

HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

OF JUNE 11, 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. Absent: Brian Holmes, Ward Five

Administration:
Jim Forthofer, Mayor; Amy Hendricks, Finance Director; Chris Howard, City Engineer

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

C. Stempowski reported the fire department responded to 16 incidents in the month of May for a total of 78 total responses year to date.

He reported the roof repairs are scheduled for Wednesday on the south flat roof at Station #1 on Ohio Street. A dumpster was put behind the building and he is trying to see if they can work around this for the Fish Festival weekend. They are hoping to get the dumpster out in two or three days.

Chief reported on the following:

-Emergency Vehicle Driver's Training Course (Obstacle Course) was completed last month and all personnel attended and passed.

-Chevron striping was put on the heavy rescue truck; when purchased it was not the standard or requirement at the time.

-Reminder that the Fire Safety Trailer owned by the Lorain County Fire Chief's will be available this weekend for the Fish Festival and Safety Town.

-Department is preparing for festival coverage and fireworks.

S. Herron said a resident questioned him about the hydrant located in the Blue Bird Beach area on the north side of Liberty that apparently is not functioning. He asked if this poses a danger to the Fire Department or property. C. Stempowski said he has looked at this and the Fire Department is prepared to respond in that area with fire protection. It's not the hydrant itself that's not functioning, but it's something with the distribution line that runs under Liberty Avenue. His understanding is this would be a very extensive repair and he can't say whether or not the administration is moving forward with making this repair, but the fire department is

aware the hydrant is out of service. As for any structure fire they run all their engines and tanker, so he is confident that the water supply for initial attack will be addressed. S. Herron said he will send an email to the service director so he can advise council at a later date on this situation with respect to repair of this line that runs under Liberty Avenue.

TOPIC TWO: Police Chief's Report

C. Hartung reported that Patrolman Steve Hammersmith and Patrolman Jason Mobley resigned. Patrolman Mobley was hired full time by the North Ridgeville Police Department and Patrolman Hammersmith accepted a full time position with Judge Lux in the Erie County Municipal Court. They both were fantastic additions to the department and did a great job. He wished them both the best of luck. B. Brady asked if both were employed part time with the city and C. Hartung responded yes.

C. Hartung reported that Safety Town began today and this will be Chrystal Deverick's last year running the program as Dispatcher Kopriva will be taking it over. He noted that Chrystal has about 15 years in the program and is ready to pass the torch.

He stated officers responded recently to Highbridge Road for a suicidal male and upon arrival the male started firing a handgun and the rounds went through the roof. Officers rightfully felt they were under fire, so they were able to secure the area and the Lorain County Swat Team assisted along with the Fire Department to keep people out of the area. They eventually were able to get the individual out and he was transported for evaluation. He said it was a nice job by all parties who helped out.

He reported on Tuesday there was another swat call where Officer G. Ptacek was shot during an entry. Vermilion's Patrolman Bailey was the second guy at the door and gunfire was exchanged with the suspect who was hit three times. They spent seven minutes under fire while they were waiting for Officer Ptacek to be evacuated. He said Patrolman Bailey did an outstanding job and the Elyria Police Department is conducting the investigation. He said this is his first officer involved in a shooting investigation. The law director was contacted to assist Patrolman Bailey in his statement with the EPD during the investigation which is standard.

He said this past weekend there was another suicidal male who discharged his handgun in the ceiling and they surrounded the residence and were able to get him out. He was transported to the Nord Center.

He said the city has had about 61 vehicle entries since January. They have had a few breaks and have identified one of the suspects on video and are tracking him down. They also have DNA profiles they are waiting on. He said Sgt. Davis has been doing a remarkable job following up on this.

He said fireworks will be held on Friday and they will be closing the river at 9:00 p.m. He said they will have a beer selling area by the stage during the Fish Festival as the Chamber doesn't want uniformed officers checking ID's. They will have bouncers because they feel police presence is hampering their sales. They will monitor the situation to see how it goes.

He addressed radio issues and explained the officers involved in the suspect that was discharging his gun this past weekend were having difficulty communicating with the portable radios. Eventually they need to look at their system, but the union may be pushing the issue, so it could be a grievable issue. He thinks this issue may come up in negotiations. S. Herron asked

if it could be the unions position that each officer would have new radios, or does the entire system need to be changed. C. Hartung said there is a combination of issues which could be related to atmospheric conditions and geographical conditions. He said they have had their repeater for a long time, but VASU has come out to look at it three times and they have said the repeater is fine, so they have to identify the time, date and when the issues arise to compare it to these conditions. He said eventually they are going to need to make the conversion to the P25 Digital which is something the FCC will mandate eventually. He said it would be good if they can do it as a county-wide initiative because Vermilion individually will not get any grant funding for this. They would need to collaborate with outside agencies. He said they can upgrade their department for around \$25,000 to \$30,000; with the Fire Department it could be around \$50,000.

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

Next Meeting: July 16, 2018 at 7:00 pm

Gwen Fisher, Certified Municipal Clerk