

THE CITY OF STREETSBORO, OHIO
SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Monday, March 11, 2024

This Safety Committee Meeting was called to order on Monday, March 11, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. by Jennifer Wagner, Chairman. Mrs. McDaniel gave an invocation and Mr. Ring led the Pledge of Allegiance

PRESENT: Justin Ring, Jon Hannan, Lisa McDaniel, Marianne Glenn, Jennifer Wagner

ABSENT: Anthony Lombardo, Steve Michniak

ALSO PRESENT: David Nott, Law Director
Patricia Wain, Police Chief
Rob Reinholz, Fire Chief
Matt Miller, Finance Director
Justin Czekaj, Municipal Engineer
John Cieszkowski, Planning Director
Patrick O'Malia, Economic Development Director
Greg Mytinger, Parks and Recreation Director
Shawna Lockhart-Reese, HR Manager
Dan D'Agostino, Residential Building Official
Caroline Kremer, Clerk of Council

MOTION: TO EXCUSE MR. MICHNIAK AND MR. LOMBARDO.

Moved by Mr. Ring, seconded by Mr. Hannan. Upon voice vote, **motion carried.**

Disposition of Minutes

MOTION: TO ACCEPT THE REGULAR SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 12, 2024 AS WRITTEN.

Moved by Mr. Ring, seconded by Mrs. McDaniel. Upon voice vote, **motion carried.**

Old Business

None.

New Business

Discuss AFG SAFER Grant

Chief Reinholz said last year the Fire Department had applied for the AFG SAFER Grant. The SAFER grant was focused on hiring personnel for the fire service; there were other grants for equipment, etc. Last year there had been some discussion on how many people to apply for, what the costs would be, and how the program worked. This year Chief Reinholz brought Retired

Assistant Fire Chief Will Anderson from Euclid to the meeting tonight to explain the SAFER Grant and the application process. Chief Anderson would be the grant writer for this application if Council confirmed they wanted to apply for the SAFER Grant and how many firefighters to apply for. They Mayor wanted to apply for three firefighters.

Will Anderson, who lived in Ashtabula, was here to talk about the SAFER Grant. [See attached.] The application process opened today through FEMA and would close April 12, 2024. Streetsboro had applied for a SAFER Grant last year and did not get it. There was no charge for Chief Anderson to write the grant for Streetsboro again this year. Chief Anderson gave a little background on himself. He had assisted with applications that had received over \$10 million in AFG or SAFER money since 2015. He had served as a peer reviewer for FEMA so he was aware of what it took to win a grant. Less than 5% of the applications nationwide get funded. He explained how the SAFER program worked. The federal government provides \$360,000,000 across the whole country. FEMA prioritizes, using the grant funds, to bring fire departments into compliance with a specific NFPA standard (1710) that was focused on staffing with the understanding that higher/improved staffing should equate to safer emergency scenes and quicker response times, and less overtime costs to the municipality. There were usually about 6,000 applications each year and approximately 200 were funded each year (only 177 were funded last year). The applications were scored on financial need, project description, impact on daily operations, and the cost benefit. There was no cost share with this grant unlike many other federal grants.

For this fiscal year the award announcements should begin in August 2024 and go through September 20, 2024. If awarded, there was a 180-day recruitment period to give an entrance test and hire candidates. The 36 months (3 years) period of performance began when those individuals were sworn in. The department would need to follow all federal law and stipulations i.e. civil rights compliance, ADA requirements, etc. There were reports that needed to be completed (semiannual financial reports, semiannual progress reports) due in January and July of each year. There was monitoring and oversight by FEMA to make sure the money they awarded was being spent for what it was intended for. FEMA reserved the right to make modifications to any grant awards, so although Streetsboro may apply for three firefighter positions, FEMA may award funding for two positions.

Chief Anderson explained what Streetsboro could do with the money, if it was awarded. Eligible costs included salary and associated benefits (payroll expenses) for newly hired or rehired fulltime positions whose primary assignment was more than 50% of their time on a fire suppression vehicle regardless of other duties they may have. Ineligible costs were for those people already hired, job sharing positions or promotions, training or equipping firefighters, or costs for additional benefits like uniform allowances, education stipends, overtime, meals, etc. unless they were contractually obligated. Chief Anderson could not guarantee a Streetsboro application would be funded, but he was certain the application submitted would give Streetsboro the best chance to be funded.

Law enforcement had a similar grant application (COPS-Community Oriented Policing Services) for staffing, but the grant application period just ended on March 5, 2024 and would not open again until early 2025.

Mr. Ring asked about the requirement for 50% of their time on a fire suppression vehicle and if Streetsboro's firefighters fulfilled that. Chief Reinholz said the ambulances responded more than the fire trucks. NFPA was the Fire Association best practices and the standards to be reached. NFPA 1710 wanted four firefighters on the engine company, but Streetsboro ran with three because two were needed on the ambulance. Chief Anderson said the ambulances counted toward staffing for NFPA 1710 compliance because the staff was cross trained, even though they responded in an ambulance they were considered part of fire suppression.

Mrs. McDaniel asked for clarification on payment for Chief Anderson. Chief Anderson explained that in the contract the City signed last year, Chief Anderson was paid last year for last year's application. Part of that contract stated that if Streetsboro didn't get a SAFER grant, Chief Anderson would resubmit it this year and there was no charge to the City, except if the City did get a SAFER grant this year, there would be a small fee.

Mrs. McDaniel asked what would happen at the end of the 360 months period of performance. Chief Anderson answered that one of the questions in the grant application was how the City planned to sustain the positions once the period of performance was over in three years. Mr. Ring said that was discussed last year, and he still felt the City would have a hard time sustaining three staff members after three years. Chief Anderson clarified that this grant would cover the salary, healthcare, and pension contributions 100% for the three years, but the grant would not be awarded if the City stated that it would not retain these people after the three years. Matt Miller said the range to staff a firefighter was between \$125,000 to \$130,000 per year, so to staff three new firefighters would cost almost \$400,000 per year and he would have to do some more modeling to sustain that after three years. Mr. Ring said the goal was to keep the people because the Fire Department needed more staff. Matt Miller wondered if the City would be penalized if it had planned to keep the people after three years, but the economy changed in three years and the City was unable to afford to keep them. Chief Anderson said there was no penalty if that happened. He said when Euclid applied previously, they were aware there would be a large number of retirements around this time, so it would be a good window to boost the fulltime staffing with federal money and then be able to keep them due to attrition. That may work for Streetsboro too.

Matt Miller asked about the reporting requirements. Chief Anderson said it was not monthly, but every six months (January and July) a financial report and a program report would be due to the federal government.

Mrs. McDaniel wondered what happened if the grant was awarded, but in the current work environment the City could not find qualified candidates to take the positions. Chief Anderson said things had changed because there were fewer applicants for positions than there were back in the 1990s, but there were still candidates out there.

Another stipulation of FEMA was that the City needed to set the pre-SAFER staffing and the post-SAFER staffing. Currently Streetsboro had 15 fulltime Fire Suppression staff and 18 total fulltime staff, so the post SAFER staffing would become 21 fulltime staff with 18 fulltime staff assigned to Fire Suppression. During the period of performance the City would have to stay at 18, so if

someone retired/resigned during the three-year period, the City would have to fill the position.

Mr. Ring supported applying for grant money, but he was concerned about the sustainability of keeping the additional staff members. He wanted a sustainability plan for what would happen after the three years because \$400,000/year was a lot of money the City did not currently have before voting to approve the submission of the SAFER Grant application confirming that if awarded the City would accept the grant. Chief Anderson could continue to work on this year's application while the sustainability plan was being worked on; the application was not due until April 12, 2024. Mrs. Glenn also wanted to apply for grant money, if the City could sustain it after the three-year period.

MOTION: TO MOVE THIS ITEM TO THE MARCH 25, 2024 FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING.

Moved by Mr. Hannan, seconded by Mr. Ring. Upon voice vote, **motion carried**. Council thanked Chief Anderson for making the presentation tonight.

T-7570 Accept EMS Grant

Chief Reinholz said the Fire Department was awarded an EMS grant from the State of Ohio for \$3,279.68 from seat belt fines for EMS supplies and disposable equipment.

MOTION: TO MOVE THIS TO TONIGHT'S REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING.

Moved by Mr. Ring, seconded by Mrs. McDaniel. Upon voice vote, **motion carried**.

T-7571 Contract for Police Station Foundation Repair

Chief Wain said at the end of last year, an inspection was done in the holding facilities and significant cracks were noticed. The department had been aware of cracks in that area of the building for years, but the cracks had changed directions and had expanded significantly. The exterior brick wall outside the holding facilities was bowing, and an exterior brick had cracked and shifted from the pressure. The Service Department staff and Building Department inspectors and someone from JDJ Waterproofing examined the building and they found some settling. It seemed to stem from when the building was constructed and that section of the building was sitting on a slab and the fill dirt under the slab was not given enough time to settle before the building was constructed, and now was settling. There was visible damage on the sidewalk and the base of the flagpole that was cracking and separating from the sidewalk. That was the only part of the building on a slab, the rest of the building had a basement.

At the time of construction the building was inspected by the County and passed, so there was no recourse toward the builder or insurance.

JDJ Waterproofing could do repairs by digging down under that section and putting in a structural helical pier system under the building to raise it back up. This repair should raise the affected areas and push the cracks back in to place. The estimated cost was \$46,800, but the Police Department was asking for approval up to \$49,999 (under the \$50,000 bidding threshold), in case

they would have to dig deeper in some sections. There was a 50-year warranty on the work.

This expenditure was not expected nor planned in the 2024 budget, so a budget amendment would be needed at the next Finance Committee Meeting.

The Service Department staff would be able to replace the concrete sidewalk up to the front door and replace the flagpole base in-house to reduce costs. All the work should take about one week and the entrance to the building would still be accessible during the work.

MOTION: TO MOVE THIS TO TONIGHT'S REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING.

Moved by Mr. Ring, seconded by Mrs. McDaniel. Upon voice vote, **motion carried.**

Citizens' Comments

None.

Announcements

A Service Committee Meeting will immediately follow this meeting.

There being no further business to be addressed by this committee, and upon motion by Mr. Hannan, seconded by Mr. Ring, this meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

ATTEST:

Caroline L. Kremer, Clerk of Council

Jennifer Wagner, Chairman