

Public Safety Committee Meeting September 22, 2021

The Public Safety Committee met Thursday, September 22, 2021, at 6:00 pm via live attendance and Zoom Conferencing in the City Hall Conference Room, 17 S. 8th. Present were Committee Members Elizabeth Patten, Kathy Wilcox, and Ken Gardner. Also present were: Councilperson Rick Huber, Fire Chief Branden Stevens, Police Chief Doug Colombik, Dispatch Supervisor Lyne Anderson, Animal / Code Enforcement Officer Mark Winkley, Police Patrol Officer Michael Morris, Fire Captain Jake Richards and HR Officer/Recorder Linda Wilkins.

Chairperson Patten called the meeting to order.

1. Request of Citizens for Public Comment

Cindy Conley, 1501 Palmer St is concerned about the trapping and dumping of animals, and would like to have this addressed by the City, and would also like to see training done for people to prevent missing cats, there have been 75 reported missing. Chairperson Patten commented the City is currently working on this and thanked Ms. Conley for the reminder.

2. Staff Comments

Fire Chief Stevens reported that the department is currently down one officer and will be interviewing in the future for this position. He stated it's more difficult to keep part-time EMT employees, much of this is due to higher EMT standards.

3. Committee Member Comments

Chairperson Patten made to the following revisions to the agenda order: Item 9 of the agenda was moved to Item 5. Item 8 was moved to Item 6. Item 6 was moved to item 8. Item 6 was moved to item 9.

4. Discuss and Recommend Police Department Building progress - furniture

Chairperson Patten stated the construction company is currently working on concrete work on the front and side entrance; mudding, taping and painting will be occurring soon. When the shrubs were pulled away water damage to the bricks was discovered and the contractor gave a contingent price of \$70,000 to repair. Gutters were recommended to prolong the life of the brickwork. Furniture is being looked at there will most likely a few pieces that will require purchase. Police Chief Colombik has meet with Morrison-Maierle and straighten out some IT issues.

5. Discuss and Recommend Animal Control how to work with vet on stray animals.

There was discussion on the transporting cats to a Billings shelter, at one point in time this shelter became overwhelmed and cats were being transported to a shelter in Livingston until there was an outbreak of distemper. It was agreed that information should be put together for the public regarding found cats. Chairperson Patten and Officer Winkley on plans for taking care of stray animals. Committee Member Wilcox recommended reviewing the current City Ordinance regarding animals. Ms. Conley will be dropping off information to Human Resources Officer of guidelines for the public when a cat is found.

6. Discuss and Recommend Dispatch staffing update – extra duties – service to Powder River County

Supervisor Anderson reported the 911 Committee and approved Dispatch adding an additional employee and she is currently recruiting for this position due to increase call volume. Powder River County Dispatch transferred all calls to South Eastern Montana Dispatch from September 8 – 11, 2021 due to a COVID outbreak. This transfer was handled seamlessly and without incident.

7. Discuss and Recommend using/informing BLM dispatch for wildland incidents as well as South Eastern Montana Dispatch – how to facilitate communication between agencies.

Chairperson Patten had worked dispatching during the wildland fire season and wanted to get the ball rolling to help improve facilitation of communication between all agencies prior to next year's fire season. Fire Chief Stevens and Supervisor Anderson will meet with all parties involved and report back to the committee to help this facilitation.

8. Discuss and Recommend Fire Department Ladder Truck options.

Fire Chief Stevens provided the committee with estimates for the following ladder truck options: repairing, purchasing used, or purchasing new. He also stated that Engine 8 will need to be replaced. The ladder truck is necessary to keep the current ISO rating for the City. Other equipment needs for the fire department are a water tender truck and the replacing ambulances. Options for financing this equipment discussed were either through Inter-cap Loan or mil levy

***Committee Member Wilcox moved to send discussion regarding apparatus truck and equipment to the Finance Committee, seconded by Committee Member Gardner and **passed** unanimously, 3-0.*

9. Discuss and Recommend Fire Department Building – Start process moving forward – preliminary conversation about funding

A PAR (Preliminary Architectural Report) has previously been drafted. At this point, a decision needs to be made as to whether to remodel or build should be made. Chairperson Patten suggested taking a look at the fire station the SDI had designed for Fairview. Committee Member Wilcox suggested that since winter is coming it was important to identify three immediate needs to get through the winter. Chief Stevens will bring back to the committee prices and priorities for the fire station

10. Adjournment

***Committee Member Wilcox moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Committee Member Gardner and **passed** unanimously, 3-0.*

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Chairperson Elizabeth Patten

Recorder Linda Wilkins