

SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

September 26, 2023

The Safety Committee of Chardon City Council met on Tuesday, September 26, 2023 at 2:00 PM in Conference Room A of the Chardon Municipal Center.

Heather Means, Chairman of Safety Committee presiding.

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

Others present: Police Chief Scott Niehus, City Manager Randy Sharpe, Secretary Rebecca Repasky, Assistant Fire Chief Larry Gaspar, Fire Chief Justin Geiss, Finance Director Mark Iacofano.

Ms. Means called the meeting to order at 2:02 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Lelko moved and Ms. Means seconded to approve the minutes of the Safety Committee from January 31, 2023. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

Regarding the draft 2024-2028 Capital Improvement Plan, Chief Niehus reviewed items in the plan for 2024 including: Replacement of Car 1, a parking enforcement solution, the John Bohl Memorial Project and renovation evaluation of the former police dispatch center.

Chief Niehus explained there is an arrangement with Statewide Ford with state procurement pricing for the replacement vehicle, which is anticipated to cost \$71,000. Ms. Means asked if the vehicle will have everything needed when it is delivered. Chief Niehus said it will be fitted for their needs.

Chief Niehus explained "chalking" of tires was deemed unconstitutional and an alternative solution for monitoring parking would be an electronic GPS system that takes photos. Ms. Means clarified there is not a person dedicated to run the electronic system. Chief Niehus said correct, however patrol officers would be operating the system.

Chief Niehus explained details of the John Bohl Memorial Project which would bring the memorial from the Square to the front of City Hall. A rendering has been drawn and will be used to collect quotes. Asst. Chief Gaspar asked if the Fire Department can be represented on that as well. Chief Niehus said he will look into that. Ms. Means asked how much has been set aside. Mr. Sharpe said \$9,500. Ms. Means asked if fundraising is an option if the quotes come in higher. Chief Niehus said yes. Ms. Means asked how

long this project has been ongoing. Chief Niehus said three (3) to four (4) years and he would like to see it completed.

Chief Niehus explained equipment in the former dispatch area will need to be determined to either be kept or removed to create a workable space. Equipment includes radios that will soon be obsolete. The renovation will also include offices, storage area and the IT storage area. Mr. Lelko suggested using Dave King, from Horne and King, to help with the re-design. Ms. Means asked if there is an idea of how much the renovation will cost. Chief Niehus said no. Ms. Means asked how much the radios cost. Chief Niehus said two (2) are in the operational budget for 2024 and for 2025 they will look for additional money. Mr. Lelko added it would be nice to have the police cars under roof. Mr. Lelko asked how many cars can fit into the sally port. Chief Niehus said three (3).

Chief Niehus reviewed projects under 'continued consideration'. Ms. Means asked out of that list, if item #6(radios) is most important. Chief Niehus said yes.

Mr. Sharpe explained the ladder truck is going to be twenty (20) years old and will need to be replaced. The projected cost is \$2.2 million in 2027. There will be a shortfall of \$1.8 million. He said an increase to the fire levy might need to be considered or a loan; however, a purchase order backed by funds needs to be in place first. The ladder truck carries the jaws of life, forceful entry and provides mutual aid to other communities. The City currently owns the truck and its share of the Fire Department funding is 55.44%.

Asst. Chief Gaspar asked if there is currently \$800,000 to go towards the truck. Mr. Iacofano said no. Ms. Means clarified a loan of \$950,000 would be needed. Mr. Iacofano said based on the projection in the current Capital Improvement Plan, as of today, assuming no loans, grants, or levy increase, the shortfall would be approximately \$1.8 million. Chief Geiss added no one could have predicted these inflation costs ten (10) years ago. Asst. Chief Gaspar asked if money has been put aside in the past twenty (20) years. Mr. Sharpe said no. Asst. Chief Gaspar said they could apply for a FEMA grant up to \$1 million. Ms. Means asked if they will apply for that grant. Asst. Chief Gaspar said yes. Mr. Iacofano shared there is a 0% revolving loan from the state, however, it would have to be bought now. Mr. Lelko suggested the project could be moved up a year if the grant is awarded.

Mr. Sharpe added if a levy is determined to be needed, that decision needs to be made by June 2024.

Mr. Lelko asked if mutual aid is provided to communities that have their own fire departments like Munson Township and Hambden Township. Chief Geiss said yes. Chief Geiss added fire alarms do not get mutual aid, but smoke detector alarms do.

Ms. Means asked if the City wanted to own the new truck. Chief Geiss said fair cost sharing will have to be decided, but he is not opposed to the Fire Department owning it. Mr. Sharpe said his intent is to have the City buy the vehicle. Asst. Chief Gaspar added the Chardon Fire Department ladder truck is designated for Geauga Hospital.

Mr. Lelko suggested having joint meetings between the City and the other communities regarding the Fire Department financing.

Ms. Means said more information needs to be gathered and another Safety Committee meeting regarding the new ladder truck will be needed.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS – none.

ADJOURN

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

The meeting adjourned at 3:01 PM.

Attest:

Rebecca Repasky
Secretary