



MINUTES
Committee on Public Safety
Thursday, February 25, 2021 @ 4:00 p.m.

Access the meeting via: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82136155042> ; ID: 821 3615 5042; Dial In: 312-626-6799

Held virtually in an effort to protect the health and safety of the public & to mitigate the spread of COVID 19

CALL TO ORDER via ZOOM

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL-via ZOOM

Council Member Jeremy Garza, Chair remotely from Lansing, Michigan

Council Member Carol Wood, Vice Chair remotely from Lansing, Michigan

Council Member Brian T. Jackson, Member remotely from Lansing, Michigan

OTHERS PRESENT- via ZOOM

Sherrie Boak, Council Staff

Lisa Hagen, OCA

Amanda O'Boyle, OCA

Captain Backus, LPD

Office VanderVoorde, LPD

Chief Martin, LFD

Shawn Guersay, Waverly Park Management (Regional)

Scott Sanford, Code Compliance

Minutes

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER WOOD TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM JANUARY 28, 2021 AS PRESENTED. ROLL CALL VOTE, MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

Public Comment

No public comment at this time.

Discussion/Action Items

Waverly Park Apartments

Council Member Garza noted to the Committee and public that it was brought to his attention that from July 1st to December 31, 2020 there was a higher rate of crime in this area compared to other areas of Lansing. Council Member Jackson asked for information on what jurisdictions are in the area and how they work together. Council Member Wood asked if any of the agencies had any conversations with management, and if so what has the outcome of those conversations. Chief Green began by stating they work with Eaton County on the violent crime initiatives. Captain Backus then began outlining the work they have done so far on the site. This involved a look into the stats over the last six (6) months, and have also spoken to James Simon, the onsite manager. When speaking to Mr. Simon, Captain Backus confirmed he was open and responded to all the questions on the events at the property, and

Captain Backus believed management is part of the solution. The LPD then noted that they have good relations with Eaton County because it is in Eaton, however LPD does maintain the strong presence. The LPD continues a presence with MSP through the Secured Cities Program. Regarding specific instances, Captain Backus spoke on the situations that have occurred, and the lack of witnesses. It was noted there are cameras in the area, however they focus on public road ways, not private complexes. In regards to crime prevention, Mr. Simon informed the LPD they have a security guard on site from 8 am to 4 am, they have trespassing issues from Kensington Meadows and report those to the LPD. In the case where people are trespassing or "passing through", LPD has steps to address. Regarding other safety, Mr. Simon confirmed they are updating their lighting, to LED, as stated to Captain Backus. Mr. Backus then informed the Committee he has reached out to BWL to check on lighting and increase lighting on the streets. Regarding the stats, there were 233 calls to service in 6 months, and with the 233 times, 34 instances for criminal reports, and some pending warrants. Officer VanderVoorde stated to the Committee that he created and distributed flyers to the residents and the response was overwhelming. They are interested in neighborhood watch groups to build dialogue between neighborhoods. Council Member Wood asked how long Mr. Simon had been in management with Waverly Park. Mr. Guersay confirmed Mr. Simon has been with the site since 2018. Council Member Wood asked if there had been discussions on giving access from their onsite cameras to LPD, and Captain Backus could not confirm, but Mr. Guersay stated he would look into it. Chief Green noted that due to the poor lighting on the site and streets, the cameras will be useless in night time. Council Member Wood asked for a date on when the lighting could be installed, at which Mr. Guersay noted that they are 75% LED in the corridor, and they are on schedule to have the wall packs later this year. It will depend on when material arrive and when maintenance can install. Regarding the tenants, it was also noted that Mr. Simon does a 3rd party criminal background check. Council Member Wood asked Mr. Sanford if the complex was in compliance with inspections and corrective notices. Mr. Sanford confirmed they were, and the inspections are on the books for 4/26/2021. Chief Martin stated the LFD does fire inspections of the common areas, but not individual units. Council Member Wood asked what courts would handle any arrests, and was told by Captain Backus, if it is a homicide, Eaton County, and anything less is Ingham County. The LPD, Fire and Code were asked to forward any follow up information to the Committee.

LPD Support from Detroit Crime Commission

Council Member Garza asked Chief Green to detail the relationship with the Commission and if there are any costs to the City or if fundraising by the Commission. Chief Green assured the Commission that no money will flow to the City of Lansing, but it is a partnership with their 501C3. The Commission will help with resources and leverage with cases. The overview was then turned over to Captain Backus who is the direct contact and has already been working with them. Captain Backus first noted they will be working with LPD cold case divisions and a focus on critical cases in the community. The project began while working on reviewing the over 80 cold case files, which are in multiple formats such as paper files, micro-fiche, stored in cold storage and this facility. Essentially a researcher will go through every case step by step, organize, categorize and lead the discussions. The LPD reached out to the Detroit Crime Commission because they offer assistance to sort these resources. Initially LPD was looking for assistance in digitizing the files, and found what the Commission can do is potentially raise funds for research and volunteers to help the current LPD Detective. The Commission handles the hiring of the volunteers, the fundraising and the finances. There are no City committed dollars and the City has not done any fundraising. Companies that the Commission currently gets their fundraising dollars from include Kellogg Foundation, and AT&T, who have a charitable arm in their company. Council Member Garza asked if LPD anticipates adding more officers to the Cold Case Division because of this, and was told by Captain Backus they do not believe they will based on best practices of set number of detectives, and how many cases they each balance. He was then asked about the retirement

of a detective, and Chief Green stated they are always training and planning for the future. Council Member Jackson asked who does the actual work. Captain Backus stated the Commission helps find actual personal; run through the Commission, assigned to the City. Council Member Wood asked if they have contacted any retired detectives, and it was confirmed they have, but will again. Council Member Wood asked for a breakdown on the case load, and was told the crimes units ideally have 20, property crime range from 30-50. With a domestic violence, they have 48 hours from the call to get the case to the prosecutors office.

Other

Council Member Jackson asked for a discussion on issues with gun fire complaints in the Moore Park neighborhood, at a future meeting, and Council Member Garza stated he would plan for a future agenda.

Council Member Wood asked Chief Martin about staffing vacancies, and Chief Martin confirmed there are currently 16 vacancies, and they plan to report for the new hiring process. There are currently 8-10 the physical and background option. Council Member Wood then inquired about the number of potential retirees, and Chief Martin could not confirmed an exact number but noted there could be six (6) potentially end of 2021, early 2022, and three (3) between now and May 22nd, with another 4-5 on the bubble.

ADJOURN

Adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Submitted by Sherrie Boak,

Recording Secretary,

Lansing City Council

Approved as presented: March 11, 2021