

**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH
AND SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
Thursday, March 10, 2022, 8:00 a.m.**

Members Present:

Scott Lewis, Chair
James Tyrrell, Trustee

Staff Present:

Chief Brian Budds, Chief of Police
Chief Mike Kelly, Chief of Fire & EMS
Deputy Chief Brian Scott, Deputy Chief of Fire & EMS
Susan Depner, Administrative Services Coordinator, Police

Others Present:

Alice Gallagher, Village President

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. on March 10, 2022.

2. Roll Call

Present were Scott Lewis, Chair, and James Tyrrell, Trustee. Also present were Chief Mike Kelly, Fire & EMS, Chief Brian Budds, Police, Deputy Chief Scott, Fire & EMS, Alice Gallagher, Village President, and Susan Depner, Police Administrative Services Coordinator.

3. Approval of Minutes – February 10, 2022

MOTION: Trustee Tyrrell made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2022 meeting. Chair Lewis seconded the motion and the minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

4. Public Comment

None.

5. Police Department Community and Traffic Surveys 2021

Chief Budds explained that we have been doing community surveys for approximately 10 years. He gave credit to Records Specialist Karen Brosius for doing the 2021 community and traffic surveys. Chief Budds explained the criteria for choosing respondents for the surveys, which are mailed out every month and contain five questions. The 2021 response rate was 31.1 percent, which is lower than the 2020 rate, but still a reasonable response rate. Once again, the responses were mostly excellent or good. Each year, these reports demonstrate that the Police Department staff is doing great work in the community. The majority of respondents had positive interactions with our officers, which shows the support of our community. Neighborhood patrol and visibility ranked as the most important issue in our community to respondents. Trustee Tyrell noted that approximately 95 percent of the responses were excellent or good.

Chief Budds explained that we have been doing the traffic surveys for a shorter period of time than the community surveys, about 6-7 years. He explained the criteria for choosing respondents for the surveys, which are mailed out every month. The 2021 response rate was 21.9 percent, which is lower than the 2020 rate. Chief Budds would like to get this rate higher next year. This survey had 100 percent positive responses in every category. Chief Budds asked that Chair Lewis share the results of these two surveys at the next Board meeting with the Village Board.

6. Police Department Annual Report 2021

Chief Budds presented the Police Department's 2021 annual report to the committee. He credited Administrative Services Coordinator Depner and the entire Department for their efforts throughout the year towards the compilation of the report. He also credited the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners for their work in 2021, in which they met frequently to address staffing issues. The Chief said the last two years have been the most difficult in his career for the police profession and credited the resiliency of our officers in 2021.

The Chief noted that crime decreased in 2021, including the serious crimes of burglary, theft, and motor vehicle theft. He feels our efforts in informing the public through crime alerts, articles in the Tower Topics, social media posts, etc. have contributed to this decrease. The Chief also noted that calls for service increased by 26 percent. This is in part due to the 2020 Covid shutdown as well as the Department doing a better job of documenting self-initiated calls in 2021. He expects our 2022 calls for service to increase even more.

In response to a question from Chair Lewis, Chief Budds explained that the thefts in 2021 decreased significantly in part due to the high number of IDES identity theft claims in 2020, which have declined in 2021 and 2022. Chief Budds also explained that identity theft will no longer be counted as theft under new reporting requirements, but instead will be counted as fraud.

In response to another question from Chair Lewis about the large number of written warnings issued, Chief Budds explained that officers have discretion in what type of

ticket they issue. Giving a warning instead of an expensive ticket can foster good feelings in the community. He believes that education can be used to gain community compliance with traffic laws without punitive measures when appropriate.

Chief Budds also discussed the Police Department's staffing issues, noting officers who left in 2021. This is a nationwide issue in the police community and the Chief is proud of our officers' work this last year in spite of our staffing issues. He emphasized the amount of training that we do to prepare our officers, pointing out that section of the report. He also pointed out the awards section, taking pride in recognizing officers for awards they have earned.

Trustee Tyrrell praised Chief Budds for the low crime rate in Western Springs over the last ten years.

President Gallagher asked how the Peer Support program was going. Chief Budds replied that we have three trained peer support counselors and that the program is beneficial.

Chair Lewis said that he would give Chief Budds time at the Board meeting to present highlights of the 2021 annual report to the Village Board.

7. Fire Department Annual Report 2021

Chief Kelly presented the Fire Department's 2021 annual report to the committee. He acknowledged that 2021 was a challenging year. One focus was to maintain staffing in order to have enough personnel to answer calls. They were able to do this, which is a credit to their Department.

There were a number of key retirements in 2021, including the Fire Chief, the Assistant Fire Chief, and the Training Officer. However, former Chief Kenney focused on succession planning, so new personnel came in.

A major 2021 initiative was recruitment, which was led by Deputy Chief Scott. They had 25 applicants and 18 are now attending the 2022 Fire Academy, which runs from January until June. These 18 recruits will get staffing back to ideal levels, which is 40 to 50 staff. In response to a question from President Gallagher, the Chief said that recruits do leave, some to take full-time positions, others due to conflicts with their other employment.

The Fire Department received grant money in 2021, which has allowed for the purchase of a new fire engine. It has been delayed, but an inspection of the engine is scheduled for this May. The Department was also able to purchase extraction equipment through a grant.

2022 key initiatives include the Fire Academy and training of new recruits and current personnel.

The Fire Department is also rolling out a new reporting system for paramedics in 2022. They also need to complete pre-incident surveys for commercial buildings and emergency management requirements.

The calls for service in 2021 were approximately 1100, which is consistent with other years. Trustee Tyrrell noted that is an average of three calls per day.

Chief Kelly said they were able to do some fire prevention activities in spite of Covid restrictions. Some activities were done using social media and videos rather than in person. Safety Village did go ahead in person in 2021.

The Fire Department would like to expand their Explorer Program this year. Deputy Chief Scott is in talks with Lyons Township High School to bring the program there. Chief Budds suggested that the Police Department could participate also, promoting public safety employment.

In response to a question from President Gallagher, Chief Kelly said the Fire Department does have enough equipment with the new vehicle and equipment on order. She also asked if the Chief foresees EMS calls being the greater percentage of calls rather than fire. The Chief agrees that this trend will continue, but he noted that fire calls, though a lesser percentage, are the most risky calls.

Chair Lewis said that he would give Chief Kelly time at the Board meeting to present highlights of the 2021 annual report to the Village Board.

8. IGA – 55th and Wolf Emergency Vehicle Pre-emption Devices

Chief Kelly explained that due to roadway resurfacing by IDOT as referenced in the memo and contract included in the meeting packet, the vehicle pre-emption devices at the intersection of 55th and Wolf Rd that change the light green to allow an emergency vehicle to go through will be replaced along with the traffic signals. Attorney Jurusik has modified the existing agreement to note that red light cameras are now at that intersection. These were added since the last agreement. IDOT needs to review these changes. It will then go to the Board for approval. The cost to the Village will be \$8050. Chief Budds explained that the red light cameras are leased by the Village from Red Speed and that Red Speed will bear the cost, which will be taken out of our reimbursement. President Gallagher would like Chief Kelly to explore why IDOT does not pay the \$8050 since the needed replacements are a result of the work they are doing rather than any faulty equipment.

MOTION: Chair Lewis made a motion to recommend bringing the revised agreement to the full Board for discussion at the next meeting and to consider it at the omnibus meeting. Trustee Tyrrell seconded the motion and it was approved by a unanimous vote.

9. Other Business

None.

10. Adjournment

MOTION: Chair Lewis made a motion to adjourn. Trustee Tyrrell seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn was approved by a unanimous vote at 9:04 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Depner
Administrative Services Coordinator