



**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**  
**February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022**  
**7:00 P.M.**  
**700 Summit Avenue, Jenkintown, Pennsylvania**

**MINUTES**

**Call to Order:** Vice President C. Soltysiak called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**Council Members Present:** President J. Connors, Vice President C. Soltysiak, Councilor D. Pancoe, Councilor A. Khalil, Councilor A. MacHaffie, Councilor J. Marlowe, Councilor J. Bruno

**Council Members Absent:** Councilor K. McGLonn

**Others Present:** Manager G. Locke, Chief M. Bentzel, Fire Chief K. Lynch, Fire Marshal K. Lynch, Nick Pettinatti, and Engineer M. Bickerton

**Public Comment:** None at this time.

**REPORTS**

1. Police Department: (00:02:10) Chief M. Bentzel provided the detailed breakdown of the January total 444 Calls to Service broken down starting with most serious to the least serious. He also went into detail about what falls under Administrative Calls. Chief M. Bentzel explained examples of Part One versus Part Two crimes. Three total officers were affected by Covid; two returned, the third due back and was working today. Chief Bentzel stated Convoy Cleaning Service began cleaning the building today. The Chief also reported he is still waiting for costs to paint the Police Department. Manager G. Locke said two quotes have been received: still awaiting a third. (00:14:16) Councilor D. Pancoe asked about the Facebook Blotter produced by Office Murtagh. Her biggest concern was the tone that was portrayed. Chief Bentzel said it could be something to take into consideration. (00:17:16) Councilor A. Khalil asked about the numbers of carjacking and thefts in Northeast Philadelphia and asked Chief Bentzel his thoughts as it is a location close to our Borough. He stated it is hard to be proactive in these instances. What we can do is educate people with awareness to try to keep numbers low. When asked by Councilor A. Khalil about grant money, he went into detail about what the Police Department learns about grants would be specific to the Department. An example of one mentioned today was for License Plate Readers. (00:23:34) Chief Bentzel highlighted some details from the 2021 Annual Report. (00:28:44) Councilor A. MacHaffie asked Chief Bentzel if other agencies he works with has policies/protocols or standards related to

social media engines. Chief Bentzel responded by saying the rule of thumb followed is if the charge is officially public record, it can be posted.

2. Pioneer Fire Company: Monthly report was provided to Fire Chief K. Lynch who put into Dropbox.
3. Independent Fire Company: No Updates at this time. (00:32:17) Fire Chief K. Lynch described in detail a seminar he and a few of his officers attended last Saturday (Commander Staff Seminar) at the Fire Academy. Key speakers described their experience with the collapse of South Tower of a Florida condo. He also gave an update on a recent training exercise performed in Springfield (breaching cinderblock walls).
4. Fire Police: Report submitted with Fire Company Report
5. Second Alarmers: No updates at this time.

## **NEW BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

1. Fire Commission Meeting
  - The Fire Commission meeting was held prior to this meeting. The bulk of the discussion was about the Ordinance that will define the restructuring of the two firehouses. The next Fire Commission meeting will be held on March 9<sup>th</sup>.
2. Borough Police Chief Hiring Progress Update
  - The Borough has hired W.R. Smeal as Interim Police Chief and to perform the search for a new Borough Police Chief.
  - The time period for submission of resumes has ended on February 8<sup>th</sup>, Chief Smeal and Chief Bentzel are conducting reviews of the resumes that have been submitted for the position.
  - Interviews will be conducted in late February by a panel of four Police Chiefs including Chief Smeal and Chief Bentzel and before members of the Borough Police Work Group which is comprised of Borough Councilors.
3. COVID 19 Policy Update
  - Policy updated – there was a sentence within the policy (Pg. #8, #4) that conflicted with Act-17 and that sentence has been removed.
  - This policy is a guideline / handbook detailing what measures are to be taken in the case of exposure or illness and follows CDC guidelines.
  - Policy adopted by full Council for Non-Union personnel.
  - JPBA President Officer Matteo, has not responded that the JPBA agreement with policy at this time.
  - (00:37:00) Councilors D. Pancoe, A. Khalil, and C. Soltysiak discussed with Manager G. Locke the delay. Manager G. Locke suggested the next step was to move to Full Council the Approval of the Policy. Mgr. Locke also went on explain paperwork needed by an employee who tests positive in response to a question asked by Councilor A. Khalil.
4. Fire Department Training Ordinance Amendment
  - Ordinance being revised and updated at Fire Commission.
  - Once revised and agreed to at Fire Commission, the Ordinance will be brought to Public Safety for consideration to be sent to Full Council.

- Borough Council will consider to vote to advertise the revised Ordinance for adoption at a public Council meeting.
5. Emergency Management Coordination
- Emergency Management Coordinator FM Lynch has a meeting scheduled for Monday, February 14<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 PM.
  - CDC, State and County guidelines are being followed as the Borough has throughout the pandemic.
  - The Covid Policy will be discussed among other issues.
  - Official description - The Borough Administration along with the Police Department, Fire Companies, Public Works Department, Fire Marshal, Mayor and Council Representatives meet to review the current Borough State of Affairs as it pertains to all Emergency Management and the COVID-19 crisis.
6. School Zone Extension – Walnut Street
- The Borough Administration and Engineer have explored utilizing the MONTCO 2040 Implementation Grant to fund the construction of this project. “The 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the project”.
  - The MONTCO 2040 Implementation Grant would leave a balance of 12K for the approximate 80K project, ways of closing that 12K gap are currently being investigated.
  - This Grant must be submitted by March 1<sup>st</sup>, so permission to submit and a resolution to due so may be brought to Admin & Finance and Borough Council later this month if this concept of Funding is achievable and acceptable to Borough Council.
  - The PennDOT permit plan has been approved for the extension of the School Zone on Walnut Street from West Avenue to Hillside Avenue. This was the 1<sup>st</sup> of the 3 phases of the project. The approval of this permit plan was a huge success for this unconventional project and it should improve the safety of pedestrians traveling to and from the school.
  - Once Funding is approved, the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase will follow which is the construction of the proposed project.
  - (00:44:20) Engineer M. Bickerton explained Montgomery County opened the 2040 Grant and how this would be a fit for this project. (00:48:44) Councilor D. Pancoe made a motion, seconded by Councilor A. Khalil, giving permission for Mgr. G. Locke to submit the application for the grant.
7. Speed Trailer / Traffic Counter – Update
- Trailer was destroyed by a driver who was being pursued by Abington Township PD and thought to be under the influence.
  - Unfortunately, the driver was not apprehended after the crash and the claim had to be submitted to the Borough insurance company.
  - There was a discussion about possibly getting 2-3 signs that show one’s speed. The trailers are great but some of our roads are too narrow leaving little room for one.
8. Police Commission – work group update
- Update to be provided by Councilor K. McGlonn. Due to her absence, Vice President C. Soltysiak provided an update. They are all still working and determining interview questions and the process for hiring a new Police Chief.

## **ONGOING BUSINESS**

**1. York Road Speed Reduction / Safety Plan**

- No new updates this evening.
- Council has authorized the Borough Traffic Engineer to develop an Engineered plan of York Road.
- The plan will implement approximately five (5) speed reduction / safety features discussed with PennDOT.
- Currently the speed reduction/safety features PennDOT favors are: speed zone reduction signage, larger speed signage, rumble strips at cross walks, street painting and real-time/digital responsive signage.
- The latest version of the plan that has been submitted to PennDOT has been placed in your packets. This plan was also shared with Melissa Hager, owner of the herb/tea shop on Yorkway Place who has worked with other Business owners, the Borough and PennDOT to help bring this plan to fruition.
- The plan has been submitted to PennDOT for approval. Once approved, it will then be used to seek funding sources to implement the public safety measures.

**2. Washington Lane Safety Concerns Raised by Residents**

- The permits have been approved. The NO Trucks and Reduced Speed Limit signage have been installed.
- State Senator Haywood and State Representative Nelson's Office have held meetings with Officials from Penn Dot, Montco and Abington Township and Jenkintown Borough
- Permits to install updated No Truck (except local delivery) signage at York Road and Washington Lane and Reduced Speed Ahead signage at Route 73 crossing over Township Line Road and entering Washington Lane from Cheltenham Township have been submitted.
- The permits were submitted 10/11/21 and PennDOT has agreed to expedite the approval process so signage can be installed without delay.
- Pavement markings showing the speed limit are under consideration. These 25 MPH pavement markings have been installed on Homestead Road and the specification sheet for them are in this evenings packets.

**3.2019 FEMA SAFER Grant**

- Recruitment inquiries continue, retention payments have been disbursed, grant authority issued payment to the Borough and consultant was issued payment.
- The Borough Fire Department recruitment website is active, and we have had inquiries from many volunteers.
- There are also support/recruitment yard signs available to residents and the first mailer has been sent to residents as the program continues to be rolled out to assist in the recruitment and retention of the Jenkintown Fire Department Volunteers.

**4. Fire Department Training**

- Updates are provided through Fire Commission.
- Both Fire Companies have met and organized the Borough Training Log.
- Further training continues to be discussed at the Fire Commission.

**5. 2017 CFA Multimodal Grant – Washington Lane & Greenwood Avenue**

- No new updates tonight.
- This grant was awarded in conjunction with Abington Township.

- During the January Council meeting, a resolution was approved to complete improvements including the signal pole on the northeast corner to be replaced/relocated and the controller cabinet to be relocated to facilitate the stormwater and trail improvements at this location.
- Due to COVID-19, the Green Light Go funds have been withdrawn from the project which postponed improvements to three of the four corners of the intersection.
- These three (3) corners of that intersection improvement will be addressed when the Green Light Go funding is released.

(00:53:27) Councilor D. Pancoe asked if the Police Officers have reflective vests to wear while acting as a crossing guard. In addition, Councilor A. Khalil made a comment from a woman who said how nice it is to see the officers doing the crossing; it shows how much they are invested.

(00:55:44) Fire Chief K. Lynch provided an update regarding a County wide audit happening with the Fire House scheduled for Tuesday, February 15, 2022.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned by Vice President C. Soltysiak at 7:57 PM.