

HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

August 9, 2021

In Attendance: **Vermilion City Council:** *Monica Stark, Council at Large; Emily Skahen, Ward One; Steve Holoavacs, Ward Three; Barb Brady, Ward Four; Brian Holmes, Ward Five.*
Absent: Steve Herron, President of Council; Frank Loucka, Ward Two

Administration: *Jim Forthofer, Mayor; Chris Howard, City Engineer; Amy Hendricks, Finance Director; Chris Hartung, Police Chief; Tony Valerius, Service Director; Chris Stempowski, Fire Chief*

Call to Order: Brian Holmes, Chairman, RESOLVED THAT this Health & Safety Committee comprised of the committee of the whole does now come to order.

TOPIC ONE: Fire Chief's Report

Chief Stempowski reported the fire department responded to 30 incidents in the month of July for a total year-to-date of 154.

He explained that on Sunday, August 1, 2021 they had a serious accident on Route 2 by the Brill-Tansey overpass. He said they had to shut down the westbound traffic for several hours. However, they had a lot of emergency crews and mutual aid working. They called in a tech rescue team as they had to go over a cliff to extricate and transfer a patient to the top of the hill and then to life flight. This whole incident was done under 40 minutes from the time fire was dispatched until the flight was in the air. It was a smooth transition from them setting up for the extrication up to the tech rescue team, so they were working hand in hand to make sure their equipment is compatible, so there is not a lot of transferring of equipment in incidents like this.

He said the department is continuing to train with new extrication tools that they received. They have vehicles lined up tomorrow. He said this also includes new stabilization equipment they recently purchased. All of this equipment will be installed in the new truck. They are going up this Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday for the post-build inspection. Aside from any issues with this truck, they anticipate it will be delivered around August 26. It will go from Pierce Manufacturing to Atlantic Emergency Services in Findley, and then transferred to Vermilion after their final inspection.

He said they received a reimbursement for response at a local marina for a spill under the ORC around \$1,500, but this was the cost associated with the fire department response.

Coming up this fall, they have their truck PMs and ladder, hose, and bench testing.

TOPIC TWO:Police Chief's Report

Chief Hartung reported the flavor of the month is expired tags. There was a moratorium on renewing license plates, and he asked everyone to take the opportunity to look at their plate because the moratorium the governor issued has expired.

He said the other day they had a kayak floating out on the lake and they sent the police boat out to check it, but a good Samaritan went out and brought it back in. He said in a situation where somebody finds something adrift (vessel, kayak, or boat) the best course of action is to contact the police department and let them know because they need to know the latitude/longitude for that particular vessel in the event they find out somebody is missing. It is critical to their search techniques if they are looking for a person who went overboard and time is in the essence. He said this kayak just washed off the shore at Linwood and it is not a big issue. He noted it is great to be a good Samaritan, but if you see a vessel and have the capability of recording latitude and longitude by all means do that but contact the police department to let them know. If they cannot respond, then they will get the Coast Guard out to respond to it. The time they save from having this information can be invaluable and they have done enough recoveries over the years that they need this time in the event they find somebody that went overboard.

He said everyone noticed the orange barrels that are popping up on Liberty Avenue and the watermain contractors were afraid for their lives as traffic was zooming in and out. He said everything is getting ready to kick off and, in the past, when they have done Liberty Avenue it has gone pretty well. He asked everyone to watch their speed and be extra careful in these areas during the projects. He thanked the community for their patience because it has been crazy out there.

He said they brought on Kyle Ancog who was hired in as a part-time patrol officer and is under the excellent training of officer Dylon Wood. He said Kyle and Pedro are doing very well and they are looking at bringing in another part-timer as they are preparing for the shutdown of the bridge and these part-time people are critical in the staffing level to try to accommodate this. B. Holmes said when the bridge closes down the dynamics of how this will work between fire and police should be discussed and questioned if they will have a substation on one side. Chief Hartung said they are planning on operating out of Station #2, but in 1987 they had two guys east of the river and one guy west of the river, and they parked the cruiser on the west side of the river, so if something happened, they could walk over the bridge and hop in the other cruiser. It's not ideal and they are looking at bumping up to a four-person shift with two on each side of the river. He is not sure they have the manpower to accommodate this, so they are working hard at increasing their part-time capacity. They will rely a lot on the sheriff's departments. As far as what they need to do to be able to work out of Station #2 this will be done in no time because of the way the network in the city is setup.

B. Holmes adjourned the meeting after no further discussion came before the committee.

Next Meeting: September 20, 2021 @ 7pm at the Vermilion Municipal Complex, 687 Decatur Street, Vermilion, Ohio

*Transcribed by:
Gwen Fisher, Certified Municipal Clerk*