



MINUTES
Committee on Ways and Means
Special Meeting
Friday, October 6, 2017 @ 3:30 p.m.
10th Floor Conference Room, City Hall

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Councilmember Jody Washington, Chair
Councilmember Kathie Dunbar, Vice Chair
Councilmember Carol Wood, Member

OTHERS PRESENT

Sherrie Boak, Council Staff
Jim Smiertka, City Attorney
Eric Brewer, Council Internal Auditor
Chief Yankowski, LPD
Denis Prisk, LPD
Elaine Womboldt
Linda Appling

Public Comment

Public Comment will be made during each agenda item.

Discussion/Action

Overview of the Grant & Budget Appropriations for Auto Theft Prevention Authority Grant (ATPA)

Chief Yankowski provided general data, tracking on stolen cars and additional data they have utilized which includes the FBI tracking, UDAA. IN 2012 there were 264 stolen vehicles, 363 in 2013, 369 in 2014, 351 in 2015 and 375 in 2016. This represented a 6.8% increase from 2015 to 2016, which also was noted that all other property crimes were reduced; it was just vehicle property crimes that increased. This represented a 2.3% total crime reduction, per the FBI data in 2016.

Council Member Wood asked how long the proposed grant they were discussing was in effect during these time slots, at which the Chief of Police confirmed 10 plus years.

The Chief continued providing additional data to the Committee, noting that out of the 375 stolen vehicles in 2016 that could include trailers, mopeds, and anything licensed by the State of Michigan. Chief Yankowski went onto explain that in 2017 there was a change to the recorded management system, so the department has only analyzed what has occurred since that switch over. Since that time there have been 135 stolen vehicles, 57 of those were due to either leaving the key in the vehicle or the vehicle was left running unattended.

Council Member Wood asked the Chief if there was a current ordinance that addresses vehicles that are left running. Chief Yankowski confirmed, and also stated that on September 26th the State passed State legislation that it is not a crime to leave a car running on private property. On a street and public property it will continue to be a crime. The legislation still gives the City the opportunity to have its own specific language also. Council Member Wood asked if it is considered to be private property in a commercial parking lot. Mr. Smierka confirmed his office is researching that question currently and hope to have an interpretation. Chief Yankowski assured the Committee that even with the new law; the LPD is continuing to do education pieces to the public to not leave their car running. He then continued with further statistics noting that in 2016 there were a large number of mopeds stolen, however there out of the 135 stolen vehicles this year, only 10 have been mopeds. The data also shows, he added, that the majority of the thefts are in the northeast, southwest and south area of Lansing.

The Committee then continued a discussion on the remote start of a vehicle and where it can be parked during the time it is running by remote. Chief Yankowski clarified that it is not a crime to have it running on private property if it is a remote start vehicle, or on the street, again if it is a remote start vehicle. Council Member Dunbar asked how many of the 135 this year were in a driveway compared to a public street. Chief Yankowski did not have those figures, but again stated that 57 of the 135 stolen vehicles, had keys in them. Chief Yankowski assured the Committee that there were high numbers in July and August, however there was a group that was arrested for those and the numbers have gone down since those arrests. There is continued education being provided to the public at all neighborhood meetings to not leave their cars running.

Council Member Washington referred to some recent complaints she had received on the East side, that cars are being vandalized with the attempt to steal them. Chief Yankowski confirmed that it appears in those cases, the vandals are attempting to scavenge for valuables for quick cash, but again if the keys are in the vehicles they are taking them.

Council Member Wood asked, in relationship to the current grant, what is attributing and contributing with the grant from the Federal government. Chief Yankowski clarified that the grant will allow for a dedicated detective to work only on larceny and stolen vehicles. The department's belief is that if the grant is not issued, the number of crimes in these areas will go up. Chief Yankowski concluded his presentation, assuring the Committee that have begun discussions with the City Attorney on if a City Ordinance prohibiting keys left in vehicles would make sense.

Ms. Womboldt asked for clarification on the State legislation. Chief Yankowski reiterated that you can start your car in your drive way or on the street if it is by remote. If it does not have a remote start, then it cannot be left running on the street, but can be in the personal driveway. The LPD is waiting on a legal opinion if a parking lot at a commercial business is considered private or public.

OTHER

No other topics.

ADJOURN

Adjourn at 4:00 p.m.

Submitted by,

Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary

Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee on _____