



City of Ashtabula
Ashtabula City Council
Safety Forces Committee
Monday, April 24, 2023 at 8:45 AM
4717 Main Avenue, Ashtabula, OH 44004

Minutes

Opening of Committee Meeting

Call to Order

The meeting of the Ashtabula City Council Safety Forces Committee was called to order at 8:45 a.m. by Committee Chair Speelman.

Roll Call

Members Present: Chair: Council Vice President Michael Speelman, Member: Council President John Roskovics

Absent: Vice Chair: Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio

Officers Present: City Manager James Timonere, Clerk of Council McKenzie Borgan

Ashtabula Department Heads Present: Police Chief Robert Stell, Fire Chief Shawn Gruber

Visitors: None

Sunshine Law Certification

A quorum was established as defined by the Ashtabula City Council Rules of Order. The meeting met the requirements of the Ohio Sunshine Laws Open Meetings Act.

Welcome and Acknowledgement of Visitors

None.

Special Guest Presentation

None.

Police Department – Chief's Report

February and March 2023 Statistics

Chief Stell stated there was nothing unusual to report on the statistics. They are pretty typical for this time of the year as far as the calls for service. Chair Michael Speelman asked if Chief Stell had anything else to report other than his stats. Chief Stell said they have had a recent missing person which turned out to be a homicide case. His guys put in a lot of extra work on this case and did a really good job. They were able to locate the individual. Unfortunately, he was deceased. They did a very good job on this investigation and it looks like they will probably get a conviction for this. Mr. Speelman asked Chief Stell to thank them for all their hard work under awful circumstances. Chief Stell mentioned that the Fire Department helped out a lot with the search and the recovery of the body once it was found. Mr. Speelman said thank you again for all their hard work.

Fire Department – Chief's Report

Annual Report

Chief Gruber stated the annual report shows that things are back to a normal flow with calls. There is nothing crazy high or low. Mr. Speelman asked if we were back to pre-pandemic stats and Chief Gruber said yes. Chief Gruber said ACMC has stopped their mask requirement.

Mr. Speelman said he knows it has been in the paper and discussed at the City Council meeting, but he asked if Chief Gruber wanted to expand on the one million dollar grant they were awarded for the fire truck. Chief Gruber said AFG, a FEMA-funded grant for fire departments across the nation, is what they applied for. It is very competitive and Chief Gruber said some of the grant writers will not even bother writing this grant for a vehicle because the odds of you getting it are like winning the lottery. They felt they had a really good case as their truck is 33 years old and it is becoming hard to even get parts for it and it is in and out of the shop. He said these issues come and go, but he is sure it is from the truck being in Northeast Ohio for 33 years. They wrote for this grant, gave them their best case, and were awarded the grant. The one million dollars was the highest they could go for with our population and it was granted to us. These trucks are very expensive and without this grant, there was very little chance that the city could replace the truck with its finances. Getting a one million dollar grant towards purchasing this truck makes the purchasing of it achievable. They are beyond excited and it is a bigger deal than can be imagined. Mr. Speelman said a million dollars in big government may not be much but, for the City of Ashtabula, it is a game changer. He said congratulations to Chief Gruber and to everyone who helped write the grant. Chief Gruber said they had to have specs before they wrote for the grant but they are going through and fine-tuning the specs as the grant was written for in 2021 and there have been price increases and there may even be another price increase at the beginning of June. He is hoping to get this packet together and discuss it with the manager and figure out the right way to move forward so it can be presented to the council as they still have a chunk of money they have to come up with for the purchase of the truck. Mr. Speelman asked what the trucks cost, one and a half million to two million. Chief Gruber said they are running around the 1.8 million dollar range, but when they started this project it was around 1.4 million. Mr. Speelman said congratulations. He asked if Chief Gruber had anything else to report on. Chief Gruber said everything is going along well and he does not have anyone that is hurt.

Mr. Speelman said he imagines they are getting prepped for boating season. Chief Gruber said yes, they actually put the boat in the water last Friday. It is all serviced. They have some training lined up with the Coast Guard in about two weeks.

City Manager's Report

City Manager Timonere mentioned that they did the promotional exams for the Fire Department and the Police Department. They will have to do another promotional exam for the Police Department. The Fire Department will be continuing with promotions to decide who becomes lieutenants and captains there.

Mr. Timonere stated he believes he will be bringing another lateral transfer to the next City Council meeting for the Police Department. The Police Department has a retirement coming in June, so they want to bring someone on a little early for the transition.

Mr. Roskovics asked if we had had anyone with the Civil Service Commission yet. Mr. Timonere said no they have not yet. Thankfully, Mr. Balog has been doing the bulk of the work still but they need to get into the process of filling his place. Mr. Roskovics said it is such a specific need it is hard to fill it within the city. Mr. Speelman stated they would continue to announce the need for someone to fill his position at the City Council meetings.

Unfinished Business

None.

New Business

None.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on May 22, 2023.

The next meeting will be held on May 22nd at 8:45 a.m.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 AM by Safety Forces Committee Chair Michael Speelman.

Attested By: McKenzie Burgan, Clerk of Council