

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 20, 2011
VILLAGE HALL BOARD ROOM

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Wolter called the meeting to order at 6:12 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Chairman Wolter, Trustees Baum, Ewert, Hughes, Kaminski, and Zabel. Members absent: Trustees Werderman, Wing and Vanderheiden. Also present were Administrator Schornack and Deputy Clerk Lofy.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 3, 2011 and October 6, 2011 Meetings

Motion by Ewert, second by Zabel to approve meeting minutes from October 3, 2011 and October 6, 2011.

All voted aye. Motion carried.

PUBLIC SAFETY DIRECTOR POSITION DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION BY SHEBOYGAN FALLS PUBLIC SAFETY DIRECTOR

Administrator Schornack opened the meeting with a brief overview of the situation.

The Committee of the Whole met on October 3, 2011 to discuss the possibility of creating a Public Safety Director position in the Village of Germantown. It was decided to explore this further by having someone currently holding this position in a different community talk with the Committee. The Public Safety Director for the City of Sheboygan Falls was invited to talk about how the position came about in their community. Administrator Schornack introduced Public Safety Director Steve Riffel from the City of Sheboygan Falls to the Committee.

Public Safety Director Steve Riffel presented background on himself and his position with the City of Sheboygan Falls. He was part of the first K-9 Unit for the City of West Bend and moved his way up to the position of Sergeant. In 1997 he joined the City of Sheboygan Falls Police Department. He became Police Chief of the department in 2003.

About 2004, the Fire Department for the City of Sheboygan Falls started to experience organizational challenges. Divisions were present in the Fire Department and it was apparent to the Council that changes were needed. An outline was needed for the department for the next fifteen to twenty years. It was decided that the two departments were not that different, the Fire Department fought fires and the Police Department fought crime. This led to the decision to create the position of Public Safety Director for the City of Sheboygan Falls. This was one of the few such positions around and he was appointed by Ordinance.

It took time but he gained the trust and support of the fire fighters. Public perception of the Fire Department has also changed for the better. Due to this success, other communities have also contacted him to find out how this position was created in the City of Sheboygan Falls.

Discussion:

- A Fire Chief is still needed
- Sheboygan Falls does not have any full time employees on the Fire Department, including the Fire Chief

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Discussion continued:

- This position has worked out very well with the structure of the departments at Sheboygan Falls
- Public Safety Director is like a mini City Administrator just oversees different employees
- Public Safety Director Riffel's background is in police but has learned about fire fighting by riding along on calls and going to drills
- Public Safety Director reviews, approves and turns in all monthly bills for payment
- Some work load shifted to the Police Department to create time for Public Safety Director position, no power lost
- Public Safety Director position involves a lot of work
- More Police Chiefs than Fire Chiefs become Public Safety Directors
- The Police Department and Fire Department are connected in Sheboygan Falls
- Money was saved with Public Safety Director position due to restructuring of departments, accountability checking and inventory control
- Public Safety Director should have been appointed by Police & Fire Commission not by Ordinance
- No immediate cost savings by creating this position
- Does not know of anyone creating this position that has a full time Fire Chief
- Communities are looking at creating this position for long term savings and organizational issues
- Fire fighters can concentrate more on fire fighting and not administrative work
- Public Safety Director Riffel makes \$74,000 as Police Chief with \$10,000 added for Public Safety Director position
- Different demographics, cannot compare salaries between the Village and the City
- City of Sheboygan Falls Fire Department has one of the best response times, better than many full time departments
- The Village is looking for one person to oversee both departments but keep them separate
- The Village is looking into building one building in the future to house Police and Fire
- Some people think the Village Fire Department is running fine
- Take the Public Safety Director position to referendum and let the residents decide
- City of Sheboygan Falls is about one third the size of the Village of Germantown
- Sheboygan Falls gets about 400 first responder and 100 fire calls per year
- Fires and accident scenes are still controlled by the Fire Chief
- Public Safety Director position makes for one media contact
- Could look into combining equipment and paramedic services with surrounding communities

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Discussion continued:

- Need to talk about possible closed session meeting to answer questions not appropriate for this meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christa Lofy
Deputy Village Clerk