

Village of Peoria Heights
Departmental Meeting
September 1, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Everyone stood for a moment of silence and the Pledge to the Flag.

Upon calling roll, the following Trustees were present: Sherryl Carter, Diane Mariscal, Beth Khazzam, Jeff Goett, Brandon Wisenburg, and Sarah DeVore. Others present included Mayor Michael Phelan, Village Administrator and Chief of Police Dustin Sutton, and Village Clerk Stephanie Turner.

Trustee Goett made a motion to approve the minutes from the departmental meeting on August 25, 2020, and Trustee Khazzam seconded the motion. The Board voted 6-0 to approve the minutes.

Mayor Phelan opened the meeting to public comment. Hearing no public comment, Mayor Phelan moved on to old business. Mr. Mark Bean, member of the Peoria Heights Lions Club, came forward to ask if the Board had a response to moving the collection box to the curb. Chief Sutton noted the item had not been discussed and asked if there any comments. The Board offered no objection to the relocation of the collection box. Hearing no other business, Mayor Phelan moved on to new business.

Trustee Wisenburg stated Fire Chief Walters had an announcement. Fire Chief Walters announced he has decided to postpone his retirement. He stated he has a duty to rebuild the Peoria Heights Fire Department. He added he hopes his decision will alleviate the Board of Trustees' concerns.

Trustee Wisenburg invited Mr. Dave Tuttle, of Peoria County ETSB, forward to speak about missed Fire Department calls. Chief Sutton stated Mr. Tuttle was the chairman of the 911 Board, the supervisor of the City of Peoria dispatch, and fire chief for Trivoli. Mr. Tuttle explained he had been asked to provide a report for the 2019 emergency calls including missed calls. Mr. Tuttle explained a missed call is classified as a call where no units are assigned. He and Chief Walters had discussed the extenuating reasons why a missed call might not be truly missed then reviewed each missed call. He stated after reviewing dispatch data there were 107 missed called in 2019. Trustee DeVore asked if Mr. Tuttle knew how many calls were EMS calls and how many were fire calls. Mr. Tuttle stated he didn't have that information. He noted there were 761 medical calls and 141 fire calls dispatched in totals. Trustee Wisenburg asked Mr. Tuttle if his fire department missed calls. Mr. Tuttle stated they did not, but they had fewer calls and were blessed with a strong volunteer roster. Trustee Khazzam asked Fire Chief Walters if he was cancelling his retirement indefinitely. Fire Chief Walters explained he would delay his retirement until a plan was in place. He also explained the PHFD has never tracked missed calls. The PHFD tracks calls by their reporting system. Some calls have volunteers respond to the station who are unable to respond to the call for a variety of reasons. Fire Chief Walters stated the data Mr. Tuttle had was raw data and might contain errors which would lead to the discrepancy between the PHFD's numbers and Mr. Tuttle's data. Fire Chief Walters stated he planned to meet with Mr. Tuttle in order to create a better tracking system. Fire Chief Walters stated that as a result of learning the number of missed calls all volunteers are now certified or in the process of being certified as EMT-Bs or EMT-First Responders. The PHFD has also reclassified the primary response vehicle to one that doesn't require a special CDL license to drive in order to increase flexibility responding to calls. Fire Chief Walters stressed that the PHFD had not missed a critical call which he classified as a fire call or a medical call with injuries. Fire Chief Walters stated the PHFD was going to miss calls simply because it was staffed by volunteers.

Fire Chief Walters didn't believe that residents were wanting for anything. Trustee Wisenburg asked if medical calls were dual response, and Fire Chief Walters explained AMT was dispatched as well as PHFD. Fire Chief Walters stated if there was a problem with missed calls he would have had complaints, and he had not had any such complaints. Trustee Mariscal asked Fire Chief Walters if he would be working with Mr. Tuttle to recruit more volunteers. Fire Chief Walters stated he was working with multiple contacts, and there were 22 volunteers are on the roster. He said that wasn't a critical level although the PHFD could use recruits. Fire Chief Walters is working to improve volunteer numbers and reduce missed call data. Trustee DeVore stated she was happy to see the support of the volunteers from the PHFD who were present at the meeting, and she hopes to see them present in the future once the issue is resolved. Trustee DeVore asked Fire Chief Walters if he was willing to stay despite being previously set on retirement. Fire Chief Walters answered delaying his retirement was the right thing to do, and he couldn't leave the issue to someone else. Trustee DeVore asked if Fire Chief Walters would be willing to write down his plan and goals so the Board of Trustees could help with the process. Fire Chief Walters stated tomorrow would be an officers meeting where such things would be discussed prior to being presented to the PHFD. Trustee DeVore asked when certifications would be completed since some are still ongoing. Fire Chief Walters stated it would be dictated by class schedules and availability. Trustee DeVore asked if there was any kind of time limit for getting certifications, and Fire Chief Walters stated that would be something the PHFD could look into. Fire Chief Walters stated he was hoping that all the conversations around the PHFD would spur interest in volunteering.

Trustee Wisenburg introduced the discussion of the wording of a nonbinding advisory referendum on the April election ballot. Trustee Wisenburg said he had thought Attorney Walton would be present. Chief Sutton stated Attorney Walton would be at the Board meeting, and Attorney Walton was still working on a recommendation for wording. Trustee Wisenburg noted the Board of Trustees hadn't previously reached a consensus. He stated he didn't believe there was a need for additional conversation at this time. Trustee Mariscal asked why the question couldn't be modeled like the ambulance referendum. Trustee Wisenburg replied he didn't believe that question had been neutral. Trustee Mariscal asked why it was previously allowed and not presently. Trustee Wisenburg stated he would be questioning Attorney Walton on the matter. Chief Sutton stated he would pass along the information regarding wording once he received it. Trustee Wisenburg expressed the Board of Trustees needed to review the budget in order to determine cost prior to putting a number in the referendum question. Trustee Mariscal asked when the wording of the question had to be determined, and Chief Sutton stated he believed that needed to be determined by November. Trustee Khazzam stated there needed to be a conversation with counsel. Mayor Phelan noted that he had seen many referendums, and they included a reference to finances. Mayor Phelan noted, while estimates, the Village had good estimates of what the costs would be. Trustee Wisenburg stated he wanted to see budget figures in order to reduce any potential tax increase. Trustee DeVore asked Trustee Wisenburg what budget he wanted to see. Trustee Wisenburg stated he was most concerned with a full-time chief. Trustee Mariscal asked how long the contract with the City of Peoria would be. Chief Sutton invited the representative from City of Peoria Fire Department forward to speak to the question. Assistant Fire Chief Jim Bachman came forward and apologized that Fire Chief Ardis couldn't be present. Assistant Fire Chief Bachman stated the City had estimated an annual figure based off the response call charge of \$750 per unit and using the total number of calls from 2019. He believed discussions were for a 3% cost of living increase per year. Chief Sutton stated he had spoken to Fire Chief Ardis about a long term, 10 or 15 year, contract, and Fire Chief Ardis had agreed to limit cost increases to an inflation increase as a result. Trustee DeVore asked how charges would be assessed, and Assistant Fire Chief Bachman stated billing would be negotiated. Trustee DeVore noted that if the Village had the hotel and apartments increasing call volume the annual cost would increase. Assistant Fire Chief Bachman explained there

were different response options which would be part of contract negotiations. Trustee Mariscal asked if the City Council would vote on the contract, and Assistant Fire Chief Bachman stated they would. Trustee Mariscal asked if the contract could still be changed based on the Council's vote, and Assistant Fire Chief Bachman stated it could.

Trustee Wisenburg introduced discussion of an ordinance establishing the office of Chief of the Fire Department of the Village of Peoria Heights. Trustee Wisenburg asked if Fire Chief Walters' retirement would impact the ordinance. Chief Sutton stated that the ordinance would impact any fire chief after Fire Chief Walters retired. Trustee Khazzam said the ordinance looked good if the Village decided to hire a full-time fire chief. Trustee Wisenburg agreed.

Mayor Phelan introduced discussion of the Boo-Bear 5K on Saturday, October 3, 2020. Ms. Alex Lavin came forward to speak. She stated the event had been held since 2017, and the event would be coordinated so it was done in groups of 50. The event is to benefit immune compromised people. Ms. Labin explained the organization is pushing for plasma donations. Trustee Goett made a motion to approve the Boo Bear 5k, and Trustee Wisenburg seconded. The event was approved 6-0.

Mayor Phelan introduced discussion of the Central Illinois Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired event on Thursday, October 15, 2020. Mr. Mark Bean came forward to explain the Peoria Heights Lions Club had partnered with the group to help raise funds. He noted the event is new, and he anticipates 30 attendees. The event would be from 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm. Trustee Goett asked what the event was. Mr. Bean explained there would be educational activities and a walk. Trustee Goett made a motion to approve the event, and Trustee Khazzam seconded the motion. The event was approved 6-0.

Trustee Goett introduced an ordinance pertaining to the Local CURE Program. Trustee Goett stated the agreement was to reimburse the Village for any expense incurred because of COVID. Chief Sutton stated Village counsel had recommended the ordinance be passed. Trustee Mariscal asked what the CURE program was for. Chief Sutton stated there were a lot of aspects to the program, and the ordinance has to be passed in order to be eligible. Trustee Carter asked about officer overtime, and Chief Sutton stated that there were strict guidelines, but the Village would try to seek reimbursement for those costs.

Mayor Phelan asked for miscellaneous business.

Trustee Khazzam reminded residents that Ms. Tanisha Cayson was holding a voter registration event in Tower Park on Saturday 5, 2020. She also noted that the next webinar for the Village comprehensive plan would be on September 10, 2020 at 6:00 pm. Trustee Khazzam also reported that the Village had a meeting with an entrepreneur about the possibility of bringing rickshaw bicycle taxis to the Village. Trustee DeVore asked if they were already in business. Trustee Khazzam stated she didn't believe so, but the owners might have been testing the vehicles. Trustee DeVore asked if there would be a permit similar to the pedal bus bar. Trustee Khazzam stated she believed it would be a similar process. She said it was a very exciting prospect and created a destination experience in the Village.

Trustee Mariscal made a motion to pay the bills, and Trustee Khazzam seconded the motion. Trustee Wisenburg asked about duplicate payments, and Clerk Turner explained that they weren't duplicates, but separate payments sent in the same month due when the bills were received. Trustee Mariscal asked about the payment to Peoria County for PAWS, and Chief Sutton explained the County provided animal control services and billed quarterly. Chief Sutton stated they issued fines and followed up on

any animal related issues in the Village. Trustee Wisenburg asked about IMRF library voluntary contributions, and Clerk Turner explained just the library's levy is combined with the Village's their retirement data is reported together. The voluntary benefits are an optional program within IMRF so employees can increase their savings for retirement as state statute otherwise fixes retirement benefits. The Board voted 6-0 to approve the bills.

Trustee Goett made a motion to adjourn, and Trustee DeVore seconded. The Board voted 6-0 to adjourn at 7:01 pm.

Michael Phelan, Mayor

Stephanie Turner, Village Clerk