

**Public Safety Committee Meeting  
November 17, 2020**

The Public Safety Committee met Tuesday, November 17, 2020, at 7:08 pm via Zoom Conferencing in the Conference Room at City Hall, 17 S. 8th. Present were Committee Members Kathy Wilcox, Ken Gardner, Elizabeth Patten and Austin Lott. Also present were: Police Chief Doug Colombik, Mayor John Hollowell, Police Captain Dan Baker, City Planner Ally Capps, Public Utilities Director Tom Speelmon, Fire Chief Branden Stevens, Council Member Rick Huber, Council Member Stacy Broell, Fire Lieutenant Casey Miller, Fire Chief Branden Stevens, City Building Inspector Russell Murphy and HR Officer/Recorder Linda Wilkins.

Chairperson Lott called the meeting to order.

**1. Request of Citizens**

Fire Chief Stevens spoke to the committee about the lack of wildland fire fighting equipment. The department has been attempting to piece together equipment for wildland fire fighting, the equipment is expensive and he believes at this point the decision needs to be made as to whether or not the City will fight wildland fires. Mayor Hollowell stated the fire contracts need to be reviewed since firefighters are not properly equipped. This item will be put on the next Public Safety Committee agenda, the committee requested Chief Stevens bring a list of needs and the dollar amounts to get the department equipped to fight wildland fires.

**2. Committee Member Comments**

None

**3. Discussion and Recommendation to City Council regarding Long Term vision for Public Safety**

The discussion began with looking down the road at a more permanent solution for housing the police department, fire department and dispatch. Committee Member Wilcox commented on having a 4 to 5-year capital campaign for a Public Safety Building which could fund a permanent location for City public safety services and would allow for growth physically and technologically. Committee Member Patten commented that the PAR had not been done with USDA funding in mind. She thought that maybe something in between the outline of the original PAR could be done if we do something for the Police Department now; and then look at possibly combining Fire and Dispatch. Mayor Hollowell stated that Council Member Huber had an idea that made sense regarding building a second fire station near City Hall combined with a Public Safety Building. Council Member Huber stated he has been scouting a couple areas where a building could be built in the downtown area, the area across from the detention center that is currently used for parking and Dr. William's land by the cupcake place. These locations would have a presence downtown which would be good for the image of the City. The building could be a 3,800 square foot stick frame with Hardie board siding with an estimated cost of \$178/sq. ft. with a single or double bay garage. Council Member Broell thought the long-term plan should be the Public Safety Building. Committee Member Patten reiterated the fact that the Police Department needs a place to go now. Committee Member Wilcox stated the current solution for the Police Department should be temporary and then take the time to make a long-range plan.

**4. Discussion and Recommendation regarding Police Department Building Situation Options**

Chairperson Lott has called a realtor regarding the Woolhouse Gallery and the price of the building has come down to \$298,000. The property is 1.5 acres and with a building of 20,000/sq. ft., he realizes that it is not ADA, but possibly only the main floor could be utilized. With all the square footage there could be a growth plan for the building. Committee Member Gardner asked if Inspector Russell has looked at this building. Committee

Member Wilcox had heard that the County may still be getting the VA Building. Mayor Hollowell stated that he has been in contact with Senator Testor's office and they have opened possible negotiations, but has not heard back whether this would affect vacate dates. When he hears back he will get back to the Committee. Chief Colombik stated that the Woolhouse building was plenty large enough, but the cost to bring the building up to specification could be a lot. He thought it would be a good idea to have Brandon Janshen look at it to give a cost for upgrades to the building. Other buildings discussed during the conversation were: Boutelle's, Bill's Marine and Cycle, and the Clark building.

*\*\*Committee Member Lott moved to recommend to council to negotiate a buy sell agreement for either the TLC Building or Woolhouse Gallery and authorize the use of earnest money, seconded by Committee Member Wilcox.*

Captain Baker commented that he thought the Boutelle Building should also be looked at by Mr. Janshen as it could possibly be a permanent location for the Police Department.

*\*\*Committee Member Wilcox amended the original motion to included the Boutelle Building, seconded by Committee Member Lott.*

Mayor Hollowell conferred with Mr. Janshen, he could not look at both the Woolhouse Gallery and the Boutelle Building between now and the next council meeting on November 23; he could have both buildings looked at by November 27.

*\*\*On roll call vote the amended motion failed unanimously, 0-4.*

*\*\*On roll call vote the original motion passed unanimously, 4-0.*

**5. Discussion regarding structure condemnation process for the City of Miles City, and establishing work groups to review and revise process**

Chairperson Lott commented that a baseline process needed to be established for condemnation proceedings and what would be the legal process.


*\*\*Committee Member Wilcox moved to nominate a work group consisting of Russell Murphy, John Hollowell, Elizabeth Patten and Ken Gardner. Motion died no second.*

Mayor Hollowell stated he would organize a group of staff to work on this process and report back to the committee.

**6. Adjournment**

*\*\*Committee Member Wilcox moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Committee Member Patten and passed unanimously, 4-0.*

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.



Chairperson Austin Lott



Recorder Linda Wilkins