

SAFETY COMMITTEE

February 3, 2025

The February 3, 2025 Safety Committee meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. in Council Chambers by Kenneth Wessler, Chairman. Safety Committee members present were Julia Lemire, John Walker, and Kenneth Wessler.

Others present included: Jared Lucas, Police Chief; Mike MaGinn, Fire Chief; Dave Yeater; Brian Hemminger, Daily Chief Union; and Sarah Bennett, Clerk.

The summary of bills totaling \$27,217.92 was presented.

A motion was made by Mr. Wessler, seconded by Mr. Walker, for the approval and payment of bills totaling \$27,217.92. Upon Voice Vote, all members voted Yes. The Chairman declared the motion carried.

The minutes of the January 6, 2025 Safety Committee meeting, having been mailed to each Safety Committee member, were approved as received.

Mr. Dave Yeater, a former Volunteer Fireman and concerned citizen, addressed the Safety Committee regarding the need for additional full-time firefighters. Mr. Yeater stated that businesses are not letting Volunteer Firemen leave work to respond to emergency fire calls and there are times when one (1) full-time firefighter responds to emergency calls and that can be dangerous. Mr. Yeater also noted that there are currently fewer Volunteer Firemen on the roster than there were years ago and today's Volunteer Firemen are not committed to responding to emergency calls like Volunteer Firemen in the past and these factors could affect residents' insurance rates. It was noted that the Fire Department has applied for a Safer grant for the third time and if approved this grant would cover the addition of three (3) full-time firefighters for a three (3) year period.

Chief MaGinn indicated that he has received inquiries about plans for the income from the ½% City income tax that could be passed by the voters in the 2025 primary election, besides a new swimming pool in Harrison Smith Park. Chief MaGinn inquired as to if the Fire Department will be receiving any of the income and noted that the addition of full-time firefighters is needed whether the Safer grant is approved or not due to the reasons explained earlier in this meeting by Mr. Dave Yeater.

Safety Committee members again discussed the request presented at the January 6, 2025 Safety Committee meeting from Ms. Chari Alesch to make the north/south alley adjacent and to the east of her home located at 419 West Walker Street one way to prevent motorists from using the alley as a shortcut to get to West Wyandot Avenue without having to travel the extra distance west to North Warpole Street and then turn left to get to West Wyandot Avenue. Mrs. Lemire and Mr. Walker indicated that they have observed the area and witnessed motorists traveling through the alley after dropping off/picking up their children at the nearby Union Elementary and Middle School. Chief Lucas suggested that half of this alley be made one way.

A motion was made by Mrs. Lemire, seconded by Mr. Walker to make the north/south alley located to the east of 419 West Walker Street one-way northbound from the east/west alley intersection to the south to West Walker Street. Upon Roll Call, all members voted Yes. The Chairman declared the motion carried.

Mr. Walker inquired about a handicap parking sign near 117 East Walker Street as discussed at the December 2, 2024 Safety Committee meeting and requested by Mrs. Jodi Turnwald, owner of Findlay Hearing Center and who recently opened a business at 121 East Walker Street. Chief Lucas will contact Mr. Brad Taylor, Street and Sanitation Supervisor, regarding this matter.

It was noted that help wanted advertisements were posted online, in the local newspaper, and in newspapers in surrounding counties for the current Police Officer vacancy and only one application was received for this position. It was noted that pursuant to Section 7.04 of the City's Civil Service Commission Rules and Regulations: "No competitive examination will normally be administered unless there are at least two (2) applicants eligible to compete. Furthermore, if fewer than a sufficient number of people apply or are eligible to compete in a competitive examination, the appointing authority may request approval of an appointment without competitive examination." Chief Lucas requested the Safety Committee request the Civil Service Commission to approve an appointment to the position of Police Officer without a competitive examination.

A motion was made by Mrs. Lemire, seconded by Mr. Wessler, to request approval from the Civil Service Commission for an appointment to the position of Police Officer without a competitive examination. Upon Roll Call, all members voted Yes. The Chairman declared the motion carried.

Chief Lucas inquired with the Safety Committee as to if all of the Safety Committee members want to attend the interview for the Police Officer candidate. It was agreed that all Safety Committee members should attend the interview. Chief Lucas will schedule the interview following the Civil Service Commission meeting and notify the Safety Committee members of the date and time of the interview.

Information from Mayor McColly was reviewed regarding a request received to close the north/south $\frac{1}{4}$ alley located to the rear of the Municipal Building, 119 North Seventh Street, from February through May during the day for the demolition of the former Shotzy's Bar and Grille, located in the downtown at 130 North Sandusky Avenue, which was destroyed in a fire on Thursday, June 30, 2022.

A motion was made by Mr. Walker, seconded by Mrs. Lemire, to approve the closure of the north/south $\frac{1}{4}$ alley to the rear of the Municipal Building, 119 North Seventh Street, from February through May during the day for the demolition of the former Shotzy's Bar and Grille, located in the downtown at 130 North Sandusky Avenue, as requested. Upon Roll Call, all members voted Yes. The Chairman declared the motion carried.

Also discussed was a suggestion from Mayor McColly to delay the alley closure of the east/west alley located between the buildings located at 116 and 120 North Sandusky Avenue, from North Sandusky Avenue to the adjoining north/south alley to the west, as this north/south alley is the same alley referenced in the previous discussion and approved for closure from February through May during the day, until the work to be done in the north/south alley is completed. It was noted that Mr. Mike Hill, 120 North Sandusky Avenue, is going to have work done on the outside of his building in the spring of 2025 and will need the alley to be closed for that work, and the building located at 116 North Sandusky Avenue will be painted along the alley and the alley will also need to be closed for that work.

Safety Committee members also reviewed a request from Meagan Hill, 428 South Fifth Street, to make the narrow east/west section of South Fifth Street a one way to South Sandusky Avenue as there are issues with vehicles speeding in the area and there's not enough room for two (2) vehicles traveling in opposite directions on the east/west section of South Fifth Street so one (1) vehicle has to back up to let the other vehicle through. It was noted that there is currently a stop sign located on the east/west portion of South Fifth Street at the curve for motorists traveling eastbound and turning northbound on South Fifth Street. Chief Lucas noted that there are many residences and a business in the area that would be affected by making this portion of the street one way. Chief Lucas suggested a stop sign be placed at the end of the north/south portion of South Fifth Street for motorists traveling southbound, and prior to the curve onto the east/west portion of the street.

A motion was made by Mr. Wessler, seconded by Mr. Walker, to place a stop sign at the end of the north/south portion of South Fifth Street for motorists traveling southbound, and prior to the curve onto the east/west portion of the street. Upon Roll Call, all members voted Yes. The Chairman declared the motion carried.

Chief Lucas presented a request from the Wyandot County Health Department to close Court Street on Thursday, May 1, 2025 during the Wyandot County Chamber of Commerce's First Thursday event so car seat inspections can be performed.

A motion was made by Mr. Walker, seconded by Mr. Wessler, to approve the closure of Court Street on Thursday, May 1, 2025 during the First Thursday event to allow for car seat inspections. Upon Roll Call, all members voted Yes. The Chairman declared the motion carried.

Chief Lucas presented resignation letters from part-time police dispatchers Benjamin Dearth and Sarah Kalb.

A motion was made by Mr. Walker, seconded by Mr. Wessler, to accept the resignations of Benjamin Dearth and Sarah Kalb as part-time police dispatchers. Upon Voice Vote, all members voted Yes. The Chairman declared the motion carried.

A motion was made by Mr. Wessler, seconded by Mr. Walker, to have the Human Resource Officer advertise for part-time police dispatchers. Upon Voice Vote, all members voted Yes. The Chairman declared the motion carried.

Chief MaGinn reported that the Fire Department responded to thirty-three (33) calls in January 2025 including five (5) fires, seven (7) gas leaks/carbon monoxide alerts, five (5) false alarms, three (3) vehicle accidents, eleven (11) EMS assists, and two (2) miscellaneous.

Chief MaGinn also reported that two (2) of the Fire Department's trucks have experienced some issues with their seat belt sensors. These issues were dealt with immediately.

Chief MaGinn demonstrated a thermal imaging sensor/camera as three of these units were purchased primarily from a \$10,000.00 donation received from the Wyandot Classics and Cruisers from their annual Autumn Cruise held in September 2024 along with some additional funds from the Volunteer Fire Department.

Chief MaGinn further reported that the Fire Department has been in need of ice rescue equipment due to the many bodies of water in the area including ponds, reservoirs, and rivers. The Wyandot County EMS purchased four (4) ice rescue suits from the income from the camping area located along the east side of Indian Mill Drive, on property owned by the City, and across the road from the Wyandot County Fairgrounds. Two (2) of these suits were provided to the Upper Sandusky Fire Department. Chief MaGinn indicated that a resident donated money to the Fire Department and a water/ice rescue boat was purchased. The total cost of the two (2) suits and boat was approximately \$7,000.00 with the Volunteer Fire Department contributing \$400.00 towards the purchase of the boat.

Chief Lucas demonstrated a thermal imaging device/camera and noted that six (6) of these devices were purchased with funds from a donation received from a citizen, and each police cruiser now has one of these devices.

Chief Lucas also presented a newly purchased training paint handgun that was budgeted for 2025 and explained to the Safety Committee that this gun is an excellent training tool for members of the Police Department.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting adjourned.

Sarah J. Bennett, Clerk

Kenneth Wessler, Chairman