

Village Board Public Safety Committee

MINUTES

~ Thursday, August 8, 2013 ~

CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Senicka (Committee Co-Chair) called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

In attendance were:

Mayor Gunter, Clerk Szymiski, Trustee Addington, Trustee Barker, Trustee Nero, Trustee Senicka, Village Manager Searl, Police Chief Mulhearn and Fire Chief Weiss

Also present:

Deputy Fire Chief Connolly, EMS Director Dralle, Fire Prevention Bureau Director Kaufman, Deputy Police Chief Gunther, Sergeant Gruen, Sergeant Schlicher, Finance Director Parker, Public Works Director May, Human Resources Director Casey, Community Development Director Malik, Police and Fire Commission Members Hrnclirik and Kovanda and Recording Secretary Hardy

Absent:

Trustee Barry and Trustee Scott

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chief Weiss requested another item be added to the Fire Department agenda items, Life Safety Grants - B1 District. Trustee Senicka approved the agenda addition.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Department's 90th Anniversary Committee

- Chief Weiss advised a committee was created to coordinate the Fire Department's Open House / 90th Anniversary celebration. The committee has met two times up to date.
 - A decision was made to move the event from its normal Tuesday evening during Fire Prevention week to the following Sunday, October 13th from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Staff is hoping additional public would attend due to the event not being held on a school night.
 - Several planned activities include: live fire burn cell demonstration, educational activities, helicopter landing, and other fire related activities.
 - The Park District has authorized use of buses to transport attendees to Fire Department Headquarters Station.
 - Chief Weiss further stated a highlight to the anniversary celebration will be Headquarters Station signage being dedicated to Former Chief Frank Johanik.
- Chief Weiss further indicated several proposed activities will be driven by available funding as the event was not included in the current budget.
 - Chief Weiss indicated staff is investigating several funding resources. A total of \$1,000 each was requested from the North, South and Golfview Hills Fire Districts and another \$500 will be requested from the Citizens Fire Academy Alumni Association.
 - Chief Weiss met with Westmont Chamber of Commerce President, Larry Forssberg regarding additional funding options. A suggestion was made to create a sponsorship letter to distribute to the Westmont business community. The Fire Department will be working with the Chamber to create the letter.
- Village Manager Searl said staff may be able to utilize \$3,000-\$5,000 from the hotel/motel tax fund. Staff will investigate and handle administratively, board action would not be required.

New Ambulance

- Chief Weiss advised Fire Station No. 2's ambulance is currently due for replacement.
 - An Ambulance Committee has been created to work on the specifications, etc. for the purchase. Committee members will be attending the International Fire Chiefs Conference on August 16th to visit different ambulance vendors.
 - An option of placing the old box on a new chassis was investigated. It would appear there are only two companies able to complete the work with an approximate 1 1/2 year completion timeframe. Staff feels the 1 1/2 year timeframe is too long to wait for a new ambulance as it will take approximately an additional 6-8 months to prepare specifications.
- Chief Weiss further stated HQ Station ambulance will also be due for replacement the next budget year. Staff will investigate potential discounts for the purchase of

two ambulances.

- He further said a total of \$175,000 is included in the current ambulance replacement budget. Staff is estimating \$185,000 per ambulance replacement.
- Village Manager Searl questioned how many vendors were available.
 - EMS Director Dralle advised several were available. Staff would obtain additional vendor information while attending the International Chiefs Conference.
- Chief Weiss said he would also contact other MABAS Division 10 departments expressing interest in combining ambulance purchases if possible.
- Chief Weiss advised the Fire Act Grant has expired and is no longer being offered. A request had been made for \$100,000 in funding to be used towards the purchase of heart monitors. Staff will need to investigate alternative funding sources.

Fire Codes

- Community Development Director Malik advised Community Development and Fire Department staff have been working together on updating codes.
 - Staff proposes a rewrite of local amendments along with an update to the 2012 International Code Council Codes. The updates would be in an attempt to streamline codes and make more user friendly.
 - Fire Prevention Bureau Director Kaufman distributed copies of the Proposed Time Schedule to Upgrade Westmont Codes from 2003 ICC Based to 2012 ICC Based.
- Village Manager Searl questioned if new certifications would be required?
 - Fire Prevention Bureau Director Kaufman responded new staff members would have to test under the current codes.
 - He further indicated if codes were updated new books would need to be purchased at an estimated cost of \$1,500.
- Community Development Director Malik said looking at newer codes allows Village staff to regulate newer projects and new construction technology which in turn makes it easier to contractors.
- Village Manager Searl expressed concern over costs associated with implementing new codes and the cost being passed onto developers. He questioned if there were any codes in between current codes and 2012 codes that could be considered. He also asked if staff had reviewed current Village amendments.
 - Fire Prevention Bureau Director Kaufman advised amendments have been reviewed and they appear to be more restrictive than the proposed code update. He also said it was important to remember that codes are generally not retroactive and are typically applied to only new construction.
- Village Manager Searl questioned codes utilized by surrounding communities.
 - Fire Prevention Bureau Director Kaufman indicated a formal survey would be made of all surrounding communities.
- Community Development Director Malik said she would contact some development contractors to see if codes updates would have an impact on their operations.
 - She further indicated staff would continue to research and report findings

at the October 17, 2013 Building and Zoning meeting.

Kurtz Contract

- Fire Chief Weiss advised the Kurtz Paramedic Service, Inc. contract is due for renewal. He stated Kurtz has been the contractual provider of firefighter/EMS personnel to the Village of Westmont since 1998.
 - Fire Chief Weiss advised since 2007 Kurtz has been working with the Village through difficult economic times. Kurtz has saved the Village approximately \$140,000 over the past five years through contract renegotiations. Their contract has only increased \$80,000 over the last five years.
 - Fire Chief Weiss stated Kurtz Paramedic Service, Inc. proposes to extend the current contract an additional year at the same cost of \$929,606.00.
- EMS Director Dralle stated Westmont was one of Kurtz's first fire contracts and they have worked very well over the years. She further stated Kurtz has not lost any of their contracts within the last five years which speaks well for them.
 - She further indicated even without increasing their contract costs, Kurtz plans on providing a 1.5% salary increase to Westmont Fire Department contract employees.
 - Fire Chief Weiss said Westmont has also maintained several long time contract medics with minimal turnover which is a benefit to the department.
 - Village Manager Searl asked if Westmont could remove a contract medic due to unsatisfactory performance. EMS Director Dralle indicated Westmont has full authority relating to performance and employment with Westmont.
- Chief Weiss further stated Kurtz has sponsored approximately \$3,600 in EMS tents for special events within Westmont. They also plan on continuing to sponsor events as needed.
- Trustee Addington asked if other companies could provide the same service.
 - EMS Director Dralle indicated there were other companies such as PSSI which the Village utilized in the past.
- Trustee Nero questioned if Kurtz could supply ambulances and equipment in addition to staff.
 - Fire Chief Weiss replied Kurtz could provide ambulances and equipment. He said through discussion with other departments it would appear they are not satisfied with Kurtz supplying equipment due to replacement schedules, maintenance issues, etc. He further said owning the ambulances allows for more control over department needs.
 - Mayor Gunter suggested investigating the option since ambulances are currently due for replacement.
- EMS Director Dralle suggested Tom Vanna, Kurtz Paramedic Services, Inc. speak to the Village Board regarding the pros and cons of owning or leasing ambulances. Direction was given to invite Mr. Vanna to the October Public Safety Committee meeting.

Fire Fee Billing

- Fire Chief Weiss said fire fees were instituted for the first time in March/April 2013. Lower fees were initially approved as to minimize the impact on Fire Department customers. Fire Chief Weiss indicated since fee adoption, Andres Medical Billing has partnered with Fire Recovery USA to collect fees.
 - After several months of billing, Fire Recovery USA has indicated Westmont's fees are far below State standards. They have recommended raising Westmont's fee schedule to be in-line with other Illinois fire departments.
- Village Manager Searl asked if surrounding communities were surveyed.
 - Fire Chief Weiss said a survey was completed and very few surrounding communities charge for the exact same services.
 - Village Manager Searl said at time of approval staff was confident the rates were competitive. EMS Director Dralle indicated at the time of approval, staff did not have the additional information provided by Fire Recovery USA.
- After further discussion, direction was given for staff to research other collection agencies and report back at the October Public Safety Committee Meeting.

Life Safety Grants - B1 District

- Finance Director Parker stated downtown development grants are available for life safety and facade improvements.
 - A total of \$15,000 was budgeted for life safety improvements. Several businesses have utilized the \$3,000 life safety grants for fire alarm installation. The current grant balance is zero dollars.
 - Finance Director Parker said there are currently 31 businesses which have applied for grants under the current program with no funding available.
 - Staff presented several Downtown Development Grant Options in an effort to fund the additional grant requests.
 - Discussion followed regarding the proposed options (attached).
 - After discussion, Public Safety Committee consensus was to recommend Option D which would increase funding an additional \$30,000 and reduce the maximum project funding to \$1,500.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) Task Force

- This item was tabled until the next meeting due to meeting time constraints.

Tattoo Policy

- Police Chief Mulhearn said direction and guidance was needed on allowing visible tattoos on Police Department members. He questioned what was deemed

acceptable by the Committee.

- HR Director Casey said Village Policy states tattoos are not to be visible but gives supervisors discretion in what is allowed. She then read the policy for information.
- Police Chief Mulhern indicated several members have expressed interest in allowing visible tattoos. He felt neck or face tattoos should not be allowed under any circumstance. He further expressed concern over public opinion.
- Trustee Senicka suggested implementing a 60 day trial to see if any complaints are received. Mayor Gunter concurred.
- Discussion was held regarding what types of tattoos would be appropriate or inappropriate. HR Director Casey stated caution needs to be taken as not to violate First Amendment rights.
- Police & Fire Commissioner Kovanda said gang tattoos are frequently addressed the the Police & Fire Commission. He said the City of Chicago will not allow any type of gang tattoos.
- The consensus of the Committee was to allow for a 60 day trial and further discuss at the October Public Safety Committee.

There being no further business to discuss, Trustee Nero motioned to adjourn, to which Trustee Senicka seconded. The meeting subsequently adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Hardy
Recording Secretary