

City of Watseka
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PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
FEBRUARY 14, 2023
6:30 PM

PRESENT: Aldermen Garfield, Miller, Barragree, Cahoe, Marcier, Alderwomen Rohlfs and Musk and Mayor Allhands

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

Mayor Allhands opened the meeting at 6:30 pm. There was no public comment. Auxiliary Officer Mark Garfield stated his departments training for the month was proper traffic and proper radio control etiquette, they have also updated their id pictures and information. The department has gone to a new app called Whats App because the current app they had was not working for them.

Fire Chief Ken Baier spoke next. He stated his department had 4 fires, 4 first responder, 8 ambulance, 3 MVA's, 6 automatic alarms, 1 autoaid call, 1 CO alarm, 1 gas leak and 1 line down for the month of January. Training for January was rig maintenance, building tour preplan at IMH, 1st quarter incident command, active shooter training that 6 guys went to, building tour preplan IMH east campus, SCBA MOD A. Chief stated he took a 48 hour fire inspector 1 class. Chief stated the department purchased 6 pagers from Crete Township for \$600.00.

Chief Baier stated the department has received a grant from Firehouse Subs for \$20,900 for a Zodiac boat/motor and trailer. The total cost for this is \$21,800 so the department will need to add \$1800 from their budget. He stated this will replace a boat that has been in service since the 80's and the plan is to pass it on to public works.

Chief also reported the department is now in a program to give free smoke detectors to homeowners. The homeowners need to contact the department and they will install them. These smoke detectors are free to the department and are coming from the state. As the department uses them the state will replace them. The department also has 8 personnel in an EMT B class and should be done by the end of May. After that the department will have 20 people on the roster that are qualified EMS personnel. Chief Baier stated the department will be getting funds in from Medicaid they will get about \$0.29 on the dollar, so for every \$1,000 collected the department will get \$300. But at the year end they will need to reimburse Medicaid half of that back. Chief Baier would like to have a pooled cash account created for this reason. The committee is ok with this. Chief Baier stated the department is still looking into a monitor for the ambulance but the cost is about \$55,000 for the top model to \$35,000 for the middle. He has contacted the Miner Charitable Foundation and they are willing to donate \$25,000 to the monitor and he can get financing for the balance going out 3-4 years. The next piece of equipment that is needed is a cot and that cost is \$10,000. He has talked to Middleport Township about a fund they have that could be used for this purchase. They have a meeting next week and this will be discussed. There will be more information next month.

Nita Dubble with the Police & Fire Commission spoke next. She stated the agility test was held in January for the 1 applicant and he passed and was offered the job. The commission has contacted Chief Douglas. Nita stated new applications are being sent out again.

Police Chief Jeremy Douglas spoke next. He stated his department had 304 calls for the month of January. He stated Cory Hamlin is the new officer that has been hired and he will be attending school in Belleville beginning in May and will be gone for 3 months. At the present time Hamlin is an Auxiliary Officer. Chief stated with the recent retirement of Sgt. Stanley and now with this new hire brings the force back up to 11 and at sometime it would be nice to have 12 officers. Chief stated Josh Douglas is at a drug training class in Decatur and Sgt. Harris and Sgt. Puleo have attended an Illinois Case Law class. Chief stated he has been looking into new squads and after talking to 2 dealerships if he were to order them in September they would not arrive until sometime in 2024. The department does prefer the Tahoe's or the Explorers. He stated when the time comes he might order 2 because of the length of time it is taking to get them. He also reported his car maintenance budget is over because of the Charger. Chief Douglas stated Panasonic will be here in March to get the car and body cam's installed. Chief stated the current interview room needs to be updated. Right now it's on a DVD system that is installed in Kings office and during an interview it has quit and they have no way of knowing that because the system is in a different room. This new system that he would like to have installed is from Advance Computer System and would consist of 2 cameras that would directly link to the server. There will be switch with a key to operate so no need to enter King's office. The cost is \$8657 and he would use his COVID money to pay for it. **Alderman Garfield makes a motion to recommend to the Council to update the Interview Room Camera system for a cost of \$8657.00 and Alderman Marcier seconded. Roll call carried 8-0.** Chief Douglas also stated Tucker (K9 Dog) went to the 3rd grade class so they could meet him. Chief Douglas stated the department has been having trouble with citizens posting on social media about events happening to them and not calling 911 at the time the trouble is happening. This in turn is causing the department a lot of time chasing down details that may or may not have happened when if they would have called 911 time of trouble the problems could have been solved immediately.

Alderman Cahoe makes a motion to adjourn at 6:56 pm and Alderman Barragree seconded. Roll call carried 8-0.

John Allhands, Mayor