

**CITY OF GARDNER, MASSACHUSETTS  
CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF JANUARY 18, 2022**

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Committee Chairman Councillor Craig Cormier called the Public Safety Committee meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. in the City Council Chambers, Room 219, City Hall. Committee member Councillor Karen Hardern. Councillor James Boone was absent.

Also present were Fire Chief Greg Lagoy; Police Chief Richard Braks; Health Director Lauren Saunders; Building Commissioner Roland Jean; and City Clerk Titi Siriphan.

**I. Review and Approval of the Minutes Meeting.**

On a motion by Councillor Karen Hardern and seconded by Councillor Craig Cormier, it was voted viva voce to accept the Minutes of the October 26, 2021 Public Safety Committee Meeting, as printed.

**II. Department Updates**

**Building Department**

- There have been 1088 building permits issued, more than any he has seen the ten years he has been at city hall.
- Zoning has been busy and will continue to be busy in the future
- 163-165 Pine Street property had a fire a few years back. There is an investor interested in the property to rehab the building.
- Moving of all offices within city hall is complete.
- COVID has made its way through the building department the past few weeks. Everyone is back and healthy.

**Public Health**

- Prevention Programs are going well at the schools
- Licenses are complete
- Transfer Station, there is a part time position still open. Interviews are being conducted next week.
- Reviewing and interview for a full-time office coordinator will be done this week.
- Working on the budget that is due. Some challenges with solid waste, specifically Christmas tree removal. Last week Harvey (city's trash vendor) had employees come down with COVID
- The city has received over 4,000 COVID test kits to distribute.
- Mask mandates are still required for municipal employees. It will be discussed again at their next meeting on January 24<sup>th</sup>.

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**Police Department**

All state training requirements have been met. Massachusetts Police Training Council MPTC trainings are ongoing. Our officers continue to maintain a high level of individualized training and will assume the additional training topics to meet the MPTC standards.

The police department will hold a Rape Aggression Defense RAD class this spring at the Gardner Police Department. The class will be posted on the police department Facebook page.

Calls for service: 5.83% decrease in call volume, 18.18% decrease in arrests, 38.46% decrease in reported accidents.

**Dispatch Communications:** We are currently accepting applications to hire and train emergency 911 dispatchers. We have a very strong group of first responders as our cities first line for providing emergency resources. Our dispatchers are the first contact for assistance when emergency situations arise 24/7/365 for Police, Fire & EMS.

**Animal Control Officers (ACO's) and Animal Shelter:** The resources of the Gardner Animal Shelter can be accessed by calling the shelter directly at (978) 630-4950. An answering machine can take your message when staff is busy. The ACO's are scheduled during the day and can be contacted by calling the Animal Shelter or police department non-emergency number (978) 632-5600 x0. Also call the non-emergency number during evening hours.

**Civil Defense:** Director Paul Topolski continues to review and update plans for emergencies, particularly those situations exacerbated with winter upon us.

**Applications:**

There are no pending or existing issues to bring forward to the Committee for the annual application renewal for Brian's Auto Body on the agenda for Motor Vehicle Dealers license Class II.

**Fire Department**

**PERSONNEL**

- Probationary Firefighters Christopher Dauphinais and Jamie Henderson graduated the Mass Fire Academy Recruit Training 10-week program on December 17, 2021 and are now assigned as part of the Firefighting Force. Both will be at tonight's City Council meeting for the swearing-in ceremony.

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- Probationary Firefighters Patrick Swensen and Stenio Pereira are currently in week 4 of the Recruit Training program, with graduation scheduled for March 4, 2022.
- The hiring process continues to fill the existing four vacant positions. A Civil Service list was called for in December, approximately 185 candidates were notified by Civil Service, 11 signed the list indicating interest, 7 submitted resumes, 6 interviews were conducted, and 3 candidates withdrew due to not being willing/able to meet the residency requirement. With only 3 candidates remaining, we will not be able to fill all vacancies at this time. A new Civil Service list is expected in March, hopefully more candidates will be on that list.

#### GRANTS UPDATE

- The Fire Department was notified last week that we have been awarded \$11,647.29 from the Massachusetts FY2022 Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant Program. This program provides funding for cities and towns to replace non-compliant, out-of-date, and non-serviceable firefighting equipment. We will be purchasing new ventilation saws, nozzles, and a Rapid Intervention Team (“RIT”) emergency breathing air supply kit. This is a no-match grant, meaning there is no cost to the City.
- The FY20 FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) project for a new Fire and Carbon Monoxide Alarm system for Fire Headquarters is moving forward. This will replace the current system, which is original to the building and outdated. The required Environmental and Historic Preservation Review has been completed and approved, and a contract has been signed with the installing contractor L.W. Bills Company of Georgetown, MA. The project is expected to be completed this spring.

#### SOUTH GARDNER FIRE STATION BOILER UPDATE

- Funding for MEP portion of this project is currently on the Finance Committee’s calendar.

#### HEADQUARTERS ROOF REPAIR

- Currently in a holding pattern, due to the winter weather.

#### COVID-19 PANDEMIC UPDATE

- The Omicron variant has hit the area hard with a large surge in cases. Multiple firefighters have been out of work due to COVID. Currently, all are back to work and suffered mild or moderate symptoms. Testing is

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being performed anytime exposures are identified, and we continue to follow CDC Work Restriction Guidelines for First Responders.

2021 GARDNER FIRE DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT

- It was another busy year for the Gardner Fire Department, responding to 5255 calls for emergency assistance in 2021. A breakdown of incident types is attached.
- During the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2021, Fire Department ambulance responded to 726 medical emergencies and transported 550 patients to area hospitals.



# GARDNER FIRE DEPARTMENT 2021 ACTIVITY REPORT

**CALENDAR YEAR 2021 TOTAL INCIDENTS - 5255**

**INCIDENT TYPE CATEGORY BREAKDOWN**

[100-199] Fire/Explosion	209
[200-299] Overpressure/Rupture	9
[300-399] Rescue Call	3681
[400-499] Hazardous Condition	116
[500-599] Service Call	461
[600-699] Good Intent Call	195
[700-799] False Call	563
[800-899] Severe Weather Assessment	4
[900-999] Special Call/Complaint	3

**INCIDENT TYPE HIGHLIGHTS**

Building Fire – 44	Brush/Grass Fire – 11	Vehicle Fire – 12
Cooking/Stove Fire – 118	Chimney Fire – 4	EMS Call – 3477
Motor Vehicle Accident – 183	Haz Mat Spill/Leak – 49	CO Incident – 11
Electrical Problem – 44	Smoke Scare – 31	Water Problem – 52
Malicious False Alarm - 16	Unauthorized Burning – 32	Assist Invalid – 222
Alarm System Malfunction – 357	Unintentional Alarm Activation – 190	Lockout – 77

**MUTUAL AID CALLS - 160**

**FIRE PREVENTION/CODE ENFORCEMENT INSPECTIONS - 1012**

**III. #10590 – Application for License to Buy & Sell Second Hand Motor Vehicles, Class II**

On a motion by Councillor Karen Hardern and seconded by Councillor Craig Cormier, it was voted viva voce to recommend that the following Application for Motor Vehicles Dealers Licenses, Class II, be granted for the period of January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022 to Brian's Autobody Sales, located at 549 W Broadway.

**IV. New Business**

Councillor Craig Cormier, Karen Hardern and Craig Cormier would like to thank the staff, department heads and everyone with work with keeping the city safe.

**Adjournment.**

On a motion Councillor Karen Hardern and seconded by Councillor Craig Cormier, on call of the roll, it was voted to adjourn at 9:17 a.m.