

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE  
EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM  
November 19, 2018, 4:00pm

Committee Members present:      Councilor Martin Pepin, Chairman  
   Councilor Kenneth S. Vincent  
   Councilor David A. Witham (temporary appointment by  
Mayor)

Administration/Staff present:      City Manager, Bob Belmore  
   Police Chief, David Kretschmar  
   Fire Chief, Keith Hoyle  
   Finance Director, Scott Smith  
   City Clerk, Trish Harris

Other:                                      Councilor Richard Michaud  
   Jenne Holmes, Mayor's Assistant  
   Kerry Nolte, Hand up Health Services  
   Joe Hannon, Hand up Health Services  
   Nick Deveneau, Hand up Health Services

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Chairman Pepin called the meeting to order at 4:20pm.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Pepin made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 15, 2018 meeting. The motion passed, 3-0.

HANDS UP HEALTH SERVICES – SYRINGE SERVICE PROGRAM

City Manager Belmore stated that based on some misleading information, the Committee invited members of Hand Up Health Services to the Committee meeting. The City supports the organization. Chief Kretschmar and other members of the police department met with volunteer members of Hand Up Health Services.

Chief Kretschmar explained that there are only 2 or 3 programs like Hand Up in the State. He stated that the program allows people to exchange used syringes, to decrease the spread of HIV and HepC. The program also distributes Narcan, education materials, and referral services. Hand Up never intends to make their location very public, and doesn't want to make the participants concerned that they are being watched.

There is misinformation regarding this type of program; crime does not increase, drug use does not increase, users are more likely to get into an exchange program, low HIV and HepC rates, and lower risk to first responders.

There was discussion about different scenarios that the volunteers of Hand Up have encountered. Mr. Joe Hannon stated, by law, they are required to provide information for recovery. They also give direct referrals to local hospitals and treatment centers.

Hand Up is made up of all volunteers with a wide range of specialties, including nurses, who provide direct connections, compassionate care, support and personal referrals.

Councilor Witham thanked Hand Up for the work that they do. He reminded everyone that the drug epidemic is not a criminal matter but a public health crisis. If this program helps to get dirty needles off the streets, it's a good thing. The lack of information caused public concern.

Ms. Kerry Nolte stated that Hand Up receives no federal, state or city funding, and clarified that Somersworth does not pay for the needles or their services.

Mr. Nick Deveneau said that they will be targeting some local churches and doing more outreach to introduce what a needle exchange is.

Councilor Pepin stated that the City fully supports their efforts and thanked them for coming.

## FIRE, POLICE & EMS UPDATES

### **POLICE**

Chief Kretschmar reported that the K9 program is going well; Bravo is continuing with training. He gave an update on parking; to date, the City has paid \$11,000 to the parking enforcement officer, and has gained \$15,000 in revenue. The revenue goes to the general fund.

Currently there are 2 positions vacant in the department.

There has been ongoing questions regarding parking during snow storms and parking bans. On Noble Street, there are 17 angled spaced. There are 3 spots at the ward 5 playground. There are 10 leased spots near Queensbury Mills. Chief Kretschmar suggested that the City issue parking passes for these locations at a rate of \$20 a month from November 1st to May 1<sup>st</sup>, to allow for parking during snow bans.

This would require an Ordinance change.

*Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Vincent, made a motion to endorse an Ordinance change to allow for permitted parking during winter parking bans, on Noble Street, Ward 5 playground, at a rate of \$20 a month through the dates of November 1 through March. The motion passed, 3-0.*

### **EMS**

Chief Hoyle reported that the response time is 5.19 minutes. The new ambulance is in the garage, and is waiting for a State EMS inspection.

There was discussion about the current Contract which is good through July 31, 2019. The city has to take affirmative action as to continue with American Ambulance, by April 2019, 90 days prior to the term's end.

### **FIRE**

Chief Hoyle reported that there was a fire at 28 High Street. The structure is still standing. The department is short one person, who is in the new hire in process. They have added 2 additional call fire fighters, and 2 more are in training.

The Department was successful in getting a \$250,000 grant to replace the Firefighter air van, which will seat 10 firefighters for medical attention and rest. The van is being delivered February 28, 2019.

### FIRE STATION SITE & FACILITY: MRI REPORT

City Manager Belmore stated that the Mayor asked for a report from the Public Safety Committee, then this project will be passed on to the Finance Committee for a funding discussion.

The recommendation from the consultant MRI study was to build a new facility on the current site on Maple Street.

There was lengthy discussion of the pros and cons of a new facility on Maple Street, purchasing land and building a facility on Lilac Lane, or choosing a different location.

There are concerns about the size of the property and building footprint on Maple Street as well as the need for testing of possible ground contamination.

Councilor Witham said from a geographic location the current site on Maple Street is the perfect site, but there are gremlins with size, building up. Councilor Witham suggested that they keep looking at other possible locations as he believes the proposal from MRI only took into consideration the locations on Maple Street and Lilac Lane. He shared some google earth maps and pointed out a few locations along High Street that had potential. With High Street being a gateway to the City, it would be great to have a nice looking building.

There was brief discussion about site locations. Bonding timeline was discussed and it was pointed out that they are looking at least \$5million or so for this project.

No decision was made by the committee at this time. This item will be on the Public Safety Committee agenda for January 2019 for further discussion.

### ADJOURNMENT

***Councilor Vincent seconded by Councilor Witham made a motion to adjourn. The motion passed, 3-0. The meeting adjourned 5:23pm.***

Respectfully submitted,

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Trish Harris, City Clerk