

SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES SEPTEMBER 20, 2016

The Safety Committee meeting was held on September 20, 2016, at North Royalton City Hall, 14600 State Road. The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

PRESENT: Committee Members: Chair Gary Petrusky, Vice Chair Dan Langshaw, Steve Muller; **Council:** Larry Antoskiewicz, John Nickell, Paul Marnecheck, Dan Kasaris; **Administration:** Law Director Thomas Kelly, Police Chief John Elek, Fire Chief Robert Chegan, Safety Director Bruce Campbell, Assistant Law Director Donna Vozar.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Mr. Langshaw, seconded by Mr. Petrusky to excuse Mr. Muller from voting on minutes. Yeas: 2. Nays: 0. (Muller excused). **Motion carried.** Moved by Mr. Langshaw, seconded by Mr. Petrusky to **approve the July 19, 2016 Safety Committee minutes.** Yeas: 2. Nays: 0. (Muller excused). **Motion carried.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Staffing/Retirements

Mr. Petrusky said that he asked that this be on the agenda so that we can get an update on staffing requirements in anticipation of the upcoming budget preparations. Mr. Campbell said that we are now at a comfortable staffing level. We just added 3 firefighters bringing us up to 10, 10 and 11 on shifts. In the Police Department we are now at 35 and we are comfortable at 36. We have one sergeant retiring at the end of this month and we just had two patrolmen retire earlier in the year. He said that we are looking to fill two positions. He said based on the DROP statistics we have one retirement in 2017, one in 2018, one in 2019 and 3 retirements in 2021. Mr. Petrusky asked why we are not filling all three open positions. Mr. Campbell said that this is currently under discussion because we know that the Chief is retiring. Chief Elek said that when Officers Barsa and Kulczycki left, they had provided enough notice to hire their replacements in advance. When Officer Gnezda retired last May, he was already on injury leave and we did not know he was going to retire. We just found out that Sgt. McGraw is retiring at the end of this month so we got a little behind due to these surprises. He said that he and the Mayor have been talking about his replacement for next year, so there is a possibility that we can hire 3 off of the new list. Mr. Petrusky asked if the 2 we are now hiring will be on the street this year. Chief Elek said it depends on whether or not they already have the OPOTA certification. If they have the certification we can put them right in the FTO which is a 3 month period. Mr. Petrusky asked how far along we are in the hiring process. Chief Elek said that right now we are going through the background checks of the applicants and this can take some time. Mr. Nickell asked about if we only look at brand new candidates with no experience or do we look at candidates from other cities. Chief Elek said that we look at the top ten candidates on the Civil Service list for each position that is open. Some have experience, some don't. Mr. Petrusky asked what academy we will send them to. Chief Elek said that Akron has an academy and so does OSP and we use whichever one we can get into the quickest. Mr. Campbell said that the current trend is that most candidates already have the training. Mr. Kasaris asked if the 35 officers we already have include the Animal Control officers. Chief Elek said no. Mr. Kasaris asked how many Animal Control officers we have. Chief Elek said 1 full time, 1 part time. Mr. Kasaris said that this is the same staffing numbers we have had since 2011 and asked if we foresee any changes. Chief Elek said no, they seem to be handling the department at this staffing level. Mr. Kasaris said that in 2005 we hit our high mark of 42 police officers, and we are at 35 now. He asked what we are doing differently, given that we have more residents, to be able to serve the city with 7 less police officers. Chief Elek said that we lost the Captain's position and we also did away with one Sergeant's position. This enabled him to put more patrolmen on the road. He said that he also took a Sergeant out of the Detective Bureau and put him on the road as well. This allowed for more officers to handle the calls for service.

2. **Deer hunting**

Mr. Antoskiewicz asked for an update on the deer hunting program. Chief Elek said that as of Monday, 35 permits have been issued and 13 are pending. Mr. Petrusky asked about the locations of the permits. Chief Elek said that it is pretty evenly distributed throughout the city. Mr. Antoskiewicz asked if the permits have specific dates for hunting or is it for the entire hunting season. Also, how do we keep from having too many permits in one area. Chief Elek said that the permits are mostly just for the hunting season. There are a few hunters that have the State of Ohio damage control/nuisance permits and they have already started hunting and 5 deer have been taken. He said that when the officers go out to investigate where the deer stands are they find out how many people want access to that property so we know how many people can hunt on that property. He said that they have turned down a few of the deer stand locations and made them move to a more suitable, safer location. Mr. Marnecheck asked if there has been a property that has not been able to be configured in a safe manner. Chief Elek said no. So far all the properties have been able to be safely configured. Mr. Langshaw asked the Chief his opinion of the process so far. Chief Elek said that it has been going along smoothly. He said that there was a big influx of applications at the beginning, but by next year it will be a little easier because we were able to compile a data base and this will make it easier to track in years to come. Mr. Petrusky asked who Council should contact for information on how many permits have been issued in a particular ward. Chief Elek said to contact his assistant Nancy in the Police Department. Mr. Antoskiewicz asked how other cities are doing with this program. Chief Elek said that we had the most. Strongsville had only 10 people show up at their public meeting so they don't have the interest. Mr. Langshaw asked for a breakdown of how many permits, deer killed, etc. at the end of the hunting season. Mr. Kasaris asked for information regarding deer/auto accidents be provide at that time as well.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mr. Langshaw, seconded by Mr. Muller **to adjourn the September 20, 2016 meeting.** Yeas: 3.
Nays: 0. **Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:14 p.m.**