

HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES
OF AUGUST 13, 2018

Municipal Council of the City of Vermilion
Municipal Complex, 685 Decatur Street, Vermilion, Ohio 44089

In Attendance: **Vermilion City Council:**
S. Herron, President of Council; Monica Stark, Council at Large; John Gabriel, Ward One; Frank Loucka, Ward Two; Steve Holovacs, Ward Three; Barb Brady, Ward Four.; Brian Holmes, Ward Five

Administration:
Jim Forthofer, Mayor; Amy Hendricks, Finance Director; Chris Howard, City Engineer; Tony Valerius, Service Director; Chris Hartung, Police Chief; Chris Stempowski, Fire Chief

Call to Order: B. Brady, Chairperson, RESOLVED THAT this Health & Safety Committee comprised of the committee of the whole does now come to order.

TOPIC ONE: **Fire Chief's Report**

Fire Chief Stempowski tipped his hat to city council on the hard decisions they have to make for the city. He reported the fire department responded to 28 incidents in the month of June and 28 in July for a total of 126 total responses year to date.

He reported the fire truck maintenance schedule is currently ongoing. Total truck maintenance and inspection is being done this year which is beneficial to the department. He assumes pump testing will be completed sometime in September. On a side note, he is taking one of the trucks out of rotation (oldest in fleet stationed at Devon Drive) as it's not worth the money to invest further repairs to reserve status.

He said each year the county fire departments rotate days for coverage at the Erie County Fair and Vermilion provided coverage for the Demolition Derby on August 12.

He reported the new command vehicle arrived and they will look at the specs for command options. They are focusing on the rear compartment and will continue to review the specs. As far as the current command vehicle, he doesn't know what they are doing with it as of yet.

He stated that in talking with the Finance Director, they wanted to try something new with their hose testing because every year the testing takes three to four months of trainings to complete. This is a big part of making sure the hoses are safe for the firefighters use, but it's also about the ISO rating and grade, so it's not something they cannot do. However, spending three to four months trying to get this testing completed takes the department away from specific discipline training which he thinks would better serve the department, so after investigation and a cost benefit analysis, it's a little bit more expensive versus the labor they pay the personnel to do this, but the benefit to the department is the training they will get in those other disciplines as opposed to spending three or four months testing hoses. He said this is a trial year for them to see what happens. They are having a company come in to do the testing for \$1,700 in

September. They have around 30,000 feet of hose and this company could do the testing in a matter of two days.

He reported that an incident occurred at Station #2 involving a truck that created damage to the station. The station has been repaired and the truck involved sustained damage. The estimate for the station repairs was just below \$15,000. He noted that parts are on order to repair the truck. He said a side door that opens up and down was ultimately in the upwards position and as the driver pulled out he took the wall between two bay doors out causing damage. The truck is in service without the door and compartment and he thinks the cost for repair was just under \$3,000. They reviewed their policies and drivers are required to do a 360 walk around the truck before they get into the driver's seat. They made some policy and procedure changes which include additional personnel, safety vests, and radio communications. He said internally they are trying to avoid having this occur again.

He reported the Aerial Truck (#90) has a frayed cable on the ladder portion, which immediately took this truck out of service. It was dumb luck the company was in the area because normally they perform this inspection in October. The parts were ordered and the cable was repaired; then it required a third party to come in and do another inspection for that cable to get recertified. There are two minor deficiencies outside of the cable itself on the truck that is holding up the recertification and the truck is still in service. The parts are on order and as soon as they are in they will receive recertification on the truck.

He thanked the finance director as apparently she had spent time reviewing the fire department's previous year's spending. He said there is no hiding the fact they have been playing catch up for 10 – 12 years over the previous 30. They are to the point where they have plateaued and most everything is compliant. He said the finance director provided future advice about their future spending looking five or six years down the road. With their current spending and funding and looking five years or so down the road, they were told their funding would not be sufficient. They hope to start trickling down as they have been over budget almost every year, but with the finance director's input and insight, and their involvement departmentally as a whole, he thinks they can get back into their comfort zone. B. Brady asked how a new fire station fits into that scenario and Chief Stempowski said he is referring to the operating fund and not the capital improvement fund.

TOPIC TWO: Police Chief's Report

Chief Hartung reported that Sunday, August 19 is the Triathlon at Sherod Park and asked everyone to exercise caution due to the congestion. He said at last month's Third Thursday it was very a big event and they are reevaluating how they handle the traffic flow and traffic situations. He said Captain Graham had been there last month directing and they worked with the service director with regards to the new light system. He said they had tremendous traffic problems at West River and Sandusky Street, but noted it was a terrific event and it's a good problem to have. He said the pedestrian traffic is still there number one concern and asked everyone to exercise extreme caution.

He said they had conversations with the court and they are looking at a replacement transport vehicle specifically for the purposes of transporting prisoners to and from court. Upon conversing with Sheriff Sigsworth he has generously asked the commissioners to declare one of his transport vans as surplus property to turn over, and the Erie County Commissioners agreed to do so. This van will be the property of the Court and they will maintain it and will equip it as

required. He said the van has high mileage but it has been well-maintained. The overall benefit to the police department is to knock out 100 miles per week on their fleet vehicles.

He said Lorain County is dabbling around in a radio project and he is cautiously optimistic about this. On July 20, the Burn Local Solicitation Grant opportunity may be something they can use to upgrade the radio issues they are having.

He said the department will be doing their "Hands on Driver's Simulation" training on Devon Drive in another week. He told council they can take the opportunity to see how this works.

B. Holmes suggested that he look into Nationwide to obtain new laptops and tablet upgrades as they are law enforcement friendly. He noted the application deadline is September 1 at 11:59pm. Chief Hartung said it concerns him as they have laptops in their cruisers that cost \$5,000 a piece and the way technology is developing he thinks they will be able to operate on hand held devices and streamline their network. He said Nationwide has great opportunities but the way technology is, they spend \$5,000 for a laptop and in three years they have an obsolete laptop that doesn't run. They need a \$10,000 server upgrade to be able to run it.

J. Gabriel noted that Officer Holmes had helped an elderly neighbor of his unlock her car and he thought this was a cool service in Vermilion. Chief Hartung said there are not too many agencies that still do lock-outs because they are mostly liability related issues, but he likes doing them so much because everybody is so happy to see them.

M. Stark addressed the radios the Chief had discussed and asked if \$100,000 would be the cost to the city for new radios. Chief Hartung said this was the quote they received from VASU to upgrade the radios to digital. They did a base radio conversion when they took over the dispatch operations of the fire department, but the system they have is upgradable, so they don't have to buy that equipment, but as far as the equipment, the vehicles, etc., it's a \$100,000 project. He said this will be a county-wide project and it lends them to grant opportunities because it requires a lot of agencies coming together.

B. Brady asked if the camera program is moving forward and Chief Hartung said they had a few people on there but he thinks there is a big brother vibe anytime the cops ask people where their cameras are located. This is not what they are trying to do; it's just nice to have this database if somebody gets broken into. He thinks something was lost in translation of this program, so they didn't get a lot of interest.

B. Brady adjourned the meeting after no further discussion came before the committee.

Next Meeting: September 24, 2018 at 7:00 pm

Gwen Fisher, Certified Municipal Clerk