. Richardson thanked Ms. Zweizig for coming to the meeting and beginning to discuss this topic with the Committee, so that we can start working on it.

Adjournment: Mr. Fogt adjourned the meeting at 5:50 pm.