

THE CITY OF STREETSBORO, OHIO

SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Monday, July 13, 2020

This Safety Committee Meeting was called to order on Monday, July 13, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. by Chuck Kocisko, Chairman. Chief Powers led the Pledge of Allegiance and then there was a moment of silence in place of an invocation.

PRESENT: Jon Hannan, Justin Ring, John Ruediger, Chuck Kocisko, Jennifer Wagner

ABSENT: Mike Lampa, Mayor Broska, Julie Field [joined at 7:02 p.m.]

ALSO PRESENT: Frank Beni, Law Director
Darin Powers, Police Chief
Rob Reinholz, Fire Chief
Shawna Lockhart-Reese, HR Manager
Caroline Kremer, Clerk of Council
[by Zoom video conferencing:]
Troy Beaver, Police Lieutenant
Jenny Esarey, Finance Director
Bill Miller, Service Director
Joe Ciuni, City Engineer
John Cieszkowski, Planning Director
Patrick O'Malia, Economic Development Director
Greg Mytinger, Parks and Recreation Director
Sara Fagnilli, Assistant Law Director

MOTION: TO EXCUSE MR. LAMPA AND MRS. FIELD WHO WOULD JOIN THE MEETING SHORTLY.

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

Disposition of Minutes

MOTION: TO ACCEPT THE REGULAR SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 11, 2020 AS WRITTEN.

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

Old Business

None.

New Business

Masks/Face Coverings

[Mrs. Field joined the meeting at 7:02 p.m.] Chief Reinholz said Dr. Coleman the Med Director for the Streetsboro Fire Department was to come to tonight's meeting to give his expert opinion and safety precautions for COVID-19, but he had been out of town on vacation so now he was being quarantined and couldn't attend. Chief Reinholz explained that every day the fire forces got a daily trend update on COVID-19 cases for the State for the last 21 day cycle. The report for July 13, 2020 indicated the median age for those infected with COVID-19 was 44, the median age for those hospitalized with COVID-19 was 64. Ohio was nearing 1 million cumulative tests. Chief Reinholz said this virus was very nasty and it was highly contagious. University Hospitals was doing a study to see how many fire fighters have had it; some people were sick with what they thought was the flue back in December and January but had recovered. Chief Reinholz said he looked at the hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and deaths to judge the severity of the situation. Portage County was still in Class 2 and Class 3 was the worst category. The City of Streetsboro over the last week had 6 more cases than the previous week; the City had about 17 known cases with 11 known cases the previous week. Dispatch had the addresses so the first responders would know what to expect if there was a call to those locations.

Mr. Kocisko said he'd been watching the news closely and he asked Council to support him in encouraging Streetsboro businesses to take the time to put up signs at their entrances to ask their customers to wear face masks before entering the business. He said he was not mandating anything, it was a request, but he thought it was good for everyone. He also asked everyone in Streetsboro to please wear a mask while in public. He said anyone could be a carrier without even knowing it. He said wearing the masks, maintaining social distancing and washing our hands may not stop the spread of the disease, but it helped. He said he had a lot of faith in the scientists and doctors and their guidance, even though there was some pushback about wearing masks. He said he was not demanding anything, but he was asking everybody to at least wear a mask in public, and maybe that would help a little bit in our community.

Mr. Hannan said Governor DeWine and the Ohio Department of Health had mandated wearing masks in certain counties that were at a certain level of cases, but Portage County was not at that level/Class. Chief Reinholz said the face masks helped keep people from getting or giving the virus through airborne particles. The Fire Department staff had been wearing masks since March when this all started so they wouldn't give anything to their patients at the nursing homes or dialysis centers where the patients were very fragile. He noted that confined spaces could be more hazardous than outdoors because the air was recirculated with HVAC systems; outdoors was better unless you were in a crowd of people. Mr. Kocisko thought with enough cooperation from the residents to wear their face masks Portage County could avoid moving from Class 2 to Class 3 where the Governor would mandate the masks.

Mr. Hannan asked who would enforce a mask mandate. Chief Reinholz said in Portage County it was recommended not required because it did offer some protection. In some states they back up a mandate with fines. Mr. Hannan said the Police Departments had said they would not be enforcing the mandates. Mr. Beni said the County Departments of Health were to enforce the rules, but they were often overworked with complaint calls. Mr. Kocisko said he was often against having more

governmental regulations, that's why he didn't propose a mandate. He just wanted support from Council to encourage wearing the face masks to help keep Streetsboro and Portage County away from Class 3.

Mrs. Field, who was not wearing a mask at tonight's meeting, felt she should say something about this issue. She said she had the utmost respect for the Fire Chief and Mr. Kocisko, but this mask issue was a very contentious debate and for every professional opinion supporting wearing a mask there were opposing professional opinions against wearing a mask. She thought Mr. Kocisko and Chief Reinholz were not going to change her opinion and she was not going to change their opinion regarding masks, so she thought it best for people to use good common sense and be thoughtful of the people around them, and let businesses use their own discretion to determine for themselves how to handle mask wearing at their establishments. She said some people would watch the news and hang on to every word while others did not watch the news because they thought it was a bunch of bullcrap.

Mr. Ruediger commented that there was a lot of information for and against wearing masks; there were a lot of opinions and there were a lot of facts. He said there were a lot of professional studies done on contagious viruses and they showed that simple mask wearing could slow down the spread of the viruses. He said that every other county that had gotten this virus under control had used mask mandates and almost shut down the entire country and implemented social distancing practices, but the United States and other countries that had not gotten his under control had not taken it seriously enough. Mrs. Field disagreed but she didn't want to debate with him. Mr. Ruediger said the United States had less than 5% of the population of the entire world, but had 25 % of the deaths from this coronavirus.

Mr. Ruediger understood the case numbers were going up because of more testing, but the hospitalizations were going up too. There were several states with areas that were near or at 100% capacity for their hospitals with COVID-19 patients, who were not there because testing was going up. He said these busy hospitals were not able to serve patients with other illnesses or injuries. He said this is what happens when this virus spreads.

He said the U.S. death rate was currently at 4.445% and luckily the death rate was going down as doctors learned better treatments. He said once someone was put on a ventilator their survival rate was 30%. He added that even if people didn't die from COVID-19, they still suffered permanent affects. Older people were more susceptible, but people of all ages were dying from this disease. Mr. Ruediger worked with someone in the health care field who had told him horror stories of his patients. Some people didn't want to believe it was a big deal, but it was. He didn't understand how wearing a mask had become a political statement or political debate when the reality was that it helped prevent illness/death.

Mr. Ruediger said school would start in a month or two and the Secretary of Education had said it was OK to go to school because they were only expecting 0.02% of children to have fatal effects from this virus, which was about 15,000 kids, which Mr. Ruediger couldn't image. He was also concerned that so many children could infect the adults close to them which could result in more illnesses/deaths.

Mr. Kocisko said he'd made his request as intended regarding this item and moved on to the next agenda item.

T-6863 Donate 4 Unneeded Mobile Radios

Chief Reinholz requested permission from Council to donate four old unneeded mobile radios. Streetsboro had no use for them, they were discontinued so it was impossible to find parts for them if they broke. They were only worth about \$100-\$150 for the four radios. These were mobile radios for use in the vehicles. Charlestown Township could use them in their department.

Mr. Ruediger asked if there were any issues with donating something that still had a monetary value. Mr. Beni said it was hard to put a value on something like this unless it went to auction. These radios really had no value to Streetsboro.

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

Moved by Mr. Ruediger, seconded by Mrs. Field. Upon voice vote, **motion carried.**

Discuss Smoking at City Park

Mrs. Field realized smoking was not allowed at City Park, but she had spent a lot of time there recently with her sons playing baseball and smelled smoke most every evening so she wanted to bring this up again because she felt it could be better. She suggested more signs in more places, especially right off the parking lot, and other communication (emails) to Park attendees and SJB participants.

Mr. Ruediger agreed. He felt most smokers were pretty respectful if they knew the rules, so maybe more visible signage citing the appropriate City Ordinance would help. The ordinance required no smoking 100 feet from an organized activity or event.

Mr. Mytinger noted there was a sign near the library as soon as people entered the park that cited the City Ordinance and the 100 feet from any activity requirement. There were other signs placed on the restrooms that were installed in 2014 when the ordinance was established. He wondered how many more signs Council wanted and where should they be placed. Mrs. Field thought people didn't see the one at the entrance as they drove in; so maybe there should be one where the people walked, or where they sat near the ballfields. She offered to walk the area with Mr. Mytinger to determine where to place the signs. She also suggested more creative signs instead of the usual ones that got overlooked. Mr. Mytinger noted the enforcement of no-smoking was difficult and it usually fell to the individuals in the park who were affected by the smoking who could inform the smoker of the rule and the ordinance.

Mrs. Field said when she reminded someone they should not be smoking at City Park it lead to a horrible situation. Mr. Mytinger said he wasn't with the City when the ordinance was established so he didn't know exactly how the 100 feet rule was determined. He and Mrs. Kremer had gone through the old meeting minutes but it wasn't clear. Mr. Ruediger thought it was a compromise during those discussions.

Mr. Kocisko said as Safety Chair he was always passionate about safety issues and any safety issue usually started with common sense and then creating an ordinance if necessary. He said years ago Streetsboro Junior Baseball (SJB) had their own regulations and would speak to any smokers about not smoking around the kids or the parents, and it usually worked. Mrs. Field suggested getting rid of the 100 foot rule (hard to enforce) and just not allow smoking at City Park, but Mr. Ruediger said what if someone was walking the trail alone and there were no events going on at the Park. Mr. Kocisko said when Streetsboro Family Days had the Park for their 4-day summer festival, it would be difficult to tell someone sitting in the beer booth not to smoke, especially when the organization ran on donations. He said Streetsboro Family Days staff did tell people not to smoke near the rides/children, but it could be controversial to tell people walking in the field away from everyone not to smoke. He recommended using common sense and not to change the ordinances; he didn't want too many rules and too much government when polite requests and common sense may work just as well. Mrs. Field said, "They don't always listen."

Ms. Wagner agreed about not smoking near the activities, but wondered if the City could delegate an area father away from the kids for smoking, so it was clear they couldn't smoke all over the Park but in one area. Mrs. Field thought that was a great idea for Streetsboro Family Days, but otherwise there should be no smoking at City Park.

Mr. Mytinger commented that the current ordinance already had a section that allowed the Mayor and Council to approve exemptions for organizations and groups; the request had to be submitted five days prior to when it would be used, so it already existed for Streetsboro Family Days. Mrs. Field still wanted to change the 100 foot rule. Mr. Mytinger mentioned that sometimes people ate lunch at City Park in their car and had a cigarette and then left. Sometimes people rented the pavilions for a family gathering and it would be difficult to dictate to the family how to interact with each other. He would meet Mrs. Field at City Park next week and go over options.

Discuss Speed Bumps at City Park

Mr. Ring said he had noticed recently while he was at the Park for his son's ball games that people were constantly speeding once they got past the speed bumps at the entrance, which put the children in danger. He wanted additional speed bumps installed to slow the traffic down in the straight-aways. He suggested removable ones for summer use to be taken out for snow plow season.

Mr. Mytinger said they had recently purchased and installed 6 speed bumps at about \$100+ each. They had just painted the parking lines and a cross walk at Field 7. The speed bumps were all the way across the road so people couldn't go around them. They would add a "Slow Children at Play" sign soon. They were considering installing Stop signs behind Field 7 because they understood this was an ongoing issue because it was the main entrance to the part and people were in a hurry to get to the games. Mr. Ring suggested more speed bumps but didn't think a Stop sign was needed because the curve slowed people down. Mrs. Field agreed more speed bumps were needed at the farther end of the drive. Mr. Mytinger could do another PO and order more speed bumps.

Mr. Kocisko commented that there used to be speed bumps when he worked with SJB, but the bumps often get loose and move over time and often need to be reinstalled in a high traffic area like this.

T-6864 Assessment Center Services for Police Promotional Exams

T-6865 Contract for Written Portion of Police Promotional Exams

Mrs. Lockhart-Reese said the City was in the process to fill three positions once Chief Powers retired: Police Chief, Police Lieutenant, and Police Sergeant. The Civil Service Commission had approved all three promotional tests at their meeting on July 7, 2020. These ordinances would allow the Mayor to enter into the contracts for testing and evaluation services.

Mr. Ruediger asked if people from outside the Streetsboro Police Department were allowed to apply for the position. Mrs. Lockhart-Reese answered not at this time, the City had to post the position internally first, and then if there were no applicants the City would post the position outside the Department.

MOTION: TO MOVE T-6864 AND T-6865 TO TONIGHT'S REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING.

Moved by Mr. Ruediger, seconded by Mrs. Field. Upon voice vote, **motion carried.**

Citizens' Comments

None had been received.

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. Ruediger, seconded by Mrs. Field, this meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

ATTEST:

Caroline L. Kremer, Clerk of Council

Chuck Kocisko, Chairman