



PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
March 9th, 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 A. Narva, 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 R. Smeal, Fire Chief K. Lynch, Fire Marshal K. Lynch, Nick Pettinatti, and Engineer M. Bickerton

Public Comment: None at this time.

REPORTS

1. Police Department: Chief R. Smeal gave the following updates:
 - a. Calls for Service total was about the same as last month @450. Detective Sangree and Officer Tuffy were commended for their assistance with a medical call. An elderly gentleman had a heart attack and through their assistance, performed medical aid and he is alive today. Commendations for these same two officers for assisting Cheltenham with a carjacking just a few days ago will be brought up on next month's report.
 - b. (00:05:51) A discussion took place between Chief R. Smeal, Vice President Soltysiak, and Councilor A. Khalil regarding the incident at a Tavern in town where a student was followed by patrons leaving the bar.
 - c. (00:10:43) Councilor D. Pancoe asked about staffing. Chief R. Smeal indicated there hasn't been overtime due to staffing. It stems from officers having to transport defendants.
2. Pioneer Fire Company: Report provided but no representation on the call.
3. Independent Fire Company: Report provided but no representation on the call.
4. Fire Police: Report provided but no representation on the call.
5. Second Alarmers: Report provided but no representation on the call.

NEW BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Fire Commission Meeting
 - The Fire Commission meeting was held prior to this meeting. The next Fire Commission meeting will be held on April 13th.
2. Police Work Group update
 - In Councilor McGlenn's absence, Vice President C. Soltysiak mentioned the updates covered in the next item.
3. Borough Police Chief Hiring Progress Update
 - The Borough 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 ended on February 8th. Chief Smeal and Chief Bentzel reviewed the 19 resumes out of which 6 candidates were chosen for interviews.
 - Interviews were conducted in late February by a panel of Police Chiefs including Chief Smeal, Chief Bentzel and before the Mayor and members of the Borough Police Work Group comprised of Borough Councilors.
 - Secondary interviews were held with 3 candidates the first week of March.
 - Currently background investigation, and other medical evaluations are taking place so the decision for the Chief of Police position can be finalized.
 - The decision should be able to be brought forward at the March 23rd Borough Council meeting.
4. COVID 19 Update
 - In Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, community level is Low.
 - Pennsylvania has reached a new COVID-19 vaccine milestone with 95 percent of Pennsylvanians ages 18 and older receiving at least one vaccination. Additionally, according to the CDC, as of Monday, Feb. 28, 76.5% of Pennsylvanians age 18 and older are fully vaccinated.
5. COVID 19 Policy Update
 - Policy adopted by full Council for Non-Union personnel.
 - This policy is a guideline / handbook detailing what measures are to be taken in the case of exposure or illness and follows CDC guidelines.
 - Current updates are to the masking policies (coincide with County Guidelines)
 - Labor Attorney has worked with FOP/PBA Attorney to be able to put the policy in place.
 - Policy updated – there was a sentence within the policy (Pg. #8, #4) that conflicted with Act-17 and that sentence has been removed.
 - The Covid 19 Policy will be on the Borough Council agenda for consideration of approval on March 23rd.
6. Fire Department Training Ordinance Amendment
 - Proposed Ordinance revisions being discussed at Fire Commission.
 - Once revisions have been discussed at Fire Commission, the Ordinance will be brought to Public Safety for consideration to be sent to Full Council.

- Borough Council will consider voting to advertise the revised Ordinance for adoption at a public meeting.

7. School Zone Extension – Walnut Street

- The Borough Administration and Engineer have submitted for the MONTCO 2040 Implementation Grant to fund the construction of this project. The MONTCO 2040 Implementation Grant would leave a balance of 12K for the approximate 60K project.
- This Grant was submitted prior to the March 1st deadline.
- 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 1st 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.
- If Funding were to be approved, the 3rd phase will follow which is the construction of the proposed project.

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 evening's packets.

- (00:24:10) Councilor A. Khalil and Chief R. Smeal engaged in a discussion regarding patrolling in this area.

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 Log

- Both Fire Companies have met and organized the Borough Training Log.
- Additional training certificates are delivered to the Fire Marshal as attained.
- Further training continues to be discussed at the Fire Commission

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

No new updates tonight.

- We will know more by Wednesday Night March 9th. Mark Bickerton is confirming but Green Light Go May Have Been Re-Instated which would include the include the entire intersection in the scope of the project again.
- 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.
- (00:31:23) Councilor D. Pancoe asked if Engineer M. Bickerton is in communication with Abington. He confirmed he has been talking with their Engineer. She also voiced other concerns about that intersection. (00:33:39) Councilor A. MacHaffie asked about a storm drain and other aspects of a project that was discussed prior to Covid when an Engineer with Abington Township attended a Council meeting. Manager G. Locke confirmed these items are part of this project.

(00:37:39) Vice President C. Soltysiak noted a comment from Mary Rose Dougherty Santee on Facebook – if the school zone is extended down to Hillside, will there be a full-time crossing guard at Walnut & Hillside? She also added although it is nice to see the Officers at the crossings, we need more civilians to help. Chief Smeal agreed and added it is hard to find people who want to be crossing guards.

ADJOURNMENT: Vice President C. Soltysiak adjourned the meeting at 7:39 PM.