

SAFETY COMMITTEE

OCTOBER 22, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Mark Weber. Committee members present were Deborah Born, Jim Matuszak and Mark Weber. Also present was Bridgette Kabat, City Administrator.

PROPOSED 2020 POLICE BUDGET

Chief Pat Jones reviewed the proposed 2020 budget for the police division. He stated that the salaries line item has been increased because he has nine officers that are eligible to retire next year so there may be increased costs because of unused sick, vacation, and comp time payouts. Chief Jones said the budget also includes the purchase of three new vehicles. He said they have gotten a little behind on the vehicle purchases because they deferred some of the 2019 purchases due to the new radio system. Other items included in the budget are new rifles, dollars to upgrade the training room, and a new copier and shredder. Mr. Weber asked if the overtime line item includes funds to cover overtime for the Christmas parade, and Mr. Matuszak asked if they could find room in the budget to cover these costs. Ms. Kabat and Chief Jones said that they could. Mr. Matuszak questioned the increase in the employee insurance line item. Ms. Kabat said she will verify the amount with the Finance Director. There was discussion regarding the type of vehicles to be purchased, training room improvements, and the purchase of rifles. Mr. Matuszak asked if they are anticipating any drug activity investigations. Chief Jones said that he does not want to talk about any ongoing investigations but yes, he does.

PROPOSED 2020 FIRE BUDGET

Chief Rudy Ruiz reviewed the proposed 2020 fire budget. He said that the budget includes three additional firefighters and additional dollars because, like the police, they also have several employees eligible to retire next year. He said overtime has been increased because of training overtime next year, and CPR has been eliminated from training. Other increases the Chief spoke about are in vehicle repairs and maintenance, supplies, and EMS supplies. Chief Ruiz said that the equipment line item includes \$79,000 for personal protective equipment like turnout gear and coats. However, he plans on writing a grant for the purchase, and it will be a regional grant with Rossford which will increase the chances of approval. Mr. Weber asked about overtime since three additional firefighters will be added, and he asked why training was reduced since training was a shortfall on the ISO rating. Chief Ruiz said that their training won't be reduced, the line item was reduced because the CPR expenses were removed. Ms. Born asked if there was anything they requested that did not get included in the budget. Chief Ruiz said that he wanted five heart monitors and there are three included in the 2020 budget and they will get the other two the following year. Ms. Kabat added that the three monitors to be purchased are for the medic units. Mr. Matuszak asked about a succession plan since Chief Ruiz is eligible to retire. There was discussion regarding what qualifications the Chief believes his replacement should have when he chooses to retire, which he said would not be next

year. Ms. Kabat stated that if the Committee has any other questions about the budget to let her know.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IN CROSSWALKS

Jacqueline Barchick and Cooper Suter, 564 W. Front Street, were present to talk about pedestrian safety in crosswalks. Ms. Barchick said that her family does a lot of walking and in her experience the trouble spots are West Boundary/West Front, Front/Louisiana, and Indiana/West Boundary. Ms. Barchick said that the solutions that she came up with are lowering the speed limit on Front Street to 25 mph and enforcement, re-engineering opportunities - she said the timing of the lights has changed but we're not quite there yet - and what we do in the way of planning with regards to pedestrian safety. Mr. Weber said he had similar concerns about the crosswalk at Cherry and Front and the Department of Public Service made some improvements that have helped. Ms. Kabat said that regarding the speed limit issue, state law mandates the minimum speed limit on state routes is 35 mph except for some extraordinary exceptions that she does not believe Front Street will meet. She said that we have a new contact at ODOT District 2 so she will reach out to him. She added that the Police Division did a stealth speed study and found that the average speed was below the posted speed limit during the study. Joe Hollon from the Department of Public Service was present and explained the adjustments made to the actuated crosswalk at West Front and West Boundary. He said that vehicles travelling westbound on Front Street and turning onto West Boundary have a site obstruction with their vehicle. When a pedestrian pushes the walk button, there is eight seconds with no traffic moving. Mr. Hollon stated that at an average walking speed, pedestrians can make it half-way through the cross walk which moves them out of the drivers' blind spot. The eight seconds with no traffic moving also creates awareness because drivers are looking around to see whose turn it is. Mr. Hollon said that this change was made a year ago and no complaints had been received until now. There was discussion regarding other suggestions to increase pedestrian safety and driver awareness including additional signage and increased enforcement. Chief Jones explained that some of the locations are hard to place a cruiser or there is an issue with getting a cruiser out safely to stop a vehicle. Mr. Matuszak suggested a flashing light on the crossbar when a pedestrian has pushed the walk button. Ms. Kabat said that she will discuss this further with the ODOT liaison.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Weber, Chairman
Safety Committee

Next meeting: Tuesday, November 26, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.

