

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

WORK GROUP MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH, 2010, 5:30 PM

Present: Trustee Torkelson, Trustee Nelson, Mr. Vrakas, Ms. Decker, Mr. Domaszek

Members Not Present: Trustee Schoenecker, Mr. Elkin

Also Present: Police Chief Jim Gage and members of the public

1. Call meeting to order.

Trustee Torkelson asked for a motion to make her temporary chair of the meeting. Trustee Nelson made a motion to accept Trustee Torkelson as temporary chair. Seconded by Mr. Vrakas with a unanimous vote in favor. Trustee Torkelson called the meeting to order at 5:35pm.

2. Approval of the minutes from October 8, 2009.

Mr. Vrakas made a motion to accept the minutes of October 8, 2009. Seconded by Ms. Decker. Remaining members voted in favor of accepting the minutes with the exception of Trustee Nelson who abstained.

3. Review and vote to make permanent temporary public safety meeting start time of 5:30pm.

Trustee Nelson made a motion to make permanent the time change to 5:30pm for public safety meetings. Mr. Domaszek seconded and the measure passed by a unanimous vote.

4. Review and consider citizens concerns and comments regarding crosswalk flags, Watertown Plank pedestrian signage and Juneau Blvd. speed sign.

Trustee Torkelson introduced this topic and opened it up for public comment.

Mr. James Nortman of 1700 Notre Dame Blvd. made public comment cautioning public safety members and village board members in general about accepting free gifts from members of the public. Mr. Nortman cited several examples of what he felt were free gifts to the village and specifically commented on the pedestrian crosswalk flags, flashing pedestrian sign in the 13400 block of Watertown Plank Rd. and the solar generated speed sign on Juneau Blvd. as items that were privately funded that the village would eventually have to incur expenses to maintain or replace. Mr. Nortman further commented that he felt that all of these items had little effect in enhancing public safety. He referred to the crosswalk flag program as a "feel good" program and additionally indicated that the flashing pedestrian sign and flashing speed sign detracted from the village's esthetic appeal. Nortman went on to say that the Village Board tends to place a

number of sign restrictions on village residents and business owners, but fails to place the same restrictions on flashing signs installed by the village.

Ms. Karen Steen of 1005 Longwood Ave. addressed the committee and spoke in favor of the pedestrian crosswalk flags indicating that the flag program was supplied and maintained free of charge to the village. Ms. Steen indicates that it is her feeling that the use of the pedestrian flags helps enhance pedestrian's visibility to passing motorists.

Ms. Steen was also accompanied by Tricia Ormsby of 1195 Terrace Drive, who is in favor of the flag program and has donated the flags that are currently being used for the program. Ms. Ormsby basically reiterated much of Ms. Steen's comments adding that she has marked all of the flags with her name and address should anyone find them either discarded or in someone's possession that is not using them for purposes of crossing in a designated crosswalk.

There was general discussion among committee members thanking Steen and Ormsby for their involvement in maintaining the crosswalk flags. Additionally, committee members indicated that they felt that the general public was not aware of the flags intended use. Additionally, there was discussion about enhancing the public's knowledge through, once again, distributing flyers to the local schools and possibly making comment about the program on the village's website. Committee members inquired about liability issues concerning the flag program. Chief Gage indicated that in checking with the village's local counsel and the counsel at the League of Municipalities, there were no liability issues concerning the use of crosswalk flags; essentially indicating that the pedestrian and the vehicle operators are liable for their own conduct within the restraints of state statute, regardless of the use of a crosswalk flag.

Committee members again thanked Ms. Steen and Ms. Ormsby for their involvement and support of the program and ultimately decided to take no action on the matter with the exception of asking Steen and Ormsby to increase their public education efforts. Trustee Nelson added that Steen and Ormsby ought to examine the idea of approaching a local Boy Scout troop to see if any local scout may wish to take over the project as part of his Eagle Scout requirements.

The committee then discussed the flashing crosswalk signs in the 13400 block of Watertown Plank Rd. The committee inquired as to whether there is any statutory requirement to have a flashing sign at that location. Chief Gage indicated that there is no statutory requirement for a flashing signal at that location and that Chief Gage further indicated that for all three (3) of the projects that are in question, were brought to the village by concerned citizens and none of them were initiated by village staff, based on a public safety need. As a result, all three (3) projects were privately funded.

There was general discussion among the committee members regarding the proposed changes to Watertown Plank Rd., during the 2011 roadway project. Chief Gage indicated that he and Department of Public Works Director, Michael Flaherty, are currently discussing the realignment of crosswalks on Watertown Plank Rd. Some of the ideas currently under review are to

completely eliminate the midblock crossing in the 13400 block of Watertown Plank Rd. and move that crosswalk to the western most edge of the intersection at Legion and Watertown Plank Rd. Chief Gage went on to say that this would allow for the crosswalk to become a part of the signaled intersection, giving pedestrians greater safety in crossing the road and helping aid drivers in being able to visualize pedestrians at the signaled crossing. It was the consensus of the committee that they would take no action on the issue of the flashing pedestrian signs; however, they may revisit the topic dependent upon any potential roadway design changes that affect the midblock crossing in the 13400 block of Watertown Plank.

The committee then discussed the solar generated speed sign on Juneau at Lakeside. There was general discussion regarding the effectiveness of the sign. Chief Gage indicated that he has personally noticed vehicles slowing down for the sign and feels that there has been a positive impact in slowing vehicles in the area. Dr. Rodney Willoughby, of 14400 Juneau Blvd. also commented that he felt that the sign had a positive impact in reducing speeds in the area and spoke in favor of keeping the sign. Committee members inquired as to whether there had been any complaints received regarding the sign from people living along Juneau Blvd. Chief Gage indicated that he was not aware of any complaints from residents living on Juneau Blvd.; however, he had received comments from other residents that they felt the sign did not fit the neighborhood and that it was not esthetically pleasing. It was the general consensus of the committee that they would take no action on this matter.

5. Review car/deer accident summary for 2009.

Chief Gage presented the 2009 car/deer accident update to committee members. Chief Gage further reported that so far with the village's deer culling program that contractors had harvested two(2) deer as of the time of the meeting and that there are three active sharp shooting sites currently in the village. Chief Gage further indicated that the village's 2009 deer count was forty-five (45) and that any time the village's deer count exceeds twenty (20), the village conducts a deer culling program.

6. Other business.

Ms. Decker inquired as to when the Elm Grove St. no parking signs will be installed. Chief Gage informed her that sometime in spring after the ground thaws out sufficiently, the highway department will install the signs. Mr. Vrakas further commented that he is also working with Department of Public Works Director Michael Flaherty in selecting the appropriate signage for marking the bike route through the Indian Hills subdivision.

7. Adjournment.

At 6:24 pm Trustee Torkelson entertained a motion for adjournment. Trustee Nelson made a motion for adjournment, seconded by Mr. Vrakas and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

James P. Gage, Chief of Police

DRAFT