

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE REPORT – JULY 12, 2021

Members: Reinhold, Chairman; Richard, Vice Chairman; Ressler, Member; Zimmerman, Alternate; Petrick, Staff

Attendees: Reinhold, Chairman; Richard, Vice Chairman; Ressler, Member; Council Members: Rowe; Martin, Barr; Mayor Mowen; Staff: Petrick; B. Thompson; R. Gockley; Other Attendees: Kim Stonebraker; Chief Mike Kiefer; Teresa Caruthers; Brian Hoffman (plus 2 individuals from American Legion); Rebecca Beres (Zoom)

The Public Safety Committee met on June 21, 2021, and discussed the following:

Action Items:

1. **Termination of COVID-19 Declaration of Emergency:** Borough Manager Thompson provided an overview of the declaration termination. The Committee agreed that a resolution will be presented for action at the July 12, 2021, Council Voting Session.

Discussion Items:

1. **Police Department Monthly Report:** Chief John Petrick provided an overview of the monthly report. He detailed the “Excellence in Policing” efforts of the department. Officers (Cook/Newswanger) participated in Fulton Elementary School programs: Girls on the Run and Dream Catchers. The officers not only assisted in the facilitation of the program but also serve as role models to these students. Officer Davis visited the Ephrata Area Rehabilitation Services as part of community outreach. The Department showed wonderful teamwork during an incident involving a person in crisis (appeared as though the person had a real gun and wanted to harm himself). The person was located and a mental health referral was made. Other exceptional police work was mentioned as part of the report. Council members discussed issues: loud exhausts (limitations on enforcement due to vehicle inspection); Bethany Road closure and the detour affecting large tractor trailers turning along Akron Road (concern sent to Public Works); and vehicles with tinted windows (Department has tint meter for enforcement use). Council member inquired about traffic signal light delays for accident prevention. Manager Thompson informed the Committee that 1-2 times per year, a traffic signal maintenance contractor resets all traffic signals to Penn DOT permit standards.
2. **Promotional Process:** Chief John Petrick provided an overview of the upcoming Sergeant promotional process. Currently there are two Sergeant position vacancies. Chief Petrick stated that Ephrata Borough Civil Service Commission previously approved the promotional process and Borough Council previously approved a resolution regarding Civil Service Commission Rules and Regulations. Seven Department police officers will be participating in the upcoming process. The process consists of the following: written exam, structured interview, and selection committee final interview. Chief Petrick will provide future updates regarding the process.
3. **Emergency Management Report:** Randy Gockley provided an overview of the Emergency Management monthly report. He stated that emergency plans for the July 3 Firecracker Race and July 4th Ephrata fireworks events are actively being prepared. At report time, the local congregational care facilities had zero confirmed COVID-19 patients. Kim Stonebraker of WellSpan-Ephrata Community Hospital provided a hospital update and reported four COVID-19 patients and that vaccination efforts continue.

4. **Fire Alarm Fees:** Manager Bob Thompson provided an overview of the current alarm ordinance and that the fees are correct. Discussion took place about having two distinct alarm categories, one for fire related and the other category would be non-fire related (such as burglar alarms). Each category would follow the current fee schedule for false alarm in their respective category. Both the Pioneer and Lincoln Fire Companies would submit false fire alarm documentation to the police department who would handle the administrative false alarm count. Fines collected from false fire-related calls would be forwarded to the respective fire company. The fines received could be used to offset operation costs of responding, etc. The Borough Staff will review the current ordinance and provide suggested wording changes for Council's review.
5. **American Legion Event:** Brian Hoffman of the American Legion Cloister Post 429 provided an overview of a proposed August 21, 2021, event on the Post's property for a full day of activities for the community. Part of the event would be a Patriot Ride (hundreds of motorcycles), family-based activities, as well as military vehicles from Ft. Indiantown Gap would be on display. Also, he spoke about a Vietnam-era Huey helicopter being part of the day's event that included a landing of helicopter for display. The helicopter would remain on site for as long as arranged and fly out later. Mr. Hoffman informed Council that the Lancaster War Birds would assess the area for an appropriate landing zone. Pioneer Fire Chief Mike Kiefer had no concerns with the landing of such a helicopter since medical helicopters land often in the area. Chief Kiefer informed Mr. Hoffman that Pioneer Fire Company would be available and present during the landing. Discussion took place about possible proper landing zone locations. Mr. Hoffman discussed event use of the lower area near the playhouse. Mr. Thompson informed Mr. Hoffman to inquire with EPAC regarding possible shows and their need for event parking. Mr. Thompson informed Council that he will inquire with DVIT (Delaware Valley Trusts...Borough Insurance) regarding insurance-related parameters. Any requirements would be forwarded to the event coordinator. Chairman Reinhold informed Mr. Hoffman that a vote related to the helicopter use could occur at the July 12th Council meeting.
6. **Pioneer Fire Company Update:** Chief Mike Kiefer provided an update on the following: pursuing QRS certification to treat fire personnel, new aerial ladder truck production (possible July 2, 2021, start of production with possible delivery in November-December 2021, grant funding that was received for boats and thermal imaging items, current water rescue equipment has aged out. He also informed Council that they would like to ramp up public education efforts and use apparatus during events (downtown) as a recruitment tool.
7. **Old Business Items:** None

Miscellaneous Items:

1. Council member Linda Martin reminded those present to view the Community Calendar for upcoming events.
2. Tim Barr commended to department's uptick in integrity under Chief John Petrick.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:25 PM.