



Public Safety Commission

Town of GREENFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

Town Hall, 14 Court Square, Greenfield, Mass, 01301 Phone: 413-772-1560 Fax: 413-772-1519

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

7 DECEMBER 2016

The Public Safety Committee met at the Greenfield Police Department Meeting Room at 5:00 PM.

Attending the meeting were Chairman Hawkins and Commissioners Clark, Provost, and White.

A quorum was present.

Also present: Chief Haigh, Chief Strahan

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Hawkins called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm. Proper notice had been posted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner White moved to accept the September meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner Provost seconded the motion. All in favor the motion passed. Commissioner White moved to accept the October meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. All in favor the motion passed.

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

-Commissioner Hawkins expressed that he and the Commissioners were very concerned over the Operating budgets for both the Police and Fire departments as they appear to be under great stress and will continue to be challenged going forward. He remarked that the budgets were inadequate and noted that the personnel replacement both at the entry and executive level in the Fire Department is a severe issue. He feels that the Commission should make a recommendation to the Mayor about their serious concern regarding the negative impact to the level of service to the community at this level of funding.

OLD BUSINESS

PUBLIC SAFETY COMPLEX:

-Chairman Hawkins mentioned a meeting he and others had had with the Mayor regarding the informative conversations he took part in with a law firm he met through the MA Municipal Association with experience in PPP and municipal construction projects. They suggested the town hire a consultant to evaluate both a private/public plan and city plan and compare the two. They believed it could prove cost effective and helpful in navigating some of the hurdles the town has encountered.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

-Chairman Hawkins shared an email received from the Human Rights Commission expressing that they would like to assist the town and the Police Department in any way they can with the implementation of body cameras.

NEW BUSINESS

FIRE:

- Chief Strahan reported that the budget is in fair shape but that because the department is down two firefighters there will likely be a rise in overtime costs. He noted that the department now has a total of 5 vacant positions, with two more anticipated in July, bringing his staffing level to 75%. He also pointed out that his call force was less than ten people and they take over a year to train. Ultimately, the department will need at least one more body to get back to 6 people per shift, with two being preferential. He explained that falling below this number causes manpower to go down which increases the risk and occurrence of injury, which in turn creates more

overtime. He noted that he had a qualified pool of applicants to choose from, 4 of whom are on the call force. Commissioner Provost moved to recommend that the Mayor allow for the hiring of two new entry level firefighters to replace the two who are leaving in July. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Clark. All in favor, the motion passed. Chief Strahan presented several items to the Commission for his Capital requests. After his presentation, the Commission agreed to recommend funding for the following items: Cruiser Replacement (motioned by Commissioner Clark, seconded by Commissioner Provost), Rescue & Engine 3 (motioned by Commissioner Provost, seconded by Commissioner Clark), Brush Truck (motioned by Commissioner Clark, seconded by Commissioner Provost), and Tower Refurbishment (motioned by Commissioner Clark, seconded by Commissioner Provost).

POLICE:

-Chief Haigh began his update stating that he felt it was best for the department to withdraw its Capital request due to the impact it could have on the budget. Chairman Hawkins asked Chief Haigh what the department would need in order to be fully functional. He replied that level service would be \$215,000 over this year's budget and level funding would be \$250,000 over this year's request. He noted that with the current allotment, he would have to find \$140,000 within the budget to accommodate it- an equivalent of 2 positions and all of the new cruisers. Ultimately, he said, it would result in a loss of services to the town. He also noted that he had initiated a conversation about increasing the School Department's contribution to the School Resource Officer's salary, which is now less than 50% of his pay. He has yet to hear back on that issue, but expects that with the cuts the school will need to make this year, this will be one of the first items they eliminate altogether. Chairman Hawkins suggested the Commission support Chief Haigh's request to remove the Police Department's capital request. The motion was made by Commissioner Provost and seconded by Commissioner Clark. All in favor the motion passed. There was discussion again regarding the concern the Commission has over the link between insufficient funding and the level of service the community will receive.

EMS:

-As Ms. West was not present for the meeting, Chairman Hawkins relayed on behalf of MedCare that the Boston asset had been sold off and that there were some big changes ahead for the company. He was not concerned about the impact those changes would have on the town.

DISPATCH:

-Chief Haigh provided the Commission with a report that stated that the Dispatch Department is now fully staffed and operating efficiently. Overtime has slowed tremendously and Nick Licata has been doing an excellent job in his new position as Dispatch Supervisor and he has begun the process of policy and procedure updating. Both the 911 and Incentive grants are being fully utilized. He does not anticipate any further issues in the remaining part of the fiscal year with regard to the budget or the infrastructure. An agreement has been reached between the town and the Dispatch union which should prove positive for both parties.

OPEN FLOOR:

-Commissioner Clark announced that there would be a fire safety program at the Senior Center at 1:00 PM on Thursday, December 8th the Greenfield Senior Center.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

-N/A

Commissioner Provost moved to adjourn the regular meeting, seconded by Commissioner White. All in favor the motion passed. The meeting ended at 6:38 PM.

The next scheduled meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 22nd at the Greenfield Police Department Meeting Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Erin Nugent, Recording Clerk