

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
July 27, 2023 – 3:15 p.m.

Committee Members Present:	Councilor Martin Pepin, Chairman Councilor Kenneth S. Vincent, Vice-Chairman (arrived at 3:33 p.m.) Councilor Denis Messier Councilor Richard Michaud (temporary Mayoral appointment)
Committee Members Absent:	Councilor Nancie Cameron
Administration/Staff present:	City Manager, Bob Belmore Finance Director, Scott Smith Police Chief, Timothy McLin Fire Chief, George Kramlinger Stewarts Ambulance Manager, Paul Robidas City Clerk Kristen LaPanne

Chairman Pepin called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m. Councilor Michaud was temporarily appointed to the Committee by the Mayor in Councilor Cameron's absence.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Councilor Messier made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 22, 2023 meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Pepin and passed 2-0-1. Councilor Michaud abstained.

VEHICLE PURCHASES BUDGETED IN FY24

City Manager Belmore provided the Committee with a memorandum from Police Chief McLin pertaining to the purchase of two SUV style police cruisers and one unmarked police vehicle. Manager Belmore noted that the City budgeted for the vehicles for FY2024. He stated that McFarland Ford has notified Chief McLin that production of the 2023 Ford Explorers has been suspended and that the 2024 models have been delayed due to manufacturing. Chief McLin is working to verify that Irwin Automotive has two 2023 SUV style police cruisers available and on-site, he noted that he identified a 2023 unmarked vehicle for purchase through McFarland Ford. Manager Belmore noted that he plans to request that the Finance Committee sponsor a Resolution to lease the three Police Department vehicles, one Fire Department command vehicle, and one Front-end Loader for the Department of Public Works.

Councilor Messier asked if the 2023 model vehicles are brand new with low mileage; Chief McLin confirmed that the 2023 models are new and available in black which is color needed.

Councilor Messier made a motion to sponsor a Resolution authorizing the purchase of two 2023 SUV style police cruisers and one unmarked police vehicle from. The motion was seconded by Councilor Michaud and passed 3-0.

POLICE TASER LEASE UPDATE

Chief McLin provided an update to the Committee pertaining to the new Taser lease quote that he received from Axon. He explained that the quote has increased by almost \$15,000 from the prior quote that was received approximately one year ago for a five-year term. Chief McLin stated that the new tasers offer a dual deployment method for short and long range and that the cost also covers training and replacement cartridges throughout said term. City Manager Belmore noted that the annual cost of the lease is approximately \$3,000 over what the City initially budgeted for the tasers and will budget the additional amount accordingly in future years.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

A. Police

Chief McLin reported that the final preparations pertaining to the police body cameras are being accomplished and that he expects deployment to take place within the next 2-3 weeks, he added that staff have received training and the equipment has been installed within the police cruisers. Chief McLin stated that the original design of the body worn cameras has received complaints regarding the magnets that attach the cameras to the uniforms are not strong enough during a pursuit on foot, the vendor has been working to correct the problem and is replacing the magnets with stronger magnets.

Chief McLin updated the Committee that the replacement of the Police Departments two radio consoles is on order, but has not yet received an expected date of delivery. He stated that the departments wellness uniforms were received and expected to be in use starting next week, adding that that quality of the uniforms are very good and thanked the City Manager and Council for their support. Chief McLin noted that wellness visits are included in the Wellness Program and two officers have also become certified physical instructors.

Chief McLin provided the Committee with an update on staffing within the Police Department, he stated that two officers that have already been through the Police Academy are in their later stages of field training and two officers are attending the Academy for 16 weeks. Chief McLin stated that Sargent Lefebvre has accepted a position as an Investigator with the New Hampshire Fire Marshals Office after having served nine years with the Somersworth Police Department. He commented that Sargent Lefebvre has worked in numerous roles and capacities and will be missed throughout the City. The Police Department has five vacancies needing to be filled.

Chief McLin noted that National Night Out is Tuesday, August 1st from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Jules Bisson Park. He commented that Police Department staff continue to be engaged in City Parks and have joined children with summer reading throughout the City.

Councilor Pepin commented that Sargent Lefebvre will be missed and that she was a good officer and has been eyeing the position within the Fire Marshals Office for some time now.

B. Fire

Fire Chief Kramlinger stated that he has identified a Tahoe class vehicle, and after review of the State bid list and all associated equipment, the current average price is \$73,000 total. He added that he also suggests keeping the current command vehicle and passing it to the Deputy Chief once they are hired, he noted that the current vehicle has around 55,000 miles.

Councilor Messier questioned the reasoning on a new vehicle being needed. Chief Kramlinger stated that it is part of the departments 10-year replacement plan and only has normal wear and tear. Councilor Messier stated that he would favor getting rid of the current command vehicle.

Councilor Vincent arrived at 3:33 p.m. Councilor Pepin provided Councilor Vincent with a recap of the Fire Chief's recommendation for a new command vehicle.

Councilor Michaud commented that he agrees with the recommendation by the Fire Chief and supports the purchase of a new command vehicle and the passing down of the current vehicle, to the future Deputy Fire Chief.

Chief Kramlinger noted that there has been discussion of a new vehicle in the future for the departments Capital Improvement's Plan for the Deputy Fire Chief.

Councilor Messier made a motion to sponsor a Resolution for the purchase of a new fire command vehicle and to retain the current command vehicle. The motion was seconded by Councilor Vincent and passed 4-0.

Chief Kramlinger gave the Committee an update of the new Fire Station project, he reported that the site completion work has been delayed 2-3 weeks due to the rain over the past month. Curbs, sidewalks, and final paving have not yet been scheduled. He did state that the stone around the flag pole is being installed. Chief Kramlinger commented that the Site Superintendent is still on site and he has been wonderful to work with throughout the process and the new structure is high quality.

Councilor Pepin asked about the status of department staff moving fully into the new fire station. Chief Kramlinger reported that the new furniture is on order and that staff are temporarily using some of the old furniture until it comes in. He stated that staff are sleeping in the new quarters and that the kitchen is good. Councilor Messier questioned if there is a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) for staff to be within the new station. Chief Kramlinger confirmed that they received a temporary CO. Councilor Messier questioned the temporary CO. Chief Kramlinger stated that all safety aspects of the building are good, however, some site work such as handicap parking spaces and landscaping have not been completed.

Manager Belmore confirmed that the new Fire Station ribbon cutting ceremony is scheduled on Monday, August 7th at 5:30 p.m. and suggested that is City Council wanted a tour of the building, to arrive at 4:30 p.m. He added that after the ribbon cutting ceremony, the plan is to move into a push-in ceremony of Engine-5.

Chief Kramlinger reported that Engine-5 is in service and doing great, he added that the design and construction of the apparatus is of high quality. Councilor Pepin questioned where the next closest

Pierce apparatus is located. Chief Kramlinger commented that York, Maine is the next closest and believes that once other communities see the truck, they will also switch vendors.

Chief Kramlinger reported on the FY 2024 self-contained breathing apparatus, he stated that demonstrations and request for bids have not yet been completed but noted that a key component of the departments assessments will include a comparison on a 45-minute cylinder versus the currently used 30-minute cylinder. He stated that the 45-minute cylinder allows for more time within a structure before the “low air” warning alarm goes off, but it is heavier and will require more physicality from staff.

Chief Kramlinger stated that the day-to-day operations of the Fire Department remains very busy with emergency calls, fire drills, alarm and sprinkler inspections, Certificate of Occupancy inspections, and more which are included in a handout provided to the Committee.

C. EMS

Stewart’s Ambulance Manager, Paul Robidas, reported that they continue to see a high volume of calls as well as significant delays in offloading of patients to area hospitals. Manager Robidas stated that he met with Wentworth Douglass Hospital representatives two weeks ago and they explained the reason for the delay is due to COVID, staff shortages, and transporting of patients from Frisbie Memorial Hospital due to a number of services not being available for patients.

Manager Robidas stated that they are having some struggles with staffing and could use an additional 2-3 staff, but he assured the Committee that it has not had any effect on services provided by Stewart’s Ambulance to the City’s residents. He added that they are expecting 1-2 new vehicles to come into rotation soon.

MISCELLANEOUS

There were no miscellaneous items discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Messier made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilor Michaud and passed 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen LaPanne, City Clerk