

Public Safety Committee Meeting Minutes

August 22, 2022

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order by Councilor Fahndrich at 18:30 Hrs.

ROLL CALL

Present were: Councilor Fahndrich, Councilor Castaldi, Councilor Eichler, Mayor Bradley, Chief Goshen and Borough Manager Pugliese.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

A motion to adopt the Public Safety Committee Meeting Agenda for August 22, 2022 as presented was made by Councilor Eichler, seconded by Councilor Castaldi. Motion to approve the Agenda as presented carried unanimously. Councilor Fahndrich noted that an Executive Session would be held tonight before adjournment.

PUBLIC INPUT

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the Minutes for the July 25, 2022 Public Safety Committee Meeting was made by Councilor Eichler, seconded by Councilor Castaldi. Motion carried unanimously. Minutes from the July 25, 2022 meeting have been approved.

FDMJ REPORT

FDMJ Chief, Brett Hamm, who recently took over for Chief Gohn, was in attendance. He is a resident of Mount Joy, attended school here, retired from the military after twenty-five years of service and has been on the FDMJ for thirty plus years. He reviewed his monthly report which was included in the packet. There was a total of fifty-two calls for the month of July with a total of 313 at the end of 07/31/22. The time in service for the month was thirty hours and twenty minutes. The average response time in July was 4:24 and the average arrival time was 9:35. They averaged ten members per call. Total man hours were 284 hours and thirty-seven minutes. Twenty-eight members were trained for a total of 210 hours and thirty minutes. They did not have any fire prevention details; however, they had a community service detail. They had four duty crews, four work details and one public service event. It should be noted that the arrival time provided is an average for the entire territory they cover; the arrival time in Mount Joy Borough is significantly faster.

Samuel Clark, Assistant Fire Chief was present at the meeting and introduced himself. He resides at 202 Frederick Street. He has been a resident in the Borough for thirty years and has been with the fire department since February 1979. He was a past fire chief and past chair of the Civil Service Commission. He had been through the merger/consolidation so he has the historical perspective. Mayor Bradley stated that Sam gave an introduction but left things out of the story. Not only has Sam spent a sizeable time here in Mount Joy, he also spent a sizeable time in Harrisburg and Fort Indiantown Gap in leadership roles. He is seen as a thought leader across the State of Pennsylvania as it pertains to fire service. He brings a specific expertise as it pertains to elevator rescue which has helped out this community multiple times with the train station here in the Borough. Mayor Bradley is very pleased the department chose all of you as leaders in leading the fire department forward.

Councilor Castaldi thanked Matt Gohn for all his work with the FDMJ and wished Chief Hamm good luck. Councilor Eichler echoed Councilor Castaldi's comments. Mayor Bradley has known Matt for a long time but wanted to thank Matt Gohn for all his time, effort and hours he put into the FDMJ and knows it often goes unrecognized because often times fire chiefs recognize everybody else below him. On behalf of the Borough and all of the citizens of Mount Joy Borough, Mayor Bradley thanked him for his service up to this point and for his continued service moving forward. He assured the public that we are in very capable hands with the new officers in the FDMJ. Councilor Fahndrich echoed everyone's sentiments, thank you very much.

EMA REPORT

Mayor Bradley is pleased to report that EMA has received all of the missing radios. He has been in dialogue with Chief Goshen for upcoming fall events, specifically for the Blues, Brews and BBQ event and the Chief has been very helpful with Delta Street closure. They are planning for downtown Trick or Treat and an expansion of things being offered by MSMJ. He echoed his comments from previous months that he is filling in this role as Deputy Coordinator and it is still the responsibility of the municipality to find a coordinator and would encourage an active effort to make sure that happens. He reminded this committee that Millersville University offers a program in Emergency Management Planning so that might be a potential resource.

PSH LIFE LION REPORT

Adam Marden was in attendance and reviewed his report which was included in the packet. There was a total of seventy-five 911 calls in the borough, they handled sixty-eight of the calls in July; thirty-one Class 1, seven Class 2 and thirty Class 3 calls. The busiest days of the week were Thursday, Friday and Sunday, with twelve calls on Thursday and eleven on Friday and Sunday. The busiest unit was dayshift; 1600 Hrs. was the busiest time. Their response time is under seven minutes. Staffing is going really well! They are still delayed in the ER. The new hospital opens October 3, 2022 so that may help alleviate some of the delay. They have some upcoming drills prior to the opening. They really enjoyed being at the baseball game.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution for Banner Request – FDMJ (11/5/2022)

Chief Goshen relayed the 'sample' banner was in the packet for him to send to PennDOT. It will be put up on Monday, October, 24, 2022 (two weeks prior to the event) and removed on Monday, November 7, 2022. It is a reusable banner. Councilor Castaldi made a motion to move the banner request for FDMJ to full Council that will be up from Monday, October 24 through Monday, November 7, 2022, seconded by Councilor Eichler. Motion passed unanimously.

Special Event – Blues, Brews and BBQs – MSMJ (09/23/2022) Delta Street Closure

MSMJ has rescinded their request; they do not want to close the road; not certain they are sponsoring this event.

Discuss any concerns or perceived weakness of FDMJ

Manager Pugliese and Councilor Fahndrich met with Jerry Ozog and Matt Kratz who are working on the strategic plan for FDMJ and had asked them to bring their discussion items to Public Safety Committee meeting and any concerns or perceived weaknesses of FDMJ.

Councilor Fahndrich is on the strategic planning committee for the fire department and has been enjoying the meetings; they are looking for the mission statement; Jerry Izod has been the consultant and has facilitated a lot of good discussion. She feels the department is amazing. After hearing from a lot of other fire departments, it is strategic that we are looking ahead. The fact that we are volunteer and looking at where other fire departments are across the state, she feels is a good idea we are looking into it now and what would be our five-year plan and goals. Councilor Eichler feels is a healthy idea to have an organization take a look at itself.

Mayor Bradley feels there are a couple of structural weaknesses and one has to do with the nature of how FDMJ address recruiting issues. As with volunteer organizations, you have a small percentage of the people doing a large percentage of the work. The workload on fire departments is getting greater and greater, with unfunded mandates, more effort, but in short, the fire department itself is being asked to do preplanning which he has some concerns about. Sam Clark has done preplanning in the past, which required a sizeable number of manhours in addition to running on fire calls. Sam Clark, for the past three years, was the Assistant Fire Chief of Planning and in that role several years prior to that. To give you a snapshot, Sam Clark relayed that there are two legislative SR6 and SR60 and countless other studies of the fire service that indicate we are in crisis. Preplanning is overwhelming; been in this office for 11/12 days and just got a plans review, we typically do plans review for Mount Joy Borough, Rapho Township and as needed for East Donegal and Mount Joy Township in those areas that are first due. Today he received an email from an architectural firm in York County for plans review for 1540 Strickler Road to entail Kentucky Fried Chicken and a three-story hotel; has three outstanding NOX details; just overwhelming; solid 20 hours per week for somebody and he is not interested in doing that. Mayor Bradley expressed that there is a fairly comparable workload when it comes to the demands that the fire department is being asked to do during various periods and having to work in conjunction with the

Codes Officer on some of these types of things. Sometimes there is limited daytime availability when a lot of this work has to be done. So structurally, he sees this as unsustainable with volunteers. One of the weaknesses he sees is the fire department being able to address the needs of the professional communities that are out there using the volunteer services at this executive level. The Chief is in his office long hours. So, one of the weaknesses is their ability to address all of the demands that go beyond the response to fire calls, but all the other demands of the industry, it is overwhelming, that coupled with where FDMJ is in its lifecycle. There are bimodal levels of membership; you have a sizeable number of individuals who have been in the fire department greater than thirty years, and a sizeable portion that has been in the fire service for less than ten years; a portion of those ten years was spent during the junior program. He feels that there is going to be a number of individuals who will be retiring from their fulltime careers and will step aside from the fire department. So, the weakness they are trying to address is through recruitment drives, but that is a tough. The concern in general with volunteer fire service is: two philosophies here – having people at the fire station to be able to respond immediately but there is a dark side to it because it tends to stifle from at home response; there is more transient nature to that. What needs to be addressed is the executive side to this and being able to unload that work from the volunteers or somehow to compensate that individual/s. Also, as fire apparatus and planning become much more expensive, it is much clearer that there is much more of a reliance on municipal funding, Mount Joy Borough and Rapho Township specifically have stepped up to the plate on some of that funding, other municipalities who enjoy response in the first due have not been as forthcoming with their resources. He would like to see a more robust discussion happen between the fire department and particularly the municipalities that are highly involved in funding to have more dialogue prior to purchase in terms of how the resources are being used.

Councilor Castaldi questioned the executive workload from the engineering firm. Sam Clark explained that the fire department should be aware of new building projects and have an active role and opportunity to provide input; land development and fire protection plans to review. The building he mentioned earlier, the access around it is a big concern as is water supply which comes from the Borough Authority. Later on, he will receive another plans review on sprinkler system, fire pumps and stuff like that. Frequently things are overlooked so our input is very valuable. Everyone in the process, and it is not a complaint, from the Borough Codes or Rapho Codes, Architectural firm, Fire Protection Engineer who designs them is paid, except for the fire department volunteer. Everyone is challenged, nothing specific to Mount Joy. The bulk of the preplanning workload is Mount Joy Borough and Rapho Township. Mayor Bradley explained Knox boxes. Those need to be updated and we have just under 200 Knox boxes all within the first due.

Councilor Eichler questioned how other municipalities were handling it. Sam explained that there is some sharing within municipalities. Manheim Township was all volunteer ten years ago, now has forty-two part time personnel and at least nineteen fulltime personnel, fulltime Codes and fulltime Fire Chief. That is not needed here, but we are in a period of change. In Warwick, Duane Ober is the Emergency Services Coordinator, does preplanning, etc., and other municipalities share in the cost of that individual. There needs to be an ongoing dialogue through the municipalities' long-term planning.

Councilor Castaldi asked for the Chief Goshen and Manager's thoughts. Chief Goshen said the uniqueness of how the problem is being addressed directly correlates to each fire house membership that they have available to do the work. He does not think it is appropriate to try to create a 'one size fits all' plan when you are dealing with volunteers. His outside observation is that Mount Joy Borough is very fortunate to have the number of volunteers, however he is aware of other fire houses that are not so lucky. You have two people doing the job that this department is broken out into five and as the demand for more reporting and specificity continues, they could probably knock it out to six or seven.

Manager Pugliese pretty much agrees with everything that has been said. One of the fears that he has that as you look down the road at hiring a Fire Chief/Assistant, is that when you start paying one or two people, then the volunteers don't feel they need to do the work and he has seen that happen so many times and Manheim Township, is an example. That happened with medical services really fast and that would always be his fear. But he doesn't know that there is a way to handle it by not doing something like that. He doesn't know if that is this year or next year or five years down the road but it is going to come to a point that it's going to have to happen. You can't expect the volunteers to put in the time that they do; it's a love and passion that they have but they can burn out.

Discuss expectation of FDMJ (e.g., response times, public education, public awareness/public relation campaigns, etc.)

Councilor Eichler said we should be proactive rather than reactive and be planning for moving in a direction where we are still going to keep the high level of response and coverage and tackle burnout and issues with the specificity of forms/reports and how it all plays out. Compensation is going to have to happen, whether it is an office out of the Borough or out of the fire department or some unique place; perhaps a different title/format; person responds as able, but not on the frontline.

Mayor Bradley already touched on one expectation which is the cost of fire apparatus. Ladder truck costs \$1.3 million, the last rescue engine was \$750,000; we are looking at specking out a new fire engine which might cost close to \$700,000. Since more municipal dollars will be asked, there should be more municipal input when it comes to the purchase of apparatus. He feels they have done a good job with response times, public education/awareness, etc. and hope they continue with it. To clarify an earlier comment, we may need to look outside the fire department for some of these planning pieces, that perhaps some of the very specific tasks get taken away from the fire department and placed in the hands of some other Borough official.

Manager Pugliese stated that from a community perspective, when they have a fire call, they call 911, and a fire truck shows up. As a municipal government, we have to look at ways to help them recruit the volunteers, whether by our website, FB, Twitter to try to reach more.

Councilor Eichler brought this up before, there used to be school students that were firefighters that carried pagers and would leave school to go on a call. What happened to that?

Mayor Bradley stated that the volume of calls went from about 150 to 500 calls. There are still some businesses who allow their employees to leave to go on calls, but before we ask the school district and local businesses, we should encourage the Borough employees to volunteer – lead by example. Per Manager Pugliese, it is in the Employee Handbook that employees are allowed to respond to calls.

Mayor Bradley suggested that around November 5, we could host something here at the Borough with a small presentation to the Borough employees on what it would mean to be a volunteer in the fire department.

Councilor Castaldi mentioned that it is newsletter time and that perhaps we could insert the banner to assist in the fire department recruitment effort.

PUBLIC INPUT

None.

ANY OTHER MATTER PROPER TO COME BEFORE THE COMMITTEE

Councilor Eichler questioned the stainless-steel posts that were put in at the intersections. They came through a grant and are to improve pedestrian crossings at the intersections. The green posts are bike racks that came through a grant from the Lancaster Bicycle Club.

Councilor Castaldi inquired as to whether or not he should reach out to Donegal Animal Hospital for spay/neuter costs and an article for our newsletter. Mayor Bradley stated that SPCA rate is \$20 and veterinarians will not be able to touch that rate.

Councilor Fahndrich had a conversation with Heather Grady regarding a clarification on the cat ordinance. Chief Goshen explained that she was misreading the ordinance – owned and domesticated cats need a collar, which can be maintained inside the house; does not need to be on the cat. If the cat is out and the ear is clipped, we know that cat has been addressed. If there is nothing done at all and someone traps it and it is someone else's pet, they do not have any recourse to go after that person. Mayor Bradley explained that if you are feeding cats, you have the responsibility to TNR. Councilor Fahndrich will get back to Heather Grady.

Mayor Bradley feels that ordinance updates should be in the newsletter; just a note with the names of the ordinances and then a mention of where to find/how to access the updated ordinance. Manager Pugliese will take a look at it.

Mayor Bradley inquired as to whether or not there were any plans from Admin & Finance or this committee on finding an EMA coordinator. Councilor Fahndrich asked about language to advertise. Discussion on the EMA job description necessary to advertise. Councilor Castaldi will draft a job description for the EMA position and send it to Public Safety Committee for review. He will reach out to County EMA and Millersville University for assistance.

Councilor Castaldi said that County Commissioner John Trescot would like to get out to the municipalities in the area and inquired if there was any interest in hearing from him or any of the other Commissioners with this committee. Councilor Fahndrich welcomes him to come and introduce himself but feels he should come to a full Council meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL/LEGAL MATTERS

The committee went into Executive Session at 20:03 Hrs. and ended at 20:39 Hrs.

ADJOURNMENT

At 20:40 Hrs. Councilor Eichler made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Councilor Castaldi. Motion carried unanimously.

Submitted by Diana Ellis