

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
October 16, 2023 – 3:00 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Councilor Martin Pepin, Chairman  
Councilor Nancie Cameron  
Councilor Richard Michaud (Temporary Mayoral  
Appoinment)

Committee Members Absent: Councilor Kenneth S. Vincent, Vice-Chairman  
Councilor Denis Messier

Administration/Staff present: City Manager, Bob Belmore  
Finance Director, Scott Smith  
Fire Chief, George Kramlinger  
Police Chief, Timothy McLin  
Stewarts Ambulance Manager, Paul Robidas  
City Clerk, Kristen LaPanne

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Chairman Pepin called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m. and noted that the Mayor appointed Councilor Michaud as a temporary member for this meeting.

APPROVE THE PAST MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 30, 2023

*Councilor Cameron made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 30, 2023 meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Pepin and passed 2-0-1. Councilor Michaud abstained from the vote.*

E-BIKES: NH LAW

Police Chief McLin provided the Committee with a memorandum that summarizes the New Hampshire laws which govern Electric Bicycles (E-Bikes). He shared that the laws which govern E-Bikes can be found within NH RSA 259 and that the law defines E-Bikes as a pedaled vehicle equipped with an electric motor of less than 750 watts. He added that E-Bikes are considered bicycles and have the same rights, responsibilities and expectations of regular bikes. Chief McLin explained the 3 different classes the E-Bike falls within. Both Class 1 and 2 are similar in that there is no age requirement to operate the E-Bike, helmets are required for ages 16 and under, no license is required, the vehicle is allowed on roads and trails, and both can reach a speed of 20mph. The difference between Class 1 and 2 is that, the Class 1 E-Bike motor provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, while the Class 2 E-Bike motor may be used exclusively to propel the vehicle. The Class 3 E-bike can reach a speed of 28mph and a license is not required, however, the law does mandate that a rider be age 16 and older, a helmet is required for ages 18 and under, and the Class 3 E-bike is not allowed on trails unless the municipality having jurisdiction permits the travel along pathways or trails. Chief McLin noted that E-Bikes are not allowed to be modified.

Councilor Pepin inquired about the use of motorized scooters and where they fall within the law. Chief McLin stated that motorized scooters fall within NH RSA 265: Rules of the Road and can be either gas or electric and require no pedaling. Chief McLin mentioned that there are other municipalities that have established ordinances regarding the use of E-Bikes within their jurisdiction.

Councilor Pepin questioned who is responsible for the damage if an E-Bike strikes a vehicle. Chief McLin responded that an E-Bike is not required to carry insurance in the State of New Hampshire. He suggested that a police report be filed and a civil action can be filed, at the very least a report can be submitted to an insurance company to repair any damages. City Manager Belmore asked if there is a requirement that the E-Bike operator exchange their contact information with the owner of the vehicle they struck in this situation. Chief McLin confirmed that it is not specifically addressed within the statutes that govern the E-Bike. Manager Belmore referenced the comments made by a Councilor at a previous Council meeting, he wonders about if the E-Bike operator strikes a vehicle and leaves the scene, would they be required to stay and exchange contact information. Chief McLin stated that he had not seen anything written in the bicycle laws regarding the appropriate actions at the scene of an accident, but he will look into it and report back to the Committee.

Manager Paul Robidas commented that he and his wife purchased E-Bikes and tried to get insurance on the vehicles, however, there is currently no insurance available to cover E-Bikes.

#### PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATES:

##### *Police Department*

Police Chief McLin reported that the Department's body cameras are in full operation and they have been working out great, he added that they will certainly strengthen court cases. The two new police SUVs are being striped by Wayne Chaloux and are in the queue for a full outfitting of the two-way radios, and the new unmarked vehicle is currently being outfitted with the two-way radios.

Chief McLin updated the Committee on staffing, one recruit is graduating from the Police Academy in November and another officer, who is NH Certified, is in the Department's Field Training Program. The Police Department has a total of 6 open positions. Chief McLin noted that the NH Police Academy is increasing their education program from 16 weeks to 18 weeks beginning next year.

Chief McLin reported that the Department's dispatch radio console upgrade is on backorder for parts and equipment. The vendor has not been able to provide an estimated date of delivery, but he has and will continue to press and monitor the issue.

Chief McLin mentioned that the Department's two newest Sergeants, Colton Deschenes and Jesse Wentworth, have signed up to attend the Supervisor Leadership Institute through the FIB LEEDA Program.

### *Fire Department*

Fire Chief George Kramlinger reported that the Fire Station's Open House was a success. He added that there are still a few minor needs for the Fire Station Building Project to be complete including the red globe lights, and he added that Harvey Construction continues to be great to work with through the process. Chief Kramlinger noted that the new Engine-5 continues to perform well and that final equipment load-out and compartment configurations are close to completion. Annual testing of the fire pumps, and ground and ariel ladders were conducted, of note, T-1 experienced a vacuum leak which will be addressed during its annual servicing. Chief Kramlinger mentioned that investments in annual preventative testing have allowed the Department to address minor issues before they become larger issues.

Councilor Pepin commented that he attended the Fire Station's Open House and that it was a great event put on by staff and well attended. Chief Kramlinger agreed with Councilor Pepin, he added that he felt it was good timing with the weather and having it before Fire Prevention Week and he thanked all that were involved and that attended the event.

### *EMS*

Manager Paul Robidas reported that Stewarts Ambulance's on-time performance remains consistent at an average of four minutes. He noted that they continue to wait on receiving new radios for the two new ambulances, they have been on backorder and cannot utilize the vehicles until said radios have been installed. Manager Robidas stated that the volume of calls continues to remain steady and are projecting to be around 2,000 calls at the end of the year.

### MISCELLANEOUS

City Manager Belmore mentioned that the Dover, Rochester and Somersworth are looking for someone to operate the Emergency Center off of Willand Drive, he noted that SOS operated the Center last season but has heard that would not be the case this upcoming season. Stewarts Ambulance Manager Robidas commented that it was too bad SOS would not be operating the Center again because emergency service calls were much less when they were operating it.

### ADJOURNMENT

***Councilor Cameron made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilor Michaud and passed 3-0. The meeting adjourned at 3:39 p.m.***

Respectfully submitted,

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Kristen LaPanne, City Clerk