

SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

February 21, 2020

The Safety Committee of Chardon City Council met on Tuesday, February 21, 2020, at 8:00 AM in Conference Room A on the second floor of the Chardon Municipal Center.

Christopher Grau, Chairman of Safety Committee presiding.

Members of Finance Committee present: Christopher Grau, Heather Means.

Others present: City Manager Randy Sharpe, Police Chief Scott Niehus, Clerk of Council Amy Day.

Mr. Grau called the meeting to order at 4:46 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Grau moved and Ms. Means seconded to accept the minutes of the Safety Committee from August 6, 2019.

Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

Regarding the Valley Enforcement Group (VEG) fee, Chief Niehus explained the purpose of V.E.G. which provides member communities with manpower and assets for hostage negotiations, SWAT, child abductions, investigators, unmanned aerial vehicles and training. He explained that V.E.G. is largely funded through dues paid by its 16-member communities. V.E.G. voted in December 2019 to increase annual membership dues from \$8,000 to \$10,000 for 2020; however, due to the timing of the vote, this increase was not included in the City's temporary budget. He is asking the Committee to support the V.E.G. dues increase.

Chief Niehus explained that being a member of V.E.G. gives the City an additional team if backup is needed.

Ms. Means asked how often V.E.G. is used by the City.

Chief Niehus stated that V.E.G. was used in 2013 when the school shooting occurred. However, even though the City hasn't used the services much, they are available at no cost if the need arises.

Mr. Sharpe stated that the V.E.G. dues, including the increase, has been included in the permanent budget which Council will consider in March.

Committee members spoke in favor of paying the V.E.G. dues for 2020.

Regarding the City's Emergency Operations Preparedness Plan, Mr. Grau stated that he and the Police Chief have been working on revising the plan. Once the plan is drafted, the law director will review it for changes.

Chief Niehus stated that he would provide the group with the most current draft of the plan.

Regarding Watchguard cameras and video system for patrol cars and interview room, Chief Niehus stated that the City is working on replacing existing Arbitrator video cameras in the police vehicles with Watchguard video systems. In addition, Watchguard systems will be installed in the interview room, outside report room and booking area. This was necessitated because the existing units are not able to be serviced and are at the end of their useful life. Replacement of the equipment will allow the City to keep the video on one server and will allow the City to view and make copies of the video.

Chief Niehus reviewed the current process for obtaining video with the existing cameras.

General questions were asked about how the cameras currently work and features of the Watchguard system.

The City Manager and Police Chief reviewed some of the features of the Watchguard system.

Regarding firing range re-configuration project, Mr. Sharpe stated that the Mel Harder Park Phase II improvements presented the City with the opportunity to reconfigure the firing range away from the wastewater treatment plant while also recognizing a cost savings on the Mel Harder Park project. Clay was needed for the multi-purpose field which could be obtained from reconfiguring the firing range, and top soil from Mel Harder Park could be used to re-configure the firing range.

Mr. Grau asked about the cost savings.

Mr. Sharpe stated that the additional cost to add the range work is estimated at \$46,030.40 and the Mel Harder Park Project came in under budget and so the projects will be combined together.

Mr. Grau asked if there was interest in moving the firing range previously.

Mr. Sharpe stated that yes, for many years, discussion had taken place about moving the range.

Committee members inquired about notification to the general public that the range is there.

Chief Niehus noted that besides the firing range, there are Hambden residents who discharge automatic firearms on their property nearby.

Mr. Sharpe noted that residents in the area know that the firing range is located there and he has not heard of complaints about the noise from the firing range.

Chief Niehus stated that the firing range has been there since the 70s. He stated that the range is used by the City's police officers and other agencies.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - none.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Chief Niehus stated that it was recently discovered that the battery backup in the dispatch center is failing. The battery backup is used as an intermediary device between the time a power outage occurs and the time the generator comes on. The battery backup diagnostic test has failed the last three months which is an indicator that the batteries need replaced. The price estimate for batteries is \$8,000.

Ms. Means asked the lifespan of the batteries.

Chief Niehus stated that there is a 3-5 year lifespan on the batteries.

Ms. Means asked if the City should be considering newer technology.

Chief Niehus stated that currently the equipment is able to be serviced, but eventually newer technology eventually should be purchased.

Mr. Sharpe stated that it could be part of the permanent budget or it can be requested of Council to authorize the expenditure now.

Chief Niehus stated that he does not want the equipment to fail during a catastrophic event so he would prefer not to wait.

Mr. Grau moved and Ms. Means seconded to approve the upgrade to the Eaton UPS backup system replacement batteries in the

dispatch center based on the estimate received by UPS. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURN

Ms. Means moved and Mr. Grau seconded to adjourn. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:04 AM

Attest:

AMY DAY
Clerk of Council