



Public Safety Committee

July 22, 2008

6:00 PM

Chairperson:

Council Chambers

Minutes AMENDED 08/01/08

In Attendance:

Jerry Walter, Chairperson
Jane Braunlich, Member
Michael Kutschbach
Julie Ference, Visitor

Mayor George Doscher
Matthew Sentner, Police Chief
Connie Flasher, DAS
Mike Lutz, CEO

Glen Pritchard, Fire Chief is excused

Jerry Walter called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Citizens:

- ❖ Nothing at this time.

Mayor:

- ❖ Mayor Doscher questioned what the status of advertising for the Police Officer list.
 - The DAS stated she was in the process of comparing the Civil Service's requirements to the Personnel Code and the Contract.
 - Mr. Walter stated he had met with Chief Sentner to be briefed on the scheduling of the Officers.
 - He stated there are 400 shifts additional to the other scheduled shifts that need to be filled in a year and 9.9 officers needed to fill all of those shifts.
 - He further stated this would cover conservative vacation time with two employees per shift.
 - He stated his opinion is the Borough is operating pretty lean with 11 Officers.
 - He stated they have to be pretty careful with cutting back anymore Officers.
 - He stated he is going to be meeting with the Police Association to discuss this further and invited any Council Members willing to attend.
 - Chief Sentner stated that the hiring process for the full-time Officers and part-time Officers is different.
 - He stated the full time Officers would go through the testing process, but the part-time Officers would not have to be.
 - He further noted the part-time Officers would not be apart of the bargaining unit so therefore there could be two tiers within the Police Department.
 - There was discussion by the Committee about the benefit for having full-time Officers verses a part-time department.
 - There was discussion by the Committee about the School Resource Officer and the payment for that service.
 - The Committee stated they would like the DAS to clean up any discrepancies between the Civil Service qualifications, Personnel Code and Contract. They further stated they would like the Civil Service to be contacted so they can advertise.
 - Mayor Doscher recommended the usage of the Chief of Police website for the advertisement of this position to reduce some of the print ads.

Fire Department:

- ❖ Julie Ference stated two groups came to view the Fire Department Rescue Vehicle and they seemed interested.

- The Committee discussed when and if the Committee would want to re-advertise for the selling of this vehicle.
- The Committee stated for Mrs. Ference to contact those interested parties to see if they are interested in purchasing this vehicle.
- The Committee further stated that once they know if they are interested then they will advertise the selling of this vehicle in the local newspaper.
- The Committee made a motion to advertise the Fire Department Rescue Truck at a cost not to exceed \$50.00 in the Citizen.
- ❖ Mr. Walter stated he would like to have a meeting to discuss the Volunteer Fire Company budget and books in order for Council to be able to prepare the budget for the upcoming year.
 - Julie Ference stated she sees no problem in opening the books to the Borough to allow them to see what was spent over the past couple of years.

Police Department:

- ❖ Chief Sentner presented information to the Committee about leasing a Police vehicle rather than purchasing one.
 - There was discussion by the Committee.
 - There was discussion about how many Police cars the Borough has now.
 - Chief Sentner stated there are three in service and one is being used as the DARE car.
 - There was discussion about what type of vehicle he is proposing to purchase and what the costs would be.
 - Chief Sentner stated for the Explorer it would cost \$27,242 and the Crown Victoria \$25,794 to purchase.
 - There was further discussion.
 - The Committee stated they would prefer to lease an Explorer as the replacement Police Vehicle rather than purchasing it.
 - Mr. Walter stated the annual cost of approximately \$9,700 for leasing would have to be budgeted.
- ❖ Chief Sentner presented a quote that he received for the mobile terminals for the Police cars. He stated for the terminals and installation it would cost \$2,690 per car.
 - He stated there would also be a monthly wireless service connection fee which is approximately \$40.00 per car.
 - There was discussion about whether the costs for the purchasing and installation of the mobile terminals would be out of the bond fund.
 - Chief Sentner stated the Officers would still have to come back in to the Police Station to complete an arrest but aside from that would be able to stay out on the field longer.
 - There was discussion by the Committee about where the funds for this will come from.
 - The DAS stated it could come out of the Technology bond amount as long as there is enough money left over after the Borough Building's technology is taken care of.
 - The DAS stated she will have the total amount that is left in the Technology line item from the budget for them by next week.
- ❖ Chief Sentner stated he would like to purchase a taser device for the Police Officer's during arrests.
 - He gave a recent example of a Police Officer that could have used a taser to use in an arrest as an example to show the need for this device.
 - He explained to the Committee the costs and training that would need to be done to purchase these taser devices.
 - He stated it would cost approximately \$2,303 for two taser devices.

- There was discussion by the Committee about where the money for this purchase would come from.
- There was discussion by the Committee about what the costs for the taser replacement cartridges would cost.
- A motion was made to purchase three taser devices at a cost of \$1,603 to be paid out of line item 410.217 and the remaining balance paid by a resident's donation.
- ❖ Chief Sentner explained to the Committee of a situation that was brought to his attention where a sex offender is living across the street from an elementary school.
 - He stated Bellevue does not have any ordinances in place that requires this person to move.
 - He presented to the Committee two ordinances from other municipalities that Bellevue can use as a guideline if they choose to pass this type of ordinance.
 - The Committee stated they would like Mr. Georgalas to review them in order to see if they can be enacted.
 - The DAS stated she will forward it to the Solicitor and if he sees no issue with it she will have it on the Pre-Council agenda.
- ❖ Chief Sentner stated he and the DPW superintendent reviewed the no parking request on N. Howard Avenue.
 - He explained to the Committee how this area could be determined as a no parking zone.
 - Chief Sentner stated they would have to adopt an ordinance to create this area as a no parking zone.
 - Chief Sentner presented to the Committee a request for a handicap parking spot for 633 Roosevelt Avenue.
 - There was discussion by the Committee about whether or not there was a need for this handicap parking spot.
 - There was discussion if the owners of 633 Roosevelt own a driveway or a garage that they can use rather than a handicap spot on the street.
 - Chief Sentner stated he will review this further.
 - The Committee made a motion to approve this request upon approval from the Police Chief.

Code Enforcement:

- ❖ The CEO explained to the Committee he was unaware of the Ordinance mandating the collection of annual fees to have a group home in Bellevue.
 - He stated the CEO are going to send letters to current group homes to inform them there are fees to having a group home in Bellevue and the Borough expects payment immediately.
 - Mr. Walter questioned if they will be collecting money retroactively.
 - The DAS stated they will have to check into how far back the Borough is able to collect these unpaid fees as well as if the group homes were aware they were responsible for these fees.
 - There was discussion about whether these group homes are being inspected on an annual basis.
 - Mr. Wissner explained there are only annual fire drills but no requirements for annual occupancy inspections.
- ❖ He further explained to the Committee how the Fire Department can help the Code Enforcement Office with fulfilling certain inspecting obligations.
 - There was discussion by the Committee about how the Fire Department employees would let the CEO know when there are code violations when they inspect for fire violations.

- Mr. Wissner stated the Borough should really look into appointing a Fire Marshall.
- He further stated there are serious problems with certain properties alarm systems which are serious public safety issues that a Fire Marshall could bring to the Borough's attention.
- ❖ Mr. Kutschbach questioned if when the CEO issues an occupancy permit do they gain access to the interior of a building.
 - The CEO stated that is the only way an occupancy permit would be issued but they are only providing occupancy permits to properties that are being sold since there are not ordinances in place requiring otherwise.
 - There was discussion by the Committee about a certain property and issues the Borough may have with this certain property.
 - The CEO stated they are unable to go after this specific property owner until they actually occupy the property and violate the Borough's ordinances.
- ❖ There was discussion by the Committee about possibly having owner incentives for converting multi family units to single family units.
- ❖ The DAS stated in the Joint Zoning Ordinance there is an area that the Borough specifically wanted as single family zoning that was changed to multi-family zoning.
 - She further explained there are areas that are currently zoned neighborhood commercial that are being changed to commercial.
 - There was discussion about what type of incentives the Borough could provide to property owners to convert their multi-units to single family dwellings.
 - There was discussion by the Committee about the representation of the Borough at the Tri-Borough Zoning meetings.
 - There was further discussion by the Committee about elements of the Borough's Zoning Ordinance that they want to have incorporated into the Tri-Borough Zoning Ordinance.
 - Mr. Walter questioned if the Committee wants to come back to the next meeting with examples of incentives for property owners to convert multi-units to single family dwellings.
 - There was further discussion by the Committee.
- ❖ There was discussion by the Committee about temporary sidewalk patches after work has been completed by a contractor.
- ❖ Mr. Walter stated he would like to see the Borough have an Ordinance that allows the Code Enforcement Office gain access to the interior of the buildings with blatant exterior violations.
 - There was discussion by the Committee about how the CEO would be able to determine what is considered severe enough to warrant the CEO to be allowed to go into the interior of the building.
 - The DAS stated she will look into see if there are any other municipalities with this type of ordinance.
- ❖ The CEO reported to the Committee the status of the Sheridan Avenue and Grant Avenue demolitions.
- ❖ The CEO stated he has talked to the Solicitor who believes the Borough does not have the authority to require someone to cut down a tree that is affecting the sidewalk that the Borough has planted in the first place.
 - There was discussion by the Committee.
 - The CEO stated he will discuss this further with the Solicitor and he will start sending letters to those that have trees that are encroaching on the sidewalks and see if it will be challenged by the property owners.
- ❖ The CEO stated there is nothing in the Borough that states the businesses need to register with the Code Enforcement Office for an occupancy inspection.

- He stated they have to get an occupancy inspection when there is a change of use or renovations have been made but not under any other circumstance. He stated therefore the Code Enforcement Office may not be aware of some of the new businesses in the Borough.
- ❖ Mr. Walter questioned if there is any forward movement with the Ordinance that requires vacant businesses in Bellevue to have window treatments.
 - The CEO stated the only thing the Borough can do is require the businesses to remove their signs.
 - There was further discussion by the Committee.
- ❖ The CEO explained to the Committee that Homeland Security is requiring West View Water to place a large generator up by the water tank in Bellevue.
 - He explained to the Committee how they will be installing it and the route they will be taking.
 - He stated in order to complete that job there will need to be many Borough employees involved.
 - Mr. Walter questioned if this will be coordinated with the Police Department.
 - He stated that is correct but the Chief of Police is already involved in this situation.
 - Mr. Walter questioned if there will be any expense the Borough would be responsible for.
 - The DAS stated they are trying to get a bond from the contractor in order to pay for any damage that may happen to the Borough streets during this installation.
 - There was discussion as to the reason for the need for this.
- ❖ There was discussion by the Committee about a business that is opening that has obtained the proper permits and licenses.

Administration:

- ❖ Nothing at this time.

Council Members:

- ❖ Mrs. Braunlich stated she would like the Borough to check into the purchase of GPS tracking for the Police cars.
 - There was discussion to see why there would be a need for this.
- ❖ Mrs. Braunlich questioned what the status of reviewing various towing companies is.
 - The DAS presented the letters of those towing companies that responded to her questionnaire to the Committee for their review.
 - There was discussion by the Committee.
 - The Committee stated they would like to have Council vote on whether they want to continue using Mike Joyce Towing as the Borough's towing company or to go with another company.

Old Business:

- ❖ Nothing at this time.

New Business:

- ❖ Nothing at this time.

Citizens:

- ❖ Ms. Michelle Smith, a resident from the Borough stated to the Committee she would like to have a car cruise on a Saturday night in early September on Lincoln Avenue.
 - She stated she was hoping to possibly shut down a portion of Lincoln Avenue.
 - She stated she would be willing to contact someone at the Port Authority to see if this could be done since bus traffic would have to be re-routed.

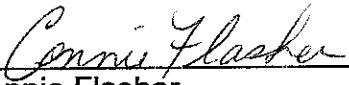
July, 22, 2008

- 6 -

- She stated she did apply for a grant for the Summer Solstice Event for 2009 but she needs a letter from the Borough to say she can use the same venues next year for the event.
- The DAS stated she will present it to the Council in order for it to be approved.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted



Connie Flasher
Secretary

Motions to be made:

- 1. Motion to determine the Borough's towing company.**
- 2. Motion to purchase three taser devices with a total cost of \$1,603 to be paid out of line item 410.217.**
- 3. Motion to lease police vehicle**
- 4. Motion to purchase 3 computer mobile terminals**
- 5. Motion to prepare Ordinance for Sex Offenders living in the Borough**
- 6. Ordinance for No Parking on Howard Avenue**