



MINUTES
Committee of the Whole
Monday, July 22, 2019 @ 5:30 p.m.
Tony Benavides Lansing City Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Wood called the meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT

Councilmember Kathie Dunbar
Councilmember Jeremy A. Garza
Councilmember Adam Hussain- excused
Council Member Brian T. Jackson
Councilmember Peter Spadafore
Councilmember Patricia Spitzley
Councilmember Jody Washington
Councilmember Carol Wood

OTHERS PRESENT

Sherrie Boak, Council Staff
Jim Smiertka, City Attorney
Samantha Harkins, Executive Staff, Mayor's Office
Lisa Hagen, Assistant City Attorney & Council Legal Analyst
Eric Brewer, Council Internal Auditor
Chief Yankowski, LPD Chief
Mary Reynolds
Loretta Stanaway
Art Hasbrook
Matt Oudssema

Minutes

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER WASHINGTON TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM JULY 8, 2019 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

Ms. Stanaway spoke in support of the LPD, but noted in her opinion they were understaffed.

Mr. Hasbrook spoke in opposition to the data management in the LPD, and the timeline it takes to review information from accidents and other incidents. He then appealed the fees that are charged in FOIA costs.

Mary Reynolds spoke in support of the LPD.

PRESENTATION

Lansing Police Department Annual Report

Chief Yankowski began his presentation, acknowledged his staff, Ms. Reddish on the creation of the report and then acknowledged the Mayor, Council, the LPD Board and citizens for their support. Lastly Chief Yankowski acknowledged all the LPD officers for keeping the community safe. The presentation moved into a summary of the report in the packet on each department. Council President Wood asked what the difference is between an informal and formal complaint in Internal Affairs. The Chief confirmed any time a citizen wants to file a complaint, they can do it with Internal Affairs or the Commission Investigator. All complaints get investigated by Internal Affairs. With the formal complaint, if a complaint is sustained, it is subject to discipline. If it is an informal complaint, they document the complaint, offer training but do not handle it as a form of discipline. Citizens have the options of both, along with the same process with an employee-based complaint. Chief Yankowski continued on patrol statistics in the report, and confirmed that traffic report is included in the report along with accident reports in the records management. Regarding the Community Service Unit, it was expanded over last 5 years and in 2019 the 11th community policing officer was added. Regarding the G.R.E.A.T. program, he noted that there are 8 officers going into the schools teaching kids to make good choices and decisions. In the summer they will continue to education and provide guidance to the kids by attending community events. The Chief continued his presentation highlighting the Citizens Academy, Youth Academy, traffic unit, honor guard, and Explorers noted in the report. Council Member Spitzley asked about the hiring process with officers retiring. Chief Yankowski informed the Committee that they are staffed +4 and in the process for hiring for 2020 class with the goal to recruit, hire and train, so by the time of a retirement they are ahead. The department hired 31 in 2018 with 68-69% minority candidates. Council Member Spadafore asked the status of the Police Social Worker position that was budgeted in 2018. Chief Yankowski confirmed the employee began in January 2019, has been doing a lot of networking, and will be working on a contact team to provide additional resources for the opioid epidemic. Lastly, the presentation highlighted training, mobile command and technology.

Council Member Jackson asked for details on the public comments earlier on the data management and the time to provide details. Chief Yankowski stated that the LPD is always looking for the best software, and with a video component they need to make sure certain details and faces are redacted along with redacting radio traffic.

Council Member Spadafore stepped away for the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

He continued noting that they are looking at new equipment to speed up the information search, and currently there are five (5) employees in central records that go through all FOIA requests.

Council Member Spadafore returned to the meeting at 6:08 p.m.

Council Member Jackson acknowledged the Chief for his years of service, then inquired in the internal affairs department. Chief Yankowski noted the majority of the complaints are handled by Internal Affairs, and there are two officers; 1 lieutenant and 1 sergeant and they have not been in the LPD for anywhere between 7-10 years. Any resident can file a complaint over the phone, text, emails or in person. The majority of the complaints are employee based internal

not external. With citizen complaints they will come to residents' homes and they not have to sign anything. There are other options for the citizens including the civilian investigator, who is not a police officer, and they can file a complaint. This investigator is not housed in LPD. Internal Affairs is the "keeper of records" the Citizen Investigator completes the report. Council President Wood referenced the complaint brochure that is available to citizens that outlines the process for all the options and encouraged all Council Members to distribute them at their neighborhood meetings. Council Member Spitzley also noted that a complaint can always be filed with the City Attorney office as well, and Council Member Washington added that the same process used by the LPD is used by the State of Michigan Department of Corrections. Council Member Jackson asked for efforts to find a policy to make more accommodating and have complaint heard and the Chief confirmed the LPD is open-minded to any suggestions on solutions or ideas.

DISCUSSION/ACTION

DISCUSSION/RESOLUTION – Changes in 2019 Council and Committee of the Whole Dates
Council President Wood proposed a discussion on moving the dates in November and December 2019 due to the holidays and still able to address business before year end. Council Member Jackson asked why the proposed changes. Council Member Spadafore clarified November 25th falls during the week of Thanksgiving and by moving those meetings into December it would allow 2 Committee and Council meetings in December where there is currently one. Council Member Dunbar noted she might have a conflict with attendance at the new dates of December 16th meetings. Council Member Spitzley recapped that Committee of the Whole and Council will now meet December 2nd and 16th.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPADAFORE TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE COUNCIL MEETING DATES FOR NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 2019. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

DISCUSSION/RESOLUTION – Council Appeal to the State on Fireworks Law Changes
Council President Wood briefly noted the proposed Resolution would ask the State legislation to consider making changes in the Fireworks law. The resolution also speaks to the statement made to Council by Mayor Schor he would also submit a letter in support of the resolution to the State as well.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPADAFORE TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR AN APPEAL ON THE STATE OF MICHIGAN FIREWORKS LAW AMENDMENTS. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Other

Council President Wood referenced a "Late" item for the Council meeting later tonight. She stated it would be introduced out of Committee on Public Safety to address 3801 Walton. She then provided historical information on the property including agreed upon letters from the owner to fix issues, work with community policing, and lack of results. She concluded that per Law, this could proceed to court. Council Member Spadafore asked for confirmation that this resolution was not stating Council was invoking the section to issue subpoenas. Council President Wood confirmed this was going to all be handled by the City Attorney and the courts, with all information gathered by the City Attorney Office. Council Member Spitzley spoke on other items discussed at Committee on the property including providing the owner numerous opportunities to comply, but nothing the property is a health and safety issue. Council President Wood added that the community policing office has also informed the Committee that the tenants are afraid to complain because of eviction. Council Member Garza spoke on the ongoing situation with the property and discussions at Committee. Mr. Smiertka concluded the discussion by clarifying that the process is to authorize the authority

with the resolution to declare it a nuisance then the next action which could be circuit court or other alternatives.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 6:39 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary

Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee on July 29, 2019