

I have reviewed the minutes, and they correctly represent the actions taken by the committee.



Jim Walters, Fire Chief

**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
March 14, 2024**

7:10 PM

Members Present: Trustee Jamie Clar
 Trustee George Dunham

Others Present: Paula Hewson, Assistant Village Manager
 Jim Walters, Chief of Fire
 Bill Wolf, Chief of Police

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Trustee Clar called the Public Safety Meeting to order at 7:10 pm. Trustee Dunham made a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting of January 11, 2024. Motion was seconded by Trustee Clar. Two ayes. Motion carried. Trustee Dunham made a second motion to approve minutes from the meeting on January 11, 2024, Executive Session. Motion was seconded by Trustee Clar. Two ayes. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Recommendation to Approve a Contract Extension for School Crossing Guard Program with Andy Frain Services.

Police Chief Wolf stated that we have been using Andy Frain since 2016 with an initial 3-year contract followed by a two-year extension. The current two-year extension will be up this school year. We need to have a contract in place for the next year. Chief Wolf stated Andy Frain has been very good to work with and is rare that a police department employee needs to fill in for them. There was discussion of an additional two-year extension dependent on price increase, they stated there would be a 3% increase each year in the next 2 years.-Compared to most price increases we have seen from other vendors; Andy Frain is still much lower. According to Chief Wolf, given the inflationary climate, 3% is a modest increase. Chief Wolf reiterated they have been very happy with their service and would like to extend the contract for two additional years at the annual 3% increase. At the end of this extension, we would go to bid again. Chief Wolf said in the other quotes received from 2016, when the original bid request was sent out, the prices were higher than Andy Frain is submitting now, even after several years of service and cost of living increases.

Trustee Dunham made a motion to recommend that the Public Safety Committee recommend to the Village Board to approve the recommendation to Approve a Contract Extension for School Crossing Guard Program with Andy Frain Services. Second by Trustee Clar. Two ayes. Motion carried.

2. Recommendation to Award Bid for New Firefighter Turnout Gear with Municipal Emergency Services (MES)

Fire Chief Jim Walters stated the turnout gear purchase is a large expense because they have not made a purchase in the last 6 to 7 months. Chief Walters stated they generally purchase 4 or 5 sets at a time and space out the purchases. The Chief said they have a replacement program where they replace 10 to 12 sets every year based on their expectant life cycle of 10 years. Chief Walters stated they went out to bid 3 years ago and it was time to do that again. One of the deciding factors on looking at other vendors was delivery times were getting extended, and delivery was over a year from placing an order to receiving the turnout gear. The Chief said they formed a committee with firefighters to investigate the gear and they looked at several things including the comfort of the fire fighters but most importantly the thermal protection and breathability. Chief Walters stated they had 3 final vendors: MES, Globe, and Lion. They decided on Fire Dex from MES, they had good breathability and thermal protection. Chief Walters said it was \$100 lower than what they are currently paying and below the bids received from other competitors. The Chief stated normally they would space the purchases out over the year but since they did not, they are purchasing 18 sets for the new candidates and 9 sets that are for replacement. Trustee Dunham asked if new candidates received new gear or older gear? Chief Walters said currently they receive a “hand-me-down” because we cannot get the new gear in a timely manner. This vendor can deliver in 3 months. The Chief said they don’t give candidates new gear to go to the academy because it gets beat up, they have sets in reserve that are older sets that are used for this purpose.

Trustee Dunham made a motion to recommend that the Public Safety Committee recommend to the Village Board to approve the recommendation to Award Bid for New Firefighter Turnout Gear with Municipal Emergency Services (MES). Second by Trustee Clar. Two ayes. Motion carried.

3. Northwest Central Joint Emergency Management Systems (JEMS) Annual Report 2022-2023 - Informational

Fire Chief Walters stated this was an update on JEMS activities for 2022-2023. JEMS is a cooperative effort that was started in 2016 by the original ten communities. In the last year they have added 2 communities, Wheeling, and Barrington. Chief Walters stated one of the highlights of the year was JEMS director Mick Flemming receiving the O.D. Troutman Outstanding Service to Emergency Management Award. It recognizes Emergency Managers that demonstrated dedication to the field of emergency management and service to all the citizens in the State of Illinois. Other highlights were the continued implementation of the five-year Integrated Preparedness Plan and renewed recognition of the storm ready communities, which included Schaumburg. Chief Walters stated one of the biggest things JEMS does is to work with all the communities to ensure they are working on the same formats and the same systems; this assists them if they need to help in a different community. He said they did a training with JEMS in our EOC this past year on different division training, including planning and logistics. Fire Chief Walters stated one of the areas they utilized JEMS this year was the fire that occurred in the senior housing complex. Chief Walters explained it was difficult to manage due to the fact it was low-income housing, and several people did not have anywhere to go. JEMS was able to assist them with contacts for county and state assistance. The Chief stated they worked on this situation daily for about three months. Trustee Clar asked if the building was repaired, Chief Walters said he believed it is tenable, and they are starting to move people back in. Trustee Clar said the department’s

efforts and everyone's in the village does not go unnoticed. He said people were commenting online on how great the Village, the Fire Department, and everyone involved was. Chief Walters said it was a great community effort. Chief Walters stated he would like to recognize Tracy Raimondo, the Emergency Manager and JEMS, specifically the coordination that they had with the State and County. The Chief said they made a bad situation as good as it could be. Trustee Clar said the day of the fire Katie from McCulloch's and Sweet Orange brought food. Chief Walters stated Nursing and Senior Services helped with the contacts and coordination of the donations. Police Chief Wolf said everyone did a great job. Trustee Dunham asked if they knew what caused the fire? Fire Chief Walters replied we would check. Chief Walters concluded by saying JEMS is a good idea, and it remains highly beneficial in providing collaboration between all the neighboring communities.

Trustee Dunham made a motion to accept the Northwest Central Joint Emergency Management Systems (JEMS) Annual Report 2022-2023 - Informational. Second by Trustee Clar. Two ayes. Motion carried.

4. Fire Department 2022-2027 Strategic Plan Update

Fire Chief Walters stated the Strategic Plan was created in 2022 and Trustee Dunham was involved with the process. The Chief said it was his belief this should be considered a "living document" that you are consistently looking at and analyzing. He stated he will review all six initiatives that came out of the plan and discuss where they are and explain the adjustments that were made with the initial goals to make them more effective. Chief Walters stated the 1st initiative was Professional Development and believes staff has done very well with this objective. When he first was hired, one of the objectives was to develop personnel. To accomplish this, they recently worked with the Police and Fire Commission to change the hiring requirements from an associate degree to 60 credit hours. This was done to include those individuals working towards their bachelor's degree that may not have an associate degree but do have the required 60 credit hours. The Chief said the next part of the objective was to have a comprehensive succession plan. To accomplish this, they have created a three-year learning plan for their candidates. This plan outlines what they need to be trained on prior to any specialty teams involvement, emphasis is on driver training and fire ground operations. The Chief stated they have created task books to track their progress in completing the plan. Chief Walters said they have also created a Fire Officer Development task book as well as a 40-hour class for future lieutenants. The top four individuals on the Lieutenants List are chosen for this 40-hour program. The Chief said they are currently working on a Captain and Battalion Chief task book. The idea is for improved administrative responsibilities for these positions. Chief Walters stated the 2nd initiative was Facilities and Capital Improvement. The Chief said this is part of the accreditation process and they are always analyzing their response data. They recently obtained better software that gives them the ability to create improved graphs and data. Chief Walters stated they have made an effort to improve their facilities. There is a current project to improve the bathrooms in Station 54 which just received final approval to move forward. Fire Chief Walters stated they are looking at updating the Emergency Operations Center and eventually are looking to build a new headquarters and convert the existing headquarters into a state-of-the-art training facility with current technologies. The 3rd initiative, Communications, Chief Walters said they have made good progress in. One of the suggestions provided by the union was to have suggestion boxes in the stations however, after analyzing the way they currently communicate they decided this would not work for them. Chief Walters said they currently have good communication with the union, they constantly have informal discussions in which any issues are addressed. If it is a more serious issue, they conduct a formal meeting. The Chief

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stated they have initiated an annual officers conference where they invite all officers to the Prairie Center and provide an overview of where the department stands on the goals and objectives, and the direction they are going. Additionally, the Chief said they have a State of the Department with all personnel after the budget has been completed where he presents their goals and objectives for the year. Chief Walters stated they are also part of the Village's new software program, Vetter, which is like an electronic suggestion box. Vetter is currently in a testing phase but once it is active it will be made available for all personnel. Additionally, the Chief said they have also initiated for the last 2 or 3 years, quarterly meetings with EPW staff and police department staff if needed. Chief Walters concluded the department has made good progress with the Communications initiative. The 4th initiative is Service Delivery. Chief Walters said they continually monitor their service with the community risk reduction program. Covid made it difficult to reach out to schools so they created videos that could be played over Zoom, once schools reopened the outreach improved. Chief Walters said they also made station alerting upgrades over the last year and a half, he said studies show that startling alarms has an impact on the cardio system. This was an improvement for the health and well-being of their people. The Chief said part of this system is putting countdown clocks in front of the apparatus bays, it shows personnel response routes and address information. Chief Walters said their overall response times have decreased. Chief Walters stated they are looking at geofencing which would time stamp when the apparatus was pulling out of the station thus giving a more accurate turnout time. The Chief said additionally, they are constantly looking at their call volume, how much mutual aid they are giving and how much mutual aid is received. It varies month to month but currently they are receiving mutual aid more frequently than giving it. Trustee Dunham asked where they were for EMS vs Fire? Chief Walters said it was 67% EMS and the rest was fire rescue. They are also reviewing the 90 North development and what the future ramifications are going to be, it is a constant evaluation process. Chief Walters stated the 5th initiative was for EMS and Nursing. He said they were tasked with trying to get a hospital readmission prevention program. It is a program where paramedics or nurses do a follow-up to make sure they are following directions and doing what is needed to prevent readmission to the hospital. Unfortunately, they were not able to implement the program because there was no funding. Northwest Community Hospital tried to put a program together 3 years ago but did not find funding. The Chief stated the hospitals and insurance companies would benefit from this program and should pay for it; Trustee Dunham agreed. Chief Walters stated they decided to wait and see if the Village is going to do any type of modifications in the Health Department after the Healthcare Study. Chief Walter said after talking with the EMS coordinator, the village does not have an issue with readmissions, he said they handle it with the Nursing Division. If someone is becoming problematic, Nursing will provide them with the resources they need. In addition, he said they work with the social workers from PD, as well. The Chief said the Barn and the Senior Services impacts the EMS runs; they engage with the seniors. They started the OASIS program where they reach out to seniors to keep them involved and comfort them. Chief Walters stated another highlight was they delivered 21,000 lunches in 2023 at the Barn. Chief Walters stated the 6th initiative was Health and Wellness. Chief Walters said they have made great progress with this initiative. Currently, all personnel are participating in a mandatory physical fitness program that includes a stress test, pulmonary screening, and bloodwork. Some of the bloodwork that is currently being done have some cancer screening in it, they are always looking at ways to preempt the cancer causes and lower that rate. Fire Chief Walters stated statistically firefighters still have a 10% higher probability of getting some type of cancer than the normal population. The Chief said they have asked the Village and the Foreign Fire Board to assist in these efforts. One of these efforts was the turnout gear. Turnout gear is one of the main sources of getting carcinogens in their body. When they are in a fire, if the gear is not washed it stays in that material which then absorbs into their bodies. Chief Walters stated the

village is purchasing one extractor this year and Foreign Fire is buying four additional so there is one at each of the stations. He said they set a program where gear will be washed after every fire and at least twice annually. Chief Walters said part of the program was to purchase each firefighter a second set of turnout gear, it takes hours to dry after washing it. The Chief said they have in the next budget year to purchase a second set of gear for a third of the department with a third every year after that. Additionally, he said they are working to develop a better fitness program to reduce their injuries. They are looking to include measurements for cardio fitness flexibility, proper strength training, and lifting techniques. In conclusion, Chief Walters stated he believes they have made great strides in each of the initiatives of the Strategic Plan, and they make necessary adjustments every year. He said they develop their annual goals to be in line with the village's goals, as well as their Strategic Plan. Chief Walters stated 2027 will be the next official update. Trustee Dunham and Trustee Clar said Chief Walters did a great job.

Trustee Dunham made a motion to accept the Fire Department 2022-2027 Strategic Plan Update. Second by Trustee Clar. Two ayes. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

CONTINUING ITEMS:

DEFERRALS:

COMMENTS:

ADJOURNMENT:

NEXT VILLAGE BOARD MEETING: March 26, 2024

ADJOURNMENT: Trustee Clar made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Trustee Dunham. Two ayes. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:48 pm.

Anne Gonzalez
Public Safety Committee Secretary