

MEETING MINUTES
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
MARCH 6, 2023
GERMANTOWN VILLAGE HALL BOARD ROOM

CALL: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Myers.

ROLL CALL: Chairman Myers, Trustees Hudson, J. Miller, and Pieper.

Also present were Police Chief Snow, Battalion Chief Asmondy.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Scott Hefle of W159 N10514 Old Farm Road expressed his concerns regarding public safety staffing, he would like to see more police officers and firefighters and feels both departments are understaffed. Hefle would also like committee members to look more closely at the budget to see if funding can be found for these positions, he would prefer they hold back on a referendum and only use that concept as a last resort.

He also stated he was concerned that the Village would use Mueller Communications for a possible referendum just because they were used in the past, and that an RFP should be opened and bids accepted before this is even on the agenda. Hefle also expressed concern that these public meetings are not able to be viewed by anyone who is not present due to cable and WebEx issues. He wondered where the \$50,000 for the proposal from Mueller would be taken from in the budget.

Melanie Smythe of N140 W17938 Cedar Lane spoke to the Committee stating she also has concerns with the Mueller Communications contract on the agenda and said there should be bids taken first. She added that the funds for this contract would equal about half the cost of a police officer or paramedic position, and that at last week's Public Works meeting money was found that could be used toward the other half. She believes there is money in the current budget that could be used towards additional staffing shortages.

She also suggested that a 4th meeting be held in October to look at all loose ends and determine if there are funds left in the budget that can be used toward needed items.

Smythe stated that Mueller Communications should be disqualified from the referendum process for the Village due to their actions last year when directed by the administrator to release a press release prior to the special communications committee meeting, which was contrary to direction from the Village Board.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: a motion was made by Pieper, seconded by Hudson, to approve the minutes of the February 6, 2023, Regular Meeting.

Motion to approve the minutes carried unanimously.

POLICE DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT: Snow reported on the following:

- Recent snowstorms have impacted the department's workload and one in particular resulted in numerous accidents, he commended personnel for a job well done
- ProPhoenix upgrade is ongoing
- He did not compile numbers for Fleet Farm and Menards regarding retail thefts, that information will be included with next month's agenda, hopefully the upgrades will assist with those number searches
- J. Miller requested that Walmart's numbers are also included with these reports
- Pieper questioned whether there have been any developments with the recent homicide investigation, Snow advised that there is nothing new to report and the Detective Bureau is continuing with its investigation

FIRE DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT: Asmondy reported on the following:

- Winter events have also impacted their department, they had to bring in additional staffing when extreme weather was present
- They are resuming inspections
- Have been experiencing issues with ProPhoenix software, namely with times recording accurately, they anticipate that the upgrades will correct these issues
- Hudson asked if their numbers showing compliance are accurate, Asmondy advised the numbers in their reports are accurate as they have been resetting the times when necessary

POLICY UPDATES FOR POLICE & FIRE DEPARTMENT:

Police Department – none

Fire Department - none

OVERTIME REPORTS:

Police and Fire Departments: Snow advised the police department is experiencing a lot of overtime with some relief in sight as one officer will be coming off field training in a couple weeks and another will be several weeks after that which should help with the overtime issues. Hudson asked for an explanation of compensatory time usage, Snow stated that officers are only allowed to use compensatory time when it does not create overtime.

Asmondy stated the fire department is experiencing a high amount of overtime and they do not have a big pool of P.O.C. members to pull from. He added that full-time staff will pick up overtime when staffing shortages are a problem.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

IT DISCUSSION REGARDING POLICE AND FIRE NEEDS: Snow advised this item was brought back to Public Safety for further discussion regarding the job description and pay grade for this position. He stated there were two job descriptions with the packet, one would be divided between the police department and fire department with a 50/50 split, the other was for police department, fire department and public works with a 40/40/20 split in that order. He added the pay grade category would be 3 which ranges from \$51,521 - \$73,680 with midpoint at \$61,268.

Discussion followed with Administrator Kreklow providing some background. He advised Village Board did review the request for an IT position and agreed there is a need for this position for police and fire departments. He added that if it were extended to include public works that would help spread the funding for this position between 3 departments. Kreklow stated that Snow and Delain were involved in discussions regarding the job description and that both departments would prefer the 50/50 split. He also advised that funding for this position has not been decided yet, but a review of current vacancies could extend some savings to afford this position. He advised the committee that if they were in agreement with this proposal, they could forward this item to GGF.

A motion was made by Pieper, seconded by Hudson, to forward this item to General Government and Finance requesting they look into where funding could be found for this IT position, its priority would be time given to the police and fire departments, with future consideration that additional help could be given to DPW and the rest of the Village.

There was further discussion regarding training for this position, J. Miller advised she was leaning towards the 50/50 split between the police and fire departments to at least get the program started and get those departments back on track. She added that DPW could be considered to join in at some point and asked why they had been added to the job descriptions. Manager Hirn responded that DPW was added because they are part of the public safety area, and it has become time consuming for her to respond to their routine IT requests that Capital Data is not needed for.

Motion to approve carried unanimously.

REPORT ON COUNTY LINE ROAD PEDESTRIAN CROSSING REQUEST:

Myers advised he, Public Works Superintendent Anderson and Trustee Jan Miller had inspected the area of the pedestrian crossing at CTH Q and Appleton Ave. in response to the request by a citizen to lengthen the timing for pedestrians to cross. Myers noted that changing the timing would not be possible due to traffic patterns at the intersection with traffic signals. J. Miller said she had discussed this matter with Anderson and was

advised there cannot be a secondary means for a pedestrian crossing at an intersection where traffic signals are in place, there would be no way to ensure that added push button activated crossing signals could integrate with the traffic signal activity which is already in place. She talked to the residents and they understood the best crossing would be at Rivercrest and County Line Road to get additional time for them to cross, there is also an island at that crossing if extra time is needed. Myers added that if they would have problems getting across, there is another button in the center island that can be activated.

REPORT ON PILGRIM ROAD PEDESTRIAN CROSSING REQUEST: J. Miller advised the school principal at MacArthur had brought forward safety concerns for residents crossing Pilgrim Road where there are no pedestrian crossings. She would like to look into this further and research ways that would create a safer environment for pedestrians to cross at non-signaled areas. Myers advised this item would be carried over to next month's meeting as Unfinished Business.

NEW BUSINESS:

CONTRACT WITH MUELLER COMMUNICATIONS FOR PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS ON POSSIBLE PUBLIC SAFETY REFERENDUM NOT TO EXCEED \$50,629.90: Kreklow advised that during the past year, there have been conversations with Village Board and Public Safety Committee regarding the staffing needs of the police and fire departments. He said that during budget discussions they looked at options to fund these positions and when it became clear that funding would not be available, it led to referendum discussions. Kreklow, Snow and Delain had discussions with Mueller Communications to find out what steps to take to begin the process of a referendum. Their recommendation would be to look at next April since there are no fall elections, and follow these 3 phases:

- Putting together background information, laying out the different options available for increasing public safety staff
- Putting out a community survey and gathering input from residents regarding what their interests are regarding additional public safety staffing and how much more would they be willing to pay (property taxes)
- Actual process of getting information about the referendum (if that is the direction the Village Board chooses to go) out to the public

Discussion continued as follows:

- Pieper stated she was not in favor of the referendum process and the \$50,000 that would be spent on this contract could be used towards the IT position. She added that if public opinion is being looked for, Facebook would be a good place to start. Pieper noted that a closer look at the budget may reveal funding from another source rather than pursuing a referendum
- Hudson said he would like to see set numbers for the total amount being looked for to cover the staffing issues before taking any additional action

- J. Miller indicated she supports the addition of staff for police and fire and agrees with the other trustees. She added an assessment of needs should be put together before bringing to the community, and she does not want a referendum with an RFP.
- Snow advised he would support a referendum because it has become clear that staffing levels will not be brought up to the needed numbers without it. For 29 years he has watched the department's requests for additional staffing be defeated during the budget process, and he stated he has real concerns for the safety and well-being of his officers working shorthanded on a continual basis.
- Pieper stated she would like to see the problem of staffing fixed as soon as possible and made a motion to send this matter to GGF and have them come up with a plan with how the Village can fund additional staffing and provide 2 more police officers and firefighters this year, 2 more in 2024 and 2 more the following year. Motion was seconded by J. Miller for discussion and she asked how they would know if that is the right number to consider.
- Snow advised that the original request was for 4 additional police officers
- President Wolter came to the podium and discussed the motion to bring this matter to GGF, he advised it should stay with Public Safety and the committee should find the resources for their recommendations. He then summarized some of the progress which has been made and confirmed with Chief Snow that there are no current open positions with the police department, fire department has one open position, and also brought up the improvements in fire department staffing where coverage is now available 24/7/365. He went on to say that though staffing levels are not ideal, the current budget does not allow for adding 4 police officers and 11 firefighters, and in order to consider those kinds of changes, serious cuts would need to take place in other areas of the budget which could be people, services or road repairs. Wolter stated that if this matter is not going to be put before the people of the Village to make their choice at a referendum, then it would need to be brought up at budget time to find where deeper cuts can be made and what services need to be dropped or what equipment doesn't need to be purchased.
- Kreklow advised that current calculations put the numbers around 1.3 million for all the necessary positions, he added that to achieve that level of cost increase, some changes could be made such as shifting the remainder of the public fire protection fee to the utility bill (\$500,000), road repairs could be reduced or funded through vehicle registration fee (\$300,000 – 400,000). There would still be ½ million dollars to find in the budget to get the number of positions requested. He recommended that to get to that level – annually – the only recourse he can see for that would be through a referendum.
- Pieper asked if the committee could get the updated budget numbers, Kreklow stated a report is prepared for GGF meetings with updated numbers and that could be made available for the Public Safety Committee members.

- Myers requested that Kreklow forward them the examples he had discussed regarding where additional funds could be collected from
 - J. Miller stated that with the numbers that are available, she is ready to research this matter
 - Pieper stated she would drop her motion
 - Kreklow noted also that additional positions would require separate expenses, i.e., equipment
 - Myers requested that one-time expenses be kept separate from the ongoing costs
- Myers stated this item would be placed on next month's agenda under Unfinished Business.

NEXT MEETING: Myers advised that next month's meeting will be held on Monday, April 3, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the Village Hall Boardroom.

ADJOURNMENT: there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Recorded by,

Julie L. Barth
Secretary