

ASHTABULA CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORT

NAME OF COMMITTEE: SAFETY FORCES

DATE: Wednesday, March 17, 2010

TIME & PLACE OF MEETING: 8:00 a.m. – Municipal Building 2nd Floor Conference Room

MEMBER(S) PRESENT: Mr. Joseph Rose (Chair/Ward 1 Councilor), Mr. James Trisket (Ward 5)
Ms. Betty Kist (Council Vice President)

MEMBER(S) ABSENT: Mr. Charles Brockway (Council President/Ex-Officio Member)

STAFF PRESENT: Fire Chief Ronald Pristera, Police Captain Jeff Bradley
Clerk of Council LaVette Hennigan

SCHEDULED VISITORS: Mr. Larry DeGeorge, Owner (Security Technologies)

PUBLIC PRESENT: Mrs. Wanda Bates-Rose

MEDIA PRESENT: NONE

REPORT OF BUSINESS CONDUCTED

FIRE DEPARTMENT

1. Fire Chief's Report

a. Truck Purchase

The Chief apologized and took responsibility for doing so for his procedural error in not first submitting to the Committee his request to purchase a new Ford Explorer. He reported he was following how it was done when the last vehicle was purchased, in that it was presented to the Manager for presentation to the full Council at a regular council meeting.

The new purchase will replace the department's 10 year old Ford Expedition, which needs major repairs (manifold, exhaust, steering, 70,000 odometer miles which probably equates to 300,000 street miles; and has been to Louisiana twice). The new vehicle is being purchased off the Federal GSA Schedule, for \$10,000.00 below list. The purchase should have been made last year but grant matching funds and the fire station roof repairs were needed.

b. Equipment Needs

The department "thinks" they need a fire truck in 2012; ½ of the protective equipment will be purchased this year; and ½ of the protective equipment will be purchased in 2011. In 2012 the department's newest truck will be 9 years old; the oldest will be 26 years old.

ACTION: Ms. Kist moved, Mr. Trisket seconded the Fire Chief's request to purchase the Ford Explorer; motion CARRIED.

c. Obsolete Vehicle – 2000 Ford Expedition

The Chief would like to sell the department's Ford Expedition and use the proceeds for fire equipment or wherever needed. He said he was going to see if a City department wants or needs it, but would not recommend it.

ACTION: Ms. Kist moved, Mr. Trisquet, to allow the Fire Chief to declare the 2000 Ford Expedition as surplus and using his discretion, dispose of it.

d. False Alarms

The Committee along with the Fire and Police Chiefs and Mr. Larry DeGeorge, owner of Security Technologies (ST), has been discussing possible changes to the City's False Alarm procedures. One of the topics has centered on Mr. DeGeorge's suggestion that alarm companies be registered with the City, and has made suggestions as to how this can happen. Another topic discussed is the need to distinguish between "false" and "unintentional" alarms. Sample false alarm legislation has been reviewed, the Fire Chief has drafted a sample ordinance titled "Regulation of Automatic Alarm Systems"; and more discussion is needed. Police Captain Bradley had no comment.

ACTION: The Fire Chief, a representative of the Police Department and Mr. DeGeorge agreed to review Codified Ordinance Chapter 1501 titled "Ohio Fire Code", and draft a proposed ordinance and present their recommendation to the Committee.

e. Snowplowing

It was suggested that snowplowing also be a licensed and registered activity.

f. Codified Ordinance Chapter 1501 titled "Ohio Fire Code"

ACTION: The Clerk of Council asked the Chief if he still wanted the Committee to consider the items he outlined in the email copy below. The Chief replied yes, but that he would have to review them to see if any updating is needed:

EMAIL

From: Ron Pristera, Ashtabula City Fire Chief
Date: Tuesday, November 10, 2009

Explanation of Updates

1501.01 Adopts three appendixes to the Ohio Fire Code. They are: calculating fire service water supply, fire hydrant spacing and

1501.04 Cleans up some language in how the fire prevention bureau is organized and staffed. It also adds fee's for multiple reinspections when they are needed. This is designed to prevent and encourage people who have been cited under the fire code for violations to correct them before we return for the re-inspection.

1501.18 Is an entirely new section that seeks to settle the ongoing issue in the badly constructed false alarm ordinance. It clearly defines a false alarm and establishes standards for alarm companies and occupancies with alarms.

Some of the changes in 1501.04 conflicts with current 1501.13, so we need to delete it and renumber the entire Part 15.

If this is too much for the allotted time frame/budget, let me know.

Ron

g. Demolition

The Chief reported he is pleased with the demolitions taking place through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program Grant administered through the Housing & Community Development Department. He reported the garage fire at 311 Pennsylvania Avenue was arson for profit case because the owners no longer wanted to make payments on the car that was in the garage. Information was received the night of the fire and the Police Department apprehended (4) people. The home owner is personally in foreclosure, and does not have the money to remove the remaining part of the garage, so the Fire Department went to court and the judge sentenced the (4) convicted of the arson to tear the building down with hammers and saws when the weather permits. A City Fire Investigator agreed to supervise the activity through adult probation. The Chief said he was happy county judges were open to something other than incarceration.

2. PROHIBIT TEXTING WHILE OPERATING A MOTOR VEHICLE (see history below)
ACTION: The Committee asked the Clerk to request that City Solicitor Franklin be advised that they would still like him to draft a proposed ordinance for their review.

HISTORY:

1/20/10 – Clerk provided Committee with sample legislation
1/27 – Clerk submitted sample legislation to Solicitor for draft of proposed legislation for Committee’s review
2/2 – Committee’s desire for local enforcement through legislation briefly discussed in Pre-Council
3/15 – Clerk sent reminded to Solicitor regarding 1/27 proposed draft request for 3/17 Committee review; Clerk asked Solicitor about status of proposed draft at 3/15 regular council meeting; Solicitor agreed to provide proposed legislation for 3/17 Committee meeting
3/16 – proposed legislation not received

3. CO 509.08 MINOR CURFEW (see history below)

The Committee reviewed the minor curfew law presently on the books; said they felt change is not needed; Police Captain Bradley agreed.

ACTION: The Committee suggested Police Chief Robert Stell review the legislation and make a recommendation to the Committee.

HISTORY

2/19 – President received letters from (3) Lakeside Junior High School students regarding Council’s need to address minor curfew language, make it fairer, and make the law known to minors and their parents; Clerk provided copy of letters to Manager at request of President and asked Manager to have Police Department (PD) address intermediate students
2/23 – Clerk suggested Manager have PD address intermediate, junior high and high school students
3/17 – Committee discussed; Police Captain Bradley suggested language remain as is; Committee suggested Police Chief Stell review language and provide comment to Committee; Clerk gave Bradley a copy of letters received by President Brockway for Chief’s review while reviewing CO 509.08 language; Chief is to make recommendation to Committee prior to or at April 21 Committee meeting
3/18 – Chief acknowledge receipt of letters and the suggestion that his department speak with students; Chief will comment in writing to the Committee

MISCELLANEOUS

A. West Avenue Overpass

ACTION: It was asked if the construction is on schedule; no one present could reply.

B. Commercial / Recreational Vehicle Ordinance

The Chair reported the recently enacted commercial/recreational vehicle Ordinance No. 2010-01 is not being enforced; and provided a picture of a Union Avenue violation.

ACTION: The Committee asked the Clerk of Council to request an update on the Manager's March 15 Regular Council meeting report that the "enforcement officers" are working on the Union Avenue violation and (3) others. Police Captain Bradley was provided with the picture of the Union Avenue violation.

Mr. Pugliese moved, Mr. Trisket seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 a.m.; motion CARRIED.

Scribe: LaVette E. Hennigan, MMC, Clerk of Council
(minutes/committees/2010/03172010sfcmm)