

City of Watseka
201 Brianna Dr
PO Box 338
Watsaka, IL. 60970

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
APRIL 13TH, 2021
7:00 PM

PRESENT: Alderwoman Ulfers, Aldermen Barragree, Cahoe, Marcier, Rushbrook, Miller, Garfield, Yates, Mayor Allhands

GUEST: Fire Chief Tim Ketchum

Alderwoman Ulfers opened the meeting at 7:00 pm. There was no public comment. Auxiliary Officer Mark Garfield stated his department will be having a boat safety course next Wednesday through the DNR.

Fire Chief Tim Ketchum stated his department had 1 line/odor investigation, 3 traffic accidents, 3 fire alarms, 3 EMS assists, and 6 mutual aid calls (Crescent City, Martinton, Pembroke and Woodland). Training for the month was forced entry, station duty, SCBA, boat orientation and vehicle fire strategy. The department did 2 escorts for junior high teams. Chief Ketchum reported currently the firemen get \$12 for attending a meeting, \$14 for a fire call for the 1st hour, \$10/hour for any hours after that. They have not had an increase for a long time. He has \$35,000 budgeted for payroll. This year he was \$7,000 under. Chief proposes to make the increase the same across the board for meetings and calls. He asks the committee for at least \$15 and would like to do \$17. Chief Ketchum stated he believes if an increase can be done it would help with recruitment. Alderman Garfield stated he has the same trouble with his Auxiliary department as their pay rate is also low and its hard to get people and then to keep them. Alderman Cahoe stated the code enforcement officer gets \$18/ hour and he thinks the fire and auxiliary departments should be paid the same. **Alderman Cahoe makes a motion to recommend to the Council to increase the Fire Department personnel to \$18.00 and hour across the board for meetings and fire calls and to increase the pay rate for Auxiliary Officers to \$18.00 hour effective May 1, 2021. Alderwoman Ulfers seconded. Roll call carried 8-1 with Alderman Garfield abstaining.**

Chief Ketchum stated the department has a person interested in being a cadet from the career center. The department had one but she has moved on. All the proper paperwork has been completed for this young man.

Chief Ketchum stated he is resigning as Fire Chief effective June 30, 2021. He has been with the department for 24 years and feels it's time for someone else to be the leader. He is willing to help the next Chief and anyone else that has questions. It was stated in the past the Mayor appoints the Chief. The committee thanked Tim for his years of service to the City.

Police Chief Jeremy Douglas was absent. Mayor Allhands stated the Police Department had 356 call for service during the month of March. The Explorer has arrived and it is a hybrid, it uses electric and gas both. The new computers have been upgraded along with the police program that the department uses.

Alderman Barragree makes a motion to adjourn at 7:12 pm and Alderman Miller seconded. Roll call carried 9-0.

Monna Ufers, Chairman