

SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

February 23, 2022

The Safety Committee of Chardon City Council met on Wednesday, February 23, 2022 at 3:00 PM in Council Chambers of the Chardon Municipal Center.

Heather Means, Chairman of Safety Committee presiding.

Members of Safety Committee present: David Lelko, Heather Means.

Others present: City Manager Randy Sharpe, Clerk of Council Amy Day, Police Chief Scott Niehus, Public Service Director Paul Hornyak, Steven Kofol, Kevin Westbrook, Fawn O'Hara, Patricia Landry, Roger & Cheryl Arbogast, Stephanie Elliott.

Ms. Means called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Ms. Means noted grammatical corrections to the minutes of November 9, 2021.

Mr. Lelko moved and Ms. Means seconded to accept the minutes of the Safety Committee from November 9, 2021. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

Introductions were made by those in attendance.

Regarding a request for speed reduction on Wilson Mills, Ms. Means stated that a letter was received from Patricia Landry, 206 Wilson Mills, asking the City to consider: reducing the speed, investigate vehicle metrics, and provide traffic calming measures on Wilson Mills.

Fawn O'Hara, 207 Wilson Mills Rd., stated that she is concerned with the noise and speed of vehicles on her street but noted that the vehicle speed is irrelevant unless it is enforced.

Police Chief, Scott Niehus, reviewed how he became aware of the concerns of Ms. Landry. He explained the actions he has taken as a result including installing a traffic calming device on Wilson Mills which has gathered data over the last week, and gathering traffic information and accident details over that last 5 years.

Chief Niehus explained that the traffic data gathered over the last week indicated that 30,599 cars traveled eastbound at an average speed of 29 mph and the 85% percentile of speed was at 39 mph.

Chief Niehus reviewed accident data on Wilson Mills for the current year and the last 5 years:

2017 - 14
2018 - 14
2019 - 13
2020 - 12
2021 - 9
2022 - 3

Mr. Sharpe reviewed the improvements proposed to be made to the Wilson Mills Rd./Park Ave. intersection to be engineered in 2024 and built in 2025. He explained that it is the City's desire to reduce some of the hills to improve the line of sight.

Ms. Landry expressed concern about being able to get out of her driveway with a light at the intersection.

Kevin Westbrook, Traffic Engineer, explained the process for changing speed limits. He stated that speed limits are set in the Ohio Revised Code and any speed limit change must be approved through ODOT. He reviewed the information that ODOT requires in order to make a change which includes factoring in the prevailing speed on the road which is the 85 percentile. He explained that in order to justify reducing a speed, you need to get the traffic driving at a lower speed. If the information gathered was sent to ODOT, they would deny a request to lower the speed limit.

Mr. Lelko asked if the speed limit can be reduced for only a portion of Wilson Mills.

Mr. Westbrook stated that there is a minimum distance where ODOT would allow a speed limit change.

Mr. Lelko asked if the City could just lower the speed limit without ODOT approval.

Mr. Westbrook stated that there would be liability issues with lowering the speed limit in that manner.

Chief Niehus stated that the speed limit sign will stay up for a period of time so that they may continue to collect more

data. This will be followed-up with officers running radar.

Mr. Westbrook stated that when the intersection is re-aligned and a traffic signal put in at Park Ave/Wilson Mills Rd., it could be re-evaluated because these improvements may change the character of the road and a speed reduction may become warranted.

Regarding the ODOT Systemic Safety Application, Mr. Westbrook reported that an application was submitted to ODOT on January 26, 2022 for pedestrian improvements to the Square and high school.

The application includes consolidation of 2 crosswalks to 1 location on the west side and the remaining pedestrian crossings on both sides will include rectangular rapid flashing beacons, curb bump-outs, high visibility crosswalks and improved signage.

Ms. Means asked what the plan is if the grant is not awarded to the city.

Steve Kofol, representing Chardon Schools, stated that if they do not receive the grant funds, they are prepared to replace the flashing 20 mph speed limit signs (\$16,000), but not the rectangular flashing beacons at the crosswalks.

Ms. Means asked when the grant is expected to be awarded.

Mr. Westbrook stated that it is expected to be awarded in April, 2022.

Mr. Sharpe asked if the application can be modified to include a motion detector and not a push button to light the rectangular flashing beacons at the crosswalk at the school.

Mr. Kofol reviewed the lighting improvements made to the school to improve visibility.

Mr. Westbrook stated that this could be done when the project does to design.

Mr. Sharpe asked if the city could propose to keep the existing north crosswalk on Main Street if it is not made ADA.

Mr. Westbrook stated that if the City did this as a separate project, they could do what they wanted with it as long as it doesn't use ODOT money.

Regarding the traffic calming policy, Mr. Hornyak explained

that Council adopted the policy in November, 2021 which is to be used in response to inquiries or complaints regarding traffic.

Mr. Sharpe reviewed the procedure for handling a complaint which should go to the public service director first.

Regarding equipment upgrades for 2022, Chief Niehus reviewed the status of budgeted items for 2022 including:

- City-wide camera project
- Body cameras
- Replacement of Rev Cord recorder in dispatch
- Vehicles
- OVI testing machine

Regarding an update to the City's emergency plan, Ms. Means noted that the key contacts in the Emergency Operations Plan need to be updated on an annual basis.

Mr. Sharpe stated that staff has updated the list for 2022, and will plan to update it on an annual basis and distribute the update to Council and appropriate parties.

ADJOURN

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

The meeting adjourned at 4:24 PM.

Attest:

AMY DAY
Clerk of Council