

Public Safety Committee Meeting January 21, 2015

The Public Safety Committee met Wednesday, January 21, 2015, at 6:00 pm in the City Hall Conference Room. Present were Committee Members Susanne Galbraith, Mark Ahner, Roxanna Brush and Jerry Partridge. Also present was Interim Fire Chief Cameron Duffin, Firefighter III/EMS Training Officer Mike Miller, Police Chief Doug Colombik, Public Works Director Scott Gray, Mayor C.A. Grenz and Committee Recorder/HR/Payroll Officer Billie Burkhalter.

Committee Member Ahner brought the meeting to order.

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

*** Committee Member Galbraith moved to nominate Committee Member Ahner for Chairperson of the Public Safety Committee. Committee Member Brush seconded the motion.*

After hearing no further nominations;

*** Motion then passed unanimously.*

TRAFFIC CONTROL MEASURES ON STOWER, PEARL AND TRUCK ROUTE

Chairperson Ahner explained that a citizen had previously approached the Committee with a concern that oversized vehicles, such as ranch pickups with trailers, traveling on Stower Street were presenting a hazard, especially when vehicles are parked on that street. He had wanted the City to put a sign by the City Shop that could direct this traffic to the existing truck route. The Committee had agreed to place additional signs along the truck route to try and alleviate congestion.

Director Gray stated that the additional signage has been up for approximately two weeks. The Committee thanked Director Gray for completing this.

Chairperson Ahner explained the Committee had also previously discussed the issue of traffic control around Lincoln School on Pearl Street. Director Gray stated that as soon as the snow was clear in this area he would address the crosswalks to make sure the painted yellow was the appropriate length. He further explained that there are 72 speed/school zone signs that will be placed in the school areas as soon as the ground thaws. He noted that this was a significant cost to the budget.

John Gorton, Principle of Lincoln School, explained that a lot of the parking congestion on or around Lincoln School is due to his staff and they are currently trying to address this issue. There is a potential facility parking area on Fort Street across from the Custer apartments. This area would need to be made more conducive for parking. Right now it is a tight fit for a pickup

truck and there is an issue with a substantial curb, which could cause an issue for a compact car. Principal Gorton further explained the gravel would need to be removed along with the curb and gutter. They have also explored the idea of moving the fence deeper onto the playground area but would prefer not to. Principal Gorton stated any help from the City crews with the curb and gutter in this area would be appreciated. Director Gray stated his department would be willing to assist with the curb and gutter removal and could provide the millings for the parking area.

Mayor Grenz suggested to take out the curb and gutter where the sidewalk is on Fort Street all the way down Custer Street and then make it perpendicular parking. Principal Gorton explained that there is not a sidewalk on the Lincoln side of Fort Street.

Director Gray added that another possibility to alleviate the traffic congestion could be to make it no parking at any time on the north side of Pearl Street from the alley going west to the intersection of Lake Street and do the same thing on Fort Street, but do it on the south side from Lake Street to half way between Custer and Jordan up to the alley. These areas could be designated as drop off only.

Cameron Duffin, 1605 Pearl, stated he is surprised that there aren't more accidents in this area, as when school is in session it is basically a one lane road. He would like to see parking be designated for only one side of Pearl Street. Cameron further explained that he has noticed a big difference in how fast vehicles travel now that there is a bigger police presence.

There was discussion concerning the possibility of parallel parking on Lake Street.

Chairperson Ahner requested that Director Gray work with Principal Gorton in regards to the facility parking area. He stated he personally did not have any issues with the City providing the millings to the school district but felt that they would need to reimburse the cost of City labor. Director Gray stated he did not think it would take more than a couple of hours.

There was discussion concerning Stower Street and the parking problems due to how narrow the street is.

Chairperson Ahner requested Director Gray and Chief Colombik work with the School District for further solutions to traffic control on Pearl Street. He further requested Director Gray to speak with Montana Department of Transportation to see if the Urban Street Transportation Study could address traffic control measures to include Stower Street and Comstock Street.

Chairperson Ahner stated whatever the direction the City decided to go in regards to Stower Street and Pearl Street would need public meetings for the residents in this area. Long term solutions would have to be fully considered. This would need to be a step by step process, start with getting the facility parking addressed at Lincoln School and then move on to other possible measures.

PART-PAID FIREFIGHTER AND EMERGENCY CARE PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS

Chief Duffin explained that he had requested Fire Training Officer Mike Miller to develop this Part-Paid Firefighter and Emergency Care Provider Requirements packet. These requirements will add more accountability and responsibility for Part-Paid Firefighters in his department.

Training Officer Miller stated currently there are no requirements in place for part-paid firefighter staff. In the past, part-paid employees have been called in to respond to an incident, such as a structure fire, and they do not have the proper training, creating a liability for the City. With these new requirements, it will be mandatory for part-paid employees to come in to the Fire Department every month and train with the department. Training Officer Miller further explained that creating this new program will bring part-paid firefighters up to a higher level of care that will benefit the citizens and the City. Currently there are 12 part-paid employees and they are excited about implementation of this program.

Chief Duffin explained that the part-paid firefighters will be required to complete 24 hours a month ride along with the department, which is a 100% volunteered time.

Chairperson Ahner stated he was impressed with the presented program.

*** Committee Member Partridge moved to recommend to Council to adopt the Part-Paid Firefighter and Emergency Care Provider Requirements, seconded by Committee Member Galbraith and motion passed unanimously, 4-0.*

REQUEST OF CITIZENS

- None.

ADJOURNMENT

*** Having no more business to come before the Committee, Committee Member Galbraith moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Committee Member Brush and passed unanimously, 4-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted:

Public Safety Committee Chairperson:



Billie D. Burkhalter, Recorder



Chairperson Mark Ahner