

**Safety Committee Meeting of Council
City of Richmond Heights
February 15, 2021**

Chairman Lentine called the meeting to order at 7:35p.m.

Lentine called for a moment of silence for the passing of Law Director, Todd Hunt's mother on February 13, 2022. She was 97 years old.

Roll Call:

Present: Lentine, Lewis, Nelson

Excused: Bell

Motion to excuse Bell by Lewis, seconded by Nelson; passed 3-0.

Other Council present: Alexander, Ursu, Jordan

Motion to approve minutes from January 18, 2022, by Lewis, Nelson; passed 3-0.

Reports:

Mayor & Safety Director, Mayor Kim Thomas: No report.

Fire Chief Marc Neumann:

- Hiring process going on in Fire Dept right now. Processed the Civil Service list for 4 vacancies and all 4 have passed the pre-employment physicals. Will be sworn in on Friday Feb 25th and come to work the following Monday for orientation and shift assignments. 3 of these hires are the result of the SAFER grant funds. Formal swearing in will be at Council on Tuesday, March 2nd so they can meet everyone and join in with their families.

Police Chief Tom Wetzel:

- Year end report was sent to Council and will be out on the web page and Facebook.
- Officers, 3 new hires are at Police Academy.
- Officer McFarland is retiring and last day will be April 11th. March 3rd is actual last day and taking vacation time.
- Feb 27th roller skating with 1st responders.
- This weekend, Ruth Ellen Drive- gunshots heard and never found the source. At some times the shots could be happening in another city and just heard nearby.
- Flock cameras will be installed on Chestnut soon.
- 444 Park- Lentine asked about someone shooting into a vehicle. Chief said the matter is under investigation and there is a suspect. Domestic related.

City Engineer, Chris Courtney:

- North side of Highland Road is open and pouring concrete on the south side. Water dept still determining the valve area. Trebisky will be closed at Highland for work soon. Large valve on Trebisky is going to be replaced. May do that now or later in year, debating on that.
- Re-lining the pipes- what does that mean? Chris Courtney explained the benefits to the city. Main one would be the water lines would stop breaking. Will line the old pipe with a new cast iron pipe. Brand new 54" pipe on Highland Road. No additional costs to the city on this. More

reliable service for the water in the city. Discussed the pavement repairs with asphalt which will happen in the spring.

Building Commissioner, Jim Urankar: -excused-

- Lentine reported on how he and Urankar are working on legislation on national problem of buildings collapsing, mandatory structural evaluations for apartment buildings. Received a call from news as this is something new that the city is doing. Trying to make buildings safer and legislation is something new in the country.

OLD BUSINESS:

Water breaks: We had 11 at one point. Being taken care of now. Financial assistance for laws? Don Kerniskey said anything on the road is city's responsibility. Water dept has hundreds throughout the county, so very busy. Chris Courtney said there is a reimbursement from county per the water service agreement for restoration of pavement. Helps a bit with the cost.

Walking Bridge by School: Letter is put together and Jim Urankar is taking to school. The entire project is on the school property.

Update on the 2 Flock cameras/Police: Chief Wetzel said the order was placed and 6-8 weeks, hopefully sooner will receive.

Street striping: Chris Courtney said we should separate city wide striping from the road program and bid out separately; get ready soon as spring starts. Go out early for bids. *Suggested to have a motion next Tues at council for city bids on striping to seek bids and legislation when it is awarded.*

NEW BUSINESS:

Gift to the PD \$10,454 from OAG: Chief Wetzel said it is a stipend from Office of Attorney General on the # of officers in each dept. Continued training hours can be used for this. Funding from casinos. Mandated hours for training on diversity, mental health issues, how to respond to assaults, etc. No resolution needed for this and said he checked with legal.

Mandatory structural evaluation apt buildings: See Urankar update per Lentine

Fireworks Ohio Revised Code Updates/Fire:

- Chief Neumann gave out information on fireworks- Fireworks Ohio House Bill 172. As of July 1, 2022, the new law will allow residents to use consumer fireworks. Cities can choose to allow or not allow them. It is covered in the Fire Prevention Code in Codified Ord 1519.07. The language mirrors all of our neighboring communities. We have allowed novelties and noisemakers. Display fireworks are huge show pyrotechnics and requires a licensed vendor (still the case). Chief Neumann is making the committee aware of the change of law and asking to amend the codified ordinances. Enforcement is responsibility of the PD.
- Retail expansion- current standard is 5,000 sq ft and will expand to 7,500 sq ft. Will be an issue with the Fire Prevention Officer (in Building dept). All fireworks sales showrooms must be approved by the local and state building code officials.
- In 2021, there were 46 events involving fireworks in the city. 20 of them were between July 4-5th. Expect that the activity will go up this year with them being legal soon. Need to make a choice on whether to exercise "home rule" or whether we will go with state and allow them. Law Director

will have to modify the language in our code regardless.

- Lentine said he would like to see the city exercise “home rule” and continue to not allow them. Safety issues and animal issues are both a strong concern on this. We will review the information and discuss further on this topic.
- Chief Neumann gave his professional opinion—spoke to other fire chiefs as well. Primary concerns- activity of law enforcement will be much higher. Most people are not going to check the codified ordinances in the city. 11 other communities in the Hillcrest area are opting against it and to invoke home rule in our area. These items are unsafe.
- Chief Wetzel—illegal to discharge a firearm in your backyard. Usually, can tell by the sound whether it is a gunshot or fireworks, but sometimes it is tough to recognize. Regional SPAN unit will be discussing this as well. When get calls on fireworks or noise, often can’t find the source. We usually give friendly warnings in this type of situation. Prefer not to give any citing or misdemeanors on these things unless someone gets hurt.

Chardon/Brush lights: Chief Wetzel said the lights there are broken. It is not functioning. Control mechanism is burned out. Fund 202 State Highway- total cost is \$25,854 cost for light repair. Kerniskey said it will be updated with new box and lights. Redo the signal heads, wiring, control box and bring up to date with 5 lights there. Will bring everything into compliance there. The broken lights there are very old right now. Parts should be in stock and can be fixed in a couple weeks.

***MOTION to recommend to Finance Committee the \$25,854 for the new traffic signal. Motioned by Lentine, seconded by Lewis; passed 3-0
Chief Wetzel has the quote on this.***

Fitness Grant equipment purchase/Fire: Chief Neumann said this is 95% grant and 5% local cost share. Awarded Assistance to FF Grant, Wellness Grant, \$39,104 from Homeland Security FEMA. \$37K and local cost \$1862

Provides for fitness/wellness/training, OT for school and fitness equipment.

Got 9 quotes- Rogue Fitness & Health & Fitness Equipment Centers provided the 2 lowest quotes.

Both are under the threshold of \$25,000 each.

Want to purchase equipment from both of these places.

Old equipment can go to the Police Dept and Service depts. Chief Wetzel said they don’t have a lot of space for a training room.

Alexander asked about donating to the school. Jordan agreed the school would be a great place to donate.

FD needs to participate in at least one hour of physical activity per day.

Health & Fitness Equipment- \$22,867.03

Rogue- \$8,478.71

MOTION to recommend to Finance for these 2 places for equipment for the Fire Dept, in the amount of \$31,345.74 by Nelson, seconded by Lewis; passed 3-0.

AUDIENCE: -no comments-

Chairman Lentine adjourned this meeting at 8:41 p.m.

Meeting minutes taken Betsy Traben, Clerk of Council