

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

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
JULY 12, 2022
7:30 PM

PRESENT: Mayor Allhands, Alderwomen Ulfers and Musk, Aldermen Miller, Barragree and Marcier

ABSENT: Aldermen Cahoe, Garfield and Rushbrook

GUESTS: Nita Dubble with the Police and Fire Commission, Fire Chief Ken Baier, Police Chief Jeremy Douglas

Mayor Allhands opened the meeting at 7:30 pm. During public comment Nita Dubble with the Fire and Police commission spoke. She stated the committee had a meeting with the Illinois Police & Fire Commission Attorney and Mayor Allhands, Chief Douglas and Alderwoman Ulfers. Nita stated after a very lengthy meeting the commission needs to start completely over on how things are being done. They will need to start from scratch and follow state statutes. There are many new rules and regulations that no one was aware of. So, this also means any promotions within the department are on hold.

Chief Douglas stated the Auxiliary department helped with the 4th of July Parade and did traffic detail for the E Walnut St fire. The department had no class in July.

Fire Chief Ken Baier spoke next. He thanked everyone for the generous donations the department received during the E Walnut St. fire. He went on to say there were no working smoke detectors and 7 people and 3 businesses were displaced because of the fire. He stated no one was hurt and they had 16 departments called in to help. The Edward Jones building next door is ok, it has smoke and water damage. Chief reported the owner of the building has plans to demolish it. Chief thanked the Police department and the water and public works department as well. Chief stated the department will bill the insurance company.

Chief stated the department had 3 fires, 1 EMS assist, 1 MVA, 6 automatic alarms, 2 auto aid calls, 2 mutual aid calls, 3 other calls (gas leak, lines down) for the month of June. Training for June consisted of boat driving with JPR, SCBA Demo with MSA, tour of Nichols Paint & Fab, acquired structure training, (ventilation) with Sheldon and Crescent Fire. Chief stated the department now has 3 1st responder bags and equipment on 2982 (pickup), 2961 (heavy rescue), and 2932 (westside engine). Chief stated the annual ladder testing was completed on all ladders, and no problems were found. The department is now first responder certified through the state. The department helped at the park district for their summer camp and the department has also received donations from Nichols Paint and Fab for \$1,000 and from United Fund of Ash Grove, Fountain Creek and Pigeon Grove townships for \$124.00.

Chief Baier discussed the future of the Riverside Ambulance next. He stated Riverside will be cutting down 1 ambulance by October 1st and it could be as soon as September 15. This means there will be a gap in service to the residents of Watseka. The fire department has a plan-they would like to lease or rent an ambulance from Riverside in lieu of the monthly rental income of

\$1400.00 the city gets from Riverside. Chief stated if the city were to contract on with another ambulance service, they typical are only good for 1 year as they will not be local people from the community and don't really care much after a year. Chief stated Riverside will get the first call and if they are busy then the fire department will pick up. The fire department will use a dividing line of east side vs west side and will use the I AM Responding ap that they all have. The billing will be done by a company and they keep 40% and the city will get the other 60%. Chief stated he has looked into purchasing a new ambulance and the cost is about \$200,000 and could take as long as 18-24 months to get. Chief stated the department is not doing this as a money maker for the city but trying to get the best care for the residents of the city. Chief asked the committee if he could move forward with working out details to lease an ambulance from Riverside in lieu of the monthly \$1400 Riverside rent and the committee stated yes move forward in trying to get something worked out.

Alderwoman stated she believes that some realtors are not following the smoke detector ordinance and she wants to get together with Chief Baier and go to some realtor meetings and explain the ordinance, chief is ok with this.

Police Chief Jeremy Douglas stated his department had 348 calls for service during June. Chief reported the charger was back for a day and then had to go back in for a new radiator that cost another \$1,000. Officer Harris went to the park district for a public service event. Chief stated 20 applications for employment were picked up but only 5 returned, there are 2 names on the lateral entry and 1 person is in part time school now.

Mayor Allhands stated he has received a letter of resignation from Police Commission member Roy Johnson. Nita Dubble stated since the city has less than 5,000 residents and police commission isn't even really necessary, so only having 3 on the committee is really not a problem.

Mayor Allhands sated Greg Marks and Dustin Standish are no longer employed by the city. He also stated the operator's contract will need to be approved at full council.

There was general discussion about foundations on properties that have been burned down, and about doing test wells behind city hall and a question was asked about the status of well 6 and about some stumps on East Walnut St that need to be ground out.

Mayor Allhands makes a motion to adjourn at 8:40 and Alderman Barragree seconded. Roll call carried 6-0.

John Allhands, Mayor, Chairman