

## **SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**FEBRUARY 27, 2018**

The meeting was called to order at 6:17 p.m. by Chairman Haraz N. Ghanbari. Committee members present were Deborah Born and Jim Matuszak. Bridgette Kabat, City Administrator and Director of Public Safety, arrived at 6:23 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Girl Scout Brownies Sofia Reyas and Noelani Knott from Perrysburg Troop 11574.

### CITIZEN CONCERNS

A resident on East Second Street is concerned about a recent incident involving another resident on East Second Street who was arrested for drinking and discharging a firearm. She noted she was not against drinking, and not against guns; however, the combination of the two is quite serious. Mr. Ghanbari said that he shares the same concerns, and would ask Ms. Kabat, the City Administrator and Director of Public Safety, to follow-up with her.

Meghan Michael, 2062 Lexington Drive, read a prepared statement regarding school safety. A copy is attached hereto and made a part of these minutes. Mr. Ghanbari said as Chair of the Safety Committee, he supports the recommendation of a community task force as recommended by Ms. Michael. Mr. Ghanbari noted he asked Ms. Kabat, as the Director of Public Safety, to set up a meeting with him to include Police Chief Dan Paez and Fire Chief Rudy Ruiz to discuss what type of training has occurred or will occur regarding active shooter/mass casualty incidents. Ms. Born thanked Ms. Michael and said she agrees with her comments. Mr. Matuszak also expressed support and indicated he would like to further study the information Ms. Michael provided to the Committee. Ms. Kabat talked about training that is done with the City and the schools, and she said that we look forward to doing our part.

Greg Szczublewski, 125 Partridge Lane, and Sandy Duty, 105 Quail Road, stated that they had been working with the previous Safety Committee regarding unhitched trailers parked in their neighborhood. Mr. Szczublewski said that they create blind spots when backing out of driveways because you can't see through them. He said that other communities don't allow unhitched trailers on the street and he is looking for a change in our ordinances. Mr. Ghanbari indicated he is aware of other communities with ordinances that restrict street parking during certain hours, and would continue the conversation with Ms. Kabat and Chief Paez.

### PROPHOENIX MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT

Ms. Kabat requested approval of the annual maintenance agreement with ProPhoenix for the computer aided dispatch and records management system used by the Police Division. The amount of the contract is \$32,628.55; a 3% increase from last year. Ms. Kabat explained that this is proprietary software so we cannot go with another company, and the maintenance agreement covers any issues we may have and the ability to

update. Mr. Matuszak asked if this is in the budget, and Ms. Kabat said that it is. Ms. Kabat was asked the due date of the invoice for this renewal, and she said it is March 21, 2018. The Committee agreed 3-0 to recommend approval of the ProPhoenix annual maintenance agreement as a non-emergency measure.

#### SAFETY TOWN

Ms. Kabat distributed information to the Committee from Chief Paez in response to a request from Mr. Matuszak. Ms. Kabat explained that Safety Town serves approximately 200 kids a year for approximately \$12,250. There are six teachers, seven assistants and the City allocates two officers for the two-week program. The Schools provide the space, janitorial services, busses, and school bus drivers. The cost is \$35 per student which covers supplies and snacks. The Police Division considers it to be a very successful program and it starts the interaction between students and the officers. Mr. Ghanbari asked if the program is self-sustaining and what the account balance is. Ms. Kabat said that it is not self-sustaining, and she can get the balance for the Committee.

#### BASIL PIZZA AND WINE BAR LLC – LIQUOR HEARING REQUEST

Ms. Kabat said that the City has received a notice from the Ohio Liquor Control Board regarding a request for a liquor license for Basil Pizza and Wine Bar LLC. This establishment will be located at the Home2Suites Hotel in Levis Commons. Ms. Kabat explained that we have the opportunity to request a hearing that would be held in Columbus, and we could give testimony. She added that Chief Paez has no issues or concerns about the request for the liquor license. There was discussion regarding other areas of the City and alcohol sales. Mr. Ghanbari asked if there is any prohibition on alcohol sales in the City. Ms. Kabat said that there may be one area with some restrictions and she will check into that. Mr. Ghanbari asked if there is any mechanism for the City to enforce the hours that liquor is sold. Ms. Kabat said that both the Ohio Liquor Control and the Police Division can go into establishments, but to change the hours that alcohol is permitted to be served is something that would have to be put before the voters. The Committee agreed 3-0 to not request a hearing on the liquor license for Basil Pizza and Wine Bar at Levis Commons.

#### WOOD COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT

Ms. Kabat requested approval of a two-year agreement renewal with the Wood County Emergency Management Agency. She explained that municipalities are required to have their own emergency management program unless they partner with the county. As part of the agreement, the Wood County EMA would enact emergency management services in the City on our behalf and provide resources from the State and Federal Governments. The City would provide information on safety personnel, public service personnel, available equipment, have an emergency operation plan and provide it to them, provide names of personnel with specialized training or skills, and provide key contact personnel. The fee would be .55 cents per City resident, based on the

population from the last census which was 20,623, for a total of \$11,342.65. The rate would remain the same for 2018 and 2019. Mr. Ghanbari asked if this would only cover natural disasters. Ms. Kabat said that it would cover any event big enough that triggers emergency response whether natural or manmade. Mr. Ghanbari asked if the Wood County EMA personnel have trained with our personnel. Ms. Kabat said that they have, and we were key players in their required training, and they came here to do table top training. Mr. Ghanbari requested a copy of the agreement and Ms. Kabat said she would provide it to the committee. The Committee agreed 3-0 to recommend approval of the ordinance as a non-emergency.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

There was discussion regarding the Code Red system that is used by the City for emergency notifications. Mr. Ghanbari said that he has researched the Nixel system used by the Wood County Sheriff's Office, and he thinks there might be some great opportunities, through community partnering, to improve our program as well as the County's. He said he can share his information with the Committee and Ms. Kabat.

Mr. Ghanbari said that resident Ed Palmatier sent him a video of a school bus driver from another jurisdiction that uses the bus as a blocking mechanism to provide safety for students getting off the bus and crossing the street. Mr. Ghanbari said Mr. Palmatier asked if there was any City ordinance to allow bus drivers any leeway to angle the bus to protect students. Ms. Kabat said that she would have to see the video and discuss it with the Police Chief. Mr. Ghanbari said that he would send it to Ms. Kabat, and would also follow-up with Mr. Palmatier and copy Ms. Kabat on the email correspondence.

Mr. Ghanbari said that resident Melissa Coressel of Silver Maple Drive contacted him regarding parking concerns. She expressed concerns about parking being permitted on both sides of a narrow street, and how it impedes emergency vehicles, school buses, garbage trucks and other large vehicles. Mr. Ghanbari asked Ms. Kabat to provide an update following his February 7 inquiry on this situation. Ms. Kabat said that she discussed this with Chief Paez and Service Director Jon Eckel, and she advised the committee they would not recommend removing parking on either side of the street and are comfortable leaving it as is. Ms. Kabat said that she also asked Fire Chief Rudy Ruiz about the parking situation, and he has no concerns. Mr. Ghanbari indicated he would follow-up with Ms. Coressel and copy Ms. Kabat on the email correspondence.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Haraz N. Ghanbari  
Chairman, Safety Committee

***Next meeting: Tuesday, March 13, 2018 at 7:30 p.m., which is a change from the regular date and time.***

Statement from Perrysburg Citizen Meghan Michael  
Delivered on Tuesday, February 27, 2018  
Perrysburg City Council Safety Committee Meeting

Good evening City Council Safety Committee members and community members. Tonight I am here to discuss school safety. First, and foremost, I want to thank the city and local law enforcement for always keeping our community safety on the forefront of your minds.

I requested to speak tonight as a follow on to my remarks to the Perrysburg School Board of Education last Tuesday, following the shooting in Parkland, FL. Many in our community took to Facebook with opinions about what “should be done” and “who should be doing it” without actually getting anything accomplished. That being said, many simply stated, they didn’t know what to do. I decided that it was time for action. In all honesty, it is probably something I personally should have addressed with the school district long ago. I recently retired after 20 years of Naval service and my last job was as the Commanding Officer of the Navy and Marine Corps Reserve Center located in Perrysburg Township. During my tenure, I was responsible for the physical security of that facility and most importantly, the safety of over 250 Sailors, Marines and civilians without a full time security force, and most certainly, without an armed security presence. Many of you might have heard in the news about a Sailor who died in the attack on a Navy Reserve center in Chattanooga in 2015 was from Paulding, Ohio. His hometown held a memorial for him shortly after he was laid to rest in Chattanooga, and as the closest Navy organization who was handling the casualty procedures for his father, I was asked to speak at the memorial. It did not matter that I didn’t know him personally, but it was the hardest day of my Navy career and has left an impression that I will never forget. I pray that nobody in our school district or community ever faces an event like that. I speak of this experience for two reasons, first, the deep impact it had on me, and how I realized in a moment, everything can change for a family and a community. Second, it significantly changed the way my organization functioned on a day-to-day basis, how we functioned in the long run as well as caused us to make significant changes to our physical security. My mission the days following that incident was spending the majority of my days focusing on the security of my people.

I have reviewed the school board policies so I understand that every year, the superintendent must develop an emergency management plan. I also understand that that plan, the EMP is not disclosed to the public and I completely agree with that. That being said, I know as a community, we can do more to protect our kids. Just this past Sunday, I received an email from Mr. Best, principal of Hull Prairie Intermediate with an in-depth explanation of what the school is doing to focus on safety. I applaud Mr. Best for composing a thorough explanation and I replied to him as such. It is a good start to working as a community, but there can be much more done. I took the liberty to research the population of Perrysburg and according to the 2016 census, Perrysburg’s

population was just over 21,500. According to a report released by the school district in November 2017, just over 5200 students were in the Perrysburg school system. That means that 20% of our population is students and assuming at least half of the students live in a household with two parents, then another 20% of our population are parents of Perrysburg students, although I would estimate the percentage much higher. Perrysburg is clearly a community built around its children. The schools and community is why we chose to live here, and why ultimately we decided to stay after I retired. I believe that means our children and their safety, health and success are of the highest priority for the people of Perrysburg, so shouldn't we as a community all be engaged on the topic of school safety?

I believe there is a triad, or a three-legged stool to a school's security program. This is evidenced in the concentric circles in the diagram. The first leg of the stool, and the one almost everyone focuses on, particularly immediately after an active shooter incident is the operational or short-term actions. For our schools, that would be focusing on the physical security and vulnerabilities of our schools and kids. It is easy to say, add a police officer or additional security officers to the buildings. Or as is the case with the state of Ohio where teachers are legally allowed to conceal carry, train and empower our teachers to protect the children and themselves. I do not discount this focus and I strongly believe we need to and can do more with the physical security at our schools. We have the resources to do more in this area and should investigate as parents and community members, additional physical security measures. In Mr. Best's email to the families of HPI, he provided in somewhat detail some of the physical security measures in place at HPI. As HPI was the most recently built school, it is not surprising that the school was built to the specifications as he indicated in the weekly newsletter. That being said, as a parent, I have no idea what security measures are in place at PJHS where my daughter attends, as I have never been able to find any information on the subject. I do not know if the school has had a vulnerability assessment completed in order to remedy failures in the physical security of the building itself. Physical security to include, upgrades to the buildings and/or armed presence at the school, in and of themselves are important factors however they are the final layer of protection should anything happen on school grounds.

Also important to the three-legged stool, that almost nobody focuses on is long range planning. I envision in our community, a community/school task force dedicated to the security of our children. That task force would need constituents from all sectors of our community to include but not limited to the school board, the city council, local law enforcement, and parents. Additionally there needs to be a greater focus on communication. Coming from a military background, I can appreciate and understand the need for keeping certain details of an emergency response plan private, which ensures our children's safety. I am happy to see an increased amount of communication coming from both the district and the schools in regards to recent incidents at the schools as well as just general security information. We should not be waiting until there is an emergency to be communicating about these things! Long range planning will

facilitate routine safety meetings, routine correspondence to the parents and ensure that we keep security on the forefront of EVERYONE'S minds, not just the school administration and teachers. Safety should include the parents of the children as well but without communication of the school's plan of action, as parents, we cannot reinforce what the children are learning.

This leads me to the last leg of the stool to security, which is training. I will say personally, this might be the most important stool in my mind based on my experience with moving my organization from an unarmed and somewhat untrained organization to an armed and trained organization ready to handle emergencies. Joint training with our local law enforcement, fire department and emergency services must be at the pinnacle of what we do as a community to prepare ourselves should a tragic event occur such as Parkland, or Kentucky in January, or Sandy Hook. It is not enough to have an emergency action plan without exercising the FULL capabilities of that plan. I was happy to see multiple drills conducted at HPI since the beginning of the school year but would request that information be sent to parents immediately following the drill so parents can reinforce the training at home. I understand our teachers received ALICE training before the school year began, and they are responsible for teaching our children the like. Yet here is the problem with that, our teachers are not qualified experts in this area. Do we not owe it to our kids to give them the best "from the source" training possible for what could be the most important life saving topic, one that will carry forward with them into their adult lives? And while we are training our kids, why are we not educating our parents? How can we answer the questions our kids have about the topic without undergoing the training ourselves? While videos are nice and articles citing "how to talk to our kids about violence" are a good start, nothing replaces engagement with an expert in the topic, which allows parents and children the opportunity to ask questions. That is just one facet of training to be considered.

As a result of the tragic shooting in Chattanooga, my organization was required to conduct extensive training both on our own using tabletop exercises as well as drills with local law enforcement. In one particular drill, we simulated a single shooter with a shotgun entering our building. In less than one minute, he had "shot" multiple victims to include my one armed security guard. It took a few minutes for local law enforcement to arrive and when they did, they were not confident in their skills because they had never trained to this level before and were not completely familiar with the building. Even though they had walked the building before, and are trained, if they are not allowed to train as they would in a real fight, they aren't getting the training they need. Please understand, this is not a slam on the police department - the truth of the matter is they rarely get the opportunity to train in a scenario to that extent. Why would we not run more realistic drill with our local law enforcement and our teachers? I am sure people would say we don't want to put our kids through such realistic training and I can certainly understand and respect that, however could we not use community volunteers to play the role of the children and give our teachers, police and other first responders a more realistic scenario? Last, we must train our parents on the action and communication

plan should a tragic event happen here. Every single time an active shooter event occurs, there is chaos because so many people don't know where to go, who to call or who to ask for information. That plan must be promulgated in advance and practiced with the community. On the same day that I addressed the school board last week, there were two threats made to two different schools in the Central York School District in Pennsylvania. One parent or teacher (I could not discern which they were) commented on the district FB page "I understand it might have taken some time to get your kids from a school today. Let's remember unfortunately no one was really prepared for this today."

There are people who say "That can never happen here", we live in the safest community and while statistically that may be true, I am here to say, many of us believe "it can happen here". We have the tools and resources, and can implement further plans of action that can prevent the types of tragedies that seem to be occurring more and more often.

Implementing long range, operational and training plans to protect our kids may seem excessive to some people but I guarantee that anyone who has dealt with active shooter situations always says, there was so much more that could have been done. I do not want to be the community that says that. I thought my organization was well prepared until we put our heads together and started working in-depth, with all hands having input. I have no doubt much training and discussion has been done at our schools but I am proof that there is always more that can be done.

Tonight I am asking for the City Council Safety Committee's support to form a community/school task force with the specific focus on school safety and a way ahead for our community and schools. I have asked for the same support from board of education and superintendent. I will ask the Mayor, the police chief or anyone else if necessary. I already know there is community interest as I have spoken personally with many parents and have had many people say to me "we want to do more to protect our children, but what can we do?" We can put our heads together, get trained and continually look for more ways we can make our kids safe at school and in our community. Thank you.