

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

March 3, 2015 – 4:30 pm

Members Present: Jane Hansen, Scottie Ard, and Jim Jackson

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Mike Darrow, Jim VanderWyst, Matt Melby, and Jeanne Bergman

Jane Hansen called the meeting to order and roll call was taken.

Scottie Ard moved to adopt the agenda as presented, seconded by Jim Jackson, and carried.

Fire Department Capital Improvement Plan

The Fire Department's Capital Improvement Plan for the next 2-3 years will be presented at the March 18th Fire Advisory Board. Attending the meeting will be the former fire chief from the City of Eau Claire, as a third party, private consultant. He will be reviewing the fleet, looking at what currently exists, evaluate future needs and connected costs. To cover the Capital Plan improvements, staff would like to include a financial roadmap which would include a plan for grants and fund raising. This targeted roadmap would help pay for improvements and hopefully help avoid borrowing funds.

Fire Calls

Currently the City funds all fire calls for City properties. Townships are now billed for the firemen's time but no additional costs for the usage of the truck or equipment. The City currently budgets approximately \$25,000 to cover these costs. City Attorney, Nick Vivian, is drafting a new ordinance adding language requiring people using this service responsible for these costs, which would be at a fixed rate. The proposed ordinance will be brought up informally at the next City Council meeting so the community is aware of the proposed changes. A draft of the ordinance will be emailed to the Public Safety Committee members when it's available.

National Night Out

The second annual National Night Out is scheduled for August 4th, 2015. Discussion followed on how to recruit volunteers to spearhead this event, possible sponsors, how to announce the event, and how to make safety fun. Mike Darrow will ask for volunteers on facebook, twitter and the City website. National Night Out will also be brought up at the Chamber breakfast where they will be asked to post information on their website. A suggestion was made to combine the City Utilities Customer Appreciation Picnic with National Night Out. Mike will present the idea at the next Utility Commission meeting. A National Night Out organizational meeting is scheduled for April 7th at 6:00 pm.

Facility Security Updates

As part of the Health Safety and General Welfare, Craig Yehlik will deliver a *Active Shooter* presentation at the March 9th City Council meeting. Staff will be working on policies and procedures to ensure all departments are properly trained in the event of an emergency. These policies will be reviewed by the Employee Handbook subcommittee

Stop Lights at Hwy 64 and Wall Street

Mike gave a presentation on the *Northwest Area Access and Economic Development Study* which covers the HWY 64/65 corridor. In 2008, a study was done by the DOT before the new Wisconsin-Minnesota bridge was agreed upon. With that in mind, the focus of the new study was to look at the old DOT goals and the goals today. The new study looked at land use, pedestrian plan, traffic calming, jug handle vs diamond interchange alternatives, future growth, crash data, parkscapes, and landscaping making the corridor a transitional avenue creating a sense of place. The plan includes the following three phases:

- Stop light at Wall Street and HWY 64
- Stop light at North 4th Street and HWY 64
- Diamond Interchange

The DOT has indicated they want the HWY 64 corridor to be an expressway; however, they set a precedent when they allowed the City to put in a stoplight at the intersection of HWY 64 and 65. Scottie Ard moved to make a recommendation of approval of the presentation, to the City Council, seconded by Jim Jackson, and carried. Staff will be looking for a recommendation from the City Council for an official plan to take to the DOT.

New Richmond Public Transit

Mike and Beth Thompson met with members of the Deerfield and New Richmond Public Transit to discuss drop off and response times. They also audited the taxi books and believe customer service is being adequately met. Mike reported New Richmond Public Transit has a secondary contract with the schools which originated in 2010. He is looking into the contract and has asked Beth to investigate which children in the New Richmond school district are not being provided bus service. Members of the committee would like further information on the contract with the school to see if this service interferes with others utilizing the taxi service and if this contract jeopardizes revenue generated. Mike will look into the legality of the taxi service working under two contracts and suggested a representative from New Richmond Public Transit attend the next meeting.

Ambulance Update

The New Richmond ambulance service cannot continue to operate on the model they are currently using as it is not financially sustainable. Currently they charge by usage and population, however, surrounding communities charge on population only. If New Richmond changed to per capita only, they could save approximately \$17,000 per year. Discussion took place on if this is a fair practice and the need to hire an independent consultant to evaluate the current program. The ambulance association ended the year with 44 days of cash on hand with the goal being 60 to 90. Mike suggested staff contact River Falls and Hudson to see how they operate their program. This topic will be brought back to the next meeting which will give staff time to do further research.

Communication and Miscellaneous

None

Scottie Ard moved to adjourn, seconded by Jim Jackson, and carried.

Meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Jeanne Bergman