

Present

Brian Riblet, City Manager
John Crowell, Chief of Police
Tracy Henao, Asst. City Manager
Paul Wright, Fire Chief
Connie Gaylor, Clerk of Council

Committee Members Present

Ron Messer, Chair
Ken Suer

Committee Members Absent

Sasha Naiman

The Law and Safety Committee of Council convened its meeting for July 7, 2022 at 3:30 p.m. with Mr. Messer presiding.

Mr. Suer made a motion to excuse Mrs. Naiman's absence. Mr. Messer seconded. The Committee unanimously agreed.

Update on the Opioid Epidemic in Hamilton County

Chief Crowell provided an update to the Committee on the current status of the addiction crisis in Hamilton County. He provided an annual report prepared by the Hamilton County Addiction Response Coalition and touched on the following data points:

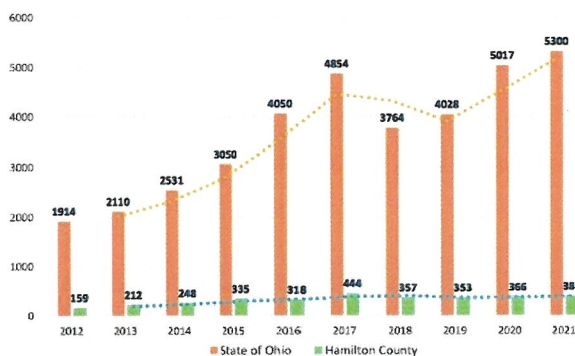
According to the New York Times November 2021 regarding the United States averages:

- In the 12-month period that ended in April 2021, more than 100,000 Americans died of overdoses, up almost 30 percent from the 78,000 deaths in the prior year, according to provisional figures from the National Center for Health Statistics.
- The figure marks the first time the number of overdose deaths in the United States has exceeded 100,000 a year, more than the toll of car crashes and gun fatalities combined. Overdose deaths have more than doubled since 2015.

According to the Hamilton County Addiction Coalition Report:

- Fatal Overdoses are trending down in Hamilton County versus increasing nationwide and Ohio.

**OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
RESIDENT DEATHS**



TOTAL OVERDOSE DEATHS



For Hamilton County Data, total overdose death counts include any overdose that occurred within Hamilton County, as of March 2022. The count for 2021 is preliminary and continues to be finalized. This count does not necessarily reflect Hamilton County resident deaths. These statistics are courtesy of the Hamilton County Coroner's Office.

54 The Committee thanked Chief Crowell for the update and stated it was good to see the
55 death totals trending down however there is still a lot of work to do to keep the trend
56 decreasing.

57

58 Discussion of the Hiring Process for Firefighter/Paramedic

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60 Fire Chief Wright explained to the Committee that in order to be compliant with ORC
61 737.081 a review of Policy 1001 in the Montgomery Fire Department Fire Policy Manual
62 was conducted. He explained that in this section of the ORC it states that *a fire recruit*
63 *applicant shall not be disqualified from appointment or employment with the City of*
64 *Montgomery due to a conviction of or guilty plea to an offense in ORC 737.081 (C) (1) if*
65 *the applicant meets at least one of the stated Rehabilitation Standards criteria.* Chief
66 Wright explained that due to this statement Policy 1001 has been modified and included
67 in a draft revised policy reviewed by the Civil Service Commission and presented to the
68 Committee at this meeting for approval.

69

70 Chief Wright stated that staff has reached out to labor attorneys at Frost Brown Todd to
71 review the Code and the policy to obtain a legal opinion on how this would affect the
72 shared space access that fire department personnel would have with the police
73 department. He further explained that prior to the change in the law in September of
74 2021, a firefighter that had a felony could not be issued a certification and would not be
75 employable due to that. With this law, there would be provisions to allow it. He stated
76 that a law enforcement officer cannot have a felony in order to be certified.

77

78 Mr. Riblet explained that with this proposed policy change, it does not indicate that we
79 must hire someone with a prior felony but that we could not disqualify because of it.

80

81 Chief Wright stated that if the City were to have an applicant with a prior felony
82 conviction that staff would need to look at operations at the Safety Center.

83

84 Chief Crowell stated that with the use of the LEEDS as a background search program
85 used by the police, that it would require the police and fire to be separated in the facility.

86

87 Mr. Suer asked that other than fire department applicants, would this change be applied
88 to all positions and how this would change our hiring process.

89

90 Mr. Riblet replied that it would not affect our overall process as it would be determined
91 on a case by case basis.

92

93 Mr. Suer stated that while there is the opinion that all people with any criminal record
94 should be considered for employment with the City, he felt that was taking it too far.

95

96 Mr. Suer made a motion to move forward with the revised hiring process for the fire
97 department. Mr. Messer seconded. The Committee unanimously agreed.

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99 Other Business

100

101 Mr. Riblet updated the Committee on past discussions regarding the issue of Jake Brakes
102 as presented to the Committee by resident Brian Burress and his attorney J. P. Burleigh.

103 Mr. Riblet reminded the Committee that past traffic studies as well as their own
104 investigations revealed that there was not sufficient evidence to justify the prohibiting of
105 the use of engine jake brakes nor the installation of signage on Ohio 126/Ronald Reagan
106 Highway. He explained that as Mr. Burress and Mr. Burleigh did not agree with the
107 Committees decision that Mr. Burleigh conducted his own traffic study using ring
108 cameras and cell phone recordings as a basis to request that the City and the Committee
109 reconsider their opinion on the matter. Mr. Riblet explained that after reviewing the
110 information that Mr. Burleigh sent, he does not feel it changes the decision due to ongoing
111 construction at the Montgomery Quarter. He explained that the traffic study did not
112 prove the need for signage even during construction and after the bulk of the
113 construction is completed it is anticipated there would be less. He stated however with
114 all of that said, he wanted to discuss this with the Committee to obtain their feedback on
115 the matter.

116
117 Mr. Suer stated that he still felt we should still monitor the situation but felt there was still
118 not enough evidence to do more at this time. He stated that it was not reasonable to
119 think we can enforce the use of jake brakes and fees associated with it.

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121 Mr. Messer stated that he had no interest in looking at Mr. Burleigh's information and
122 agreed that staff should continue to monitor the issue and revisit the discussion if needed
123 in the future.

124
125 **Minutes**

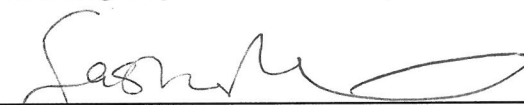
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127 Mr. Suer made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 7, 2022 meeting. Mr. Messer
128 seconded. The Committee unanimously approved the minutes.

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130 **Adjournment**

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132 Mr. Suer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Messer seconded. The Committee
133 unanimously agreed.

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135 The Law and Safety Committee meeting adjourned at 4:41 p.m.

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Chair of Law and Safety Committee of City Council