

CITY OF GARDNER, MASSACHUSETTS
CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MARCH 12, 2021

Committee Chairman Councillor Craig Cormier called the Public Safety Committee meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom. Committee member Councillor George Tyros were present. Councillor Karen Hardern was absent.

Also present were Chief of Police Richard Braks; Acting Fire Chief Greg Lagoy; and, City Clerk Titi Siriphan.

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §20, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Public Safety Committee was conducted via remote participation on Zoom. The audio recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings will be posted on the City's website as soon as possible after the meeting and the meeting was broadcast live on Gardner's YouTube Channel.

Minutes of Prior Meeting(s).

On a motion by Councillor Karen Hardern and seconded by Councillor George Tyros, on call of the roll, it was voted to accept the Minutes of the July 29, 2020 and December 14, 2020 Public Safety Committee Meeting, as printed.

II. Department Updates

Building Department

We have issued 119 Building permits, and the Zoning Board has been very busy with appeals. Many of our inspections are being done virtually, but I expect that to change soon.

Our Maintenance Dept. has been busy rearranging and refurbishing offices and will be soon adding some monitors in meeting rooms for presentations.

My Administrative staff has been volunteering at the PACC Vaccination Clinics when needed, and they tell me that it is going very well.

We are currently very busy trying to expedite the demolition of 177 West St. recently declared a Public Safety Hazard by Mayor Nicholson. A contract has been awarded and we are waiting on DEP approval of our non-traditional work plan.

In regard to the new application for used car sales. It is my opinion that the application is incomplete and should not be given any consideration until a Zoning review is done by this office. There has been no documentation presented to us, nor any request for a Zoning Review.

I will be happy to address any questions you may have regarding these or any other topics.

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Public Health

- Prevention Coordinator, Veronika Patty was hired and started in January. She is currently working on collecting youth data through the Youth & Community Survey. Data is collected in schools, specifically Gardner High School and the GALT.
 - Implementing Training Active Bystander (TAP) training with community members, schools and other organizations (virtually)
 - Working on updating the City health department's website with a resource tab for community resources
 - Working on implementing "Game Changers", a resiliency skill building program for high school aged students
 - Working with GCAT members to update the coalition's strategic plan to address the most current community issues

- The Health Department budget was submitted to the Mayor and we met to discuss. Only some minor changes and adjustments may have to be made based on which waste removal company we decide to go with for the next contract.
 - The current one-year contract with Waste Management expires on June 30, 2021 and we have been exploring other options. After reviewing the financials and overall service proposals we have made our initial selection and are in contract negotiations with that company.

- COVID cases are down. As of March 4th weekly report issued by the state Gardner's positivity rate was 2.98% and we are no longer in the "red". This has alleviated some of the pressure on contact tracing.

- We continue to work with restaurants, other businesses and local organizations on COVID-19 guideline updates as there have recently been some changes to the Phases (currently in Phase 3, Step 2 and tentatively phase 4 on March 22)

- We have been working very closely with the Mayor's office, Heywood Hospital, Community Health Connections, our Emergency Management Department and other local boards of health on getting vaccinations out to the community.
 - In partnership with the Montachusett Public Health Network we held both round of first responder clinics here in the City Hall auditorium. 180 first responders were fully vaccinated.
 - We helped coordinate a senior housing vaccination clinic held at Gardner Housing Authority's high rise for over 100 people. Second doses will be administered later this month.
 - We have another senior housing clinic scheduled for Friday 3/12 at Hillside Gardens and CHC.

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- There is another clinic planned for later in the month at Heywood Wakefield Place
- School staff clinic for the area is being held this Saturday has had to cut available doses by 50% to ensure there are enough doses for round 2
- Gardner Public Schools have their own vaccine clinic scheduled for March 19. They currently anticipate being able to get the doses they need
- Heywood's weekly clinics have been ongoing at PACC, however we were just notified we are currently unable to schedule any additional first dose clinics as we only have enough state supplied vaccine to supply second doses for the rest of the month. Therefore our call center will also be temporarily closed.
- The EOC call center will be moving to the City Hall auditorium as the PD has some professional development days scheduled in their community room and the call center has the ability to move anywhere.
- There is interest locally in setting up some kind of program to vaccinate homebound individuals but we are waiting for more guidance from the state (and more vaccine)

Police Department

The police department, Dispatch Communications, Animal Control, Animal Shelter and Civil Defense are all operating within the financial parameters approved in the FY'20 budgets.

On April 8, 2021, two recruit officers started the MPTC Academy in Randolph, MA. The recruits continue to meet the challenges put forth by the rigorous 20 week training process. Upon the successful completion of training the police department will have returned to the 2019 staffing level for the department. The department then looks forward for an opportunity to increase staffing by one or more members and reintroduce positions that remain unfilled from a prior reduction in force.

In comparison to 2020: on 03/09/2021 **Accidents** - down 15.3%, **Offense Calls** - down 12.5%, **Arrests** - down 17.47%

The police department is now approaching 6 years of service to our community at 200 Main Street and we are fortunate to have Raymond Beauregard coordinating the upkeep and repairs throughout the building and grounds of our station. Ray Beauregard puts forth exceptional efforts and takes great pride with us all in ensuring the building and grounds look their best.

Dispatch continues the process of hiring two new positions to fill vacancies. Several experienced applicants are being considered for fulltime and part-time positions. Our staff of Dispatchers and Dispatch Supervisors often exceed many of the expectations for training and service. Bridgett Hudgins was promoted to Dispatch Supervisor on February 1, 2021. Communications Director Jennifer Law continues to do an exceptional job managing the communications center as well as meeting the many demands and expectations the center has to offer.

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Animal Control Officers (ACO's) and Animal Shelter:

All ACO's continue to respond as required throughout the community to advise and assist residents when issues arise involving domestic animals and wildlife. Both ACO vehicles have required to be replaced due to disrepair. The AC Shelter fire/security system is being updated due to the obsolete system in place.

Civil Defense: Director Paul Topolski has addressed the need for receiving calls for the vaccination site at PACC. Volunteers continue to schedule appointments throughout the week for a predetermined number of doses.

A Decommission Request for City Property accompanies this report. Detailed are vehicles that have served beyond their expected life-cycle and are structurally and mechanically beyond repair when consulting the mechanical staff at the Gardner DPW. The recommendation for decommissioning is to scrap the vehicles.

There is no opposition to putting forth the new Class 2 motor vehicle dealers license application submitted for Blake Motors appearing before the Safety Committee for 412 Main Street Gardner, MA.

Fire Department

PERSONNEL

- With my appointment to the permanent Chief's position, the following promotions are being processed through Civil Service: Acting Captain Craig Osowski to Permanent Captain and Acting Lieutenant Patrick Fohy to permanent Lieutenant. Captain Osowski was appointed Call Firefighter in 1995, Permanent Firefighter in 2000, and Lieutenant in 2015, where he worked as Group 3 Shift Commander and in the Fire Prevention/Code Enforcement Office. Lieutenant Fohy was appointed Permanent Firefighter in 2004, and is now assigned as Group 1 Shift Commander. Both men are experienced, veteran Firefighters, and have performed very well in their acting positions.
- One new Firefighter has been hired and started work February 22nd. Firefighter Daniel Quinn has been assigned to Group 2 and is in training. He is scheduled to attend the Massachusetts Career Recruit Fire Academy beginning May 10th, with graduation in late July. At that time, he will become part of the regular Firefighting force. We also had another Firefighter resign in February due to personal reasons. This still leaves us with three (3) vacant Firefighter positions. The current Civil Service list is basically exhausted, with no local candidates left. A new Civil Service Firefighter list is expected to be established mid-March, which has been significantly delayed due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. As soon as the list is posted, we will commence the hiring process to fill the vacant positions.
- The Lieutenant on Injury Leave since September 2019 is still working his way through the retirement process, this continues to be delayed due to the Pandemic.
- Overtime expenditures continue to be high, mainly due to the issues noted above.

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VEHICLES

- The new 2020 Chevrolet Tahoe is now in service as Car 1 (Fire Chief's vehicle).
- The Fire Department Repairs & Maintenance budget continues to take hits due to major unexpected repairs. Combination 4 (2011 Sutphen 75' Ladder) recently had a \$6200 repair to the air bag suspension system, and Rescue 3 (2018 Ford Ambulance) had a \$5200 repair that included a new hydraulic brake pump, power steering pump, front upper and lower ball joints, as well as other regular maintenance items. This truck now has approximately 40,000 miles.

GRANT UPDATES

- The application for the FY2020 FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant has been completed and submitted. This year's application was for replacement of the fire alarm system at Fire Headquarters. This system is original to the building (1978), and is overdue for replacement. This item is on the City's Capital Improvement Plan.
- We are also awaiting award of the FY2021 Massachusetts Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant, which should be out shortly. We have applied for several hydrant valves and intake valves that will replace older equipment and help to protect the City's hydrant/water system.

SOUTH GARDNER FIRE STATION BOILER

- Royal Steam Heater Co. has provided a rough estimate of the cost to replace the boiler at the South Gardner Fire Station, which has failed a State inspection. The estimate was \$60,000-\$70,000, which includes asbestos remediation, new zoned oil-fired boiler, new oil tank, and associated electrical work.

HEADQUARTERS ROOF REPAIR

- The roof at Fire Headquarters has developed additional leaks. The roof is standing-seam metal, original to the building (1978), and has been problematic for many years. The Building Commissioner recently inspected to roof, and we are developing a report to pursue either repair or replacement. There were repairs made to the roof to fix leaks in 2011 at a cost of approximately \$18,000. This project is on the City's Capital Improvement Plan.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE

- The Capital Improvement Plan for the Fire Department has been updated. In addition to facilities projects mentioned above, several Fire Apparatus are listed on the plan. These include Engine 1 (1996 E-One pumper), Rescue 1 (1996 Ford/E-One Heavy Rescue), and Tower 1 (2002 E-One 95' Tower Ladder). These are three aging apparatus that will be expensive to replace. Consideration should be given to developing a plan to fund replacing them over the next several years in order to spread out the cost. It should be noted that from the time funding is approved until delivery of a custom-built fire truck can be well over a year.

COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

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- The recent surge of cases of COVID-19 in the area has stabilized. The Fire Department continues to treat and transport confirmed and suspected COVID-19 patients, and follow strict personal protective equipment (PPE) protocol and disinfection procedures.
- No Firefighters have been required to quarantine for the past several weeks.
- Vaccines have been provided for all interested Fire and EMS workers in the City.

III. **#10400, An Application by Blake Motors, for a License to Buy and Sell Second Hand Motor Vehicles, Class 2, on 412 Main Street (In City Council and Referred to Public Safety, 3/1/2021).**

Building Commissioner Roland Jean said that this is a brand new application and not a renewal. Zoning review would be required and he has not received any documentation nor any requests for zoning review. At this time he cannot approve the application. If the application goes before the City Council and the Council approves it, the applicant will be in zoning violation.

On a motion by Councillor George Tyros and seconded by Councillor Craig Cormier, on a call of the roll, it was voted to recommend more time.

IV. **New Business**

Councillor George Tyros would like to thank everyone for their updates and their hard work over the past few months and serving the citizens throughout the pandemic

Councillor Craig Cormier would also like to thank the departments and their employees for their reports and all their work during the pandemic.

Adjournment.

On a motion Councillor George Tyros and seconded by Councillor Craig Cormier, on call of the roll, it was voted to adjourn at 9:34 a.m.

PRESIDENT
Elizabeth J. Kazinskas

COUNCILLORS AT LARGE
James S. Boone
Craig R. Cormier
Ronald F. Cormier
Scott Joseph Graves, Esq.
Judy A. Mack
George C. Tyros

CITY OF GARDNER
MASSACHUSETTS 01440-2630

OFFICE OF THE
CITY COUNCIL



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CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
GARDNER, MA

WARD 1 COUNCILLOR
James M. Walsh, Esq.

WARD 2 COUNCILLOR
Elizabeth J. Kazinskas

WARD 3 COUNCILLOR
Nathan R. Boudreau

WARD 4 COUNCILLOR
Karen G. Hardern

WARD 5 COUNCILLOR
Aleksander Dernalowicz, Esq.

March 9, 2021

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING NOTICE

Date: Friday, March 12, 2021
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Location: Remotely via Zoom/Broadcast on the City's YouTube Channel.

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §20, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Public Safety Committee will be conducted via remote participation. The audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings will be posted on the City's website as soon as possible after the meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENT - Any person may make a video or audio recording of an open session of a meeting, or may transmit the meeting through any medium, subject to reasonable requirements of the chair as to the number, placement and operation of equipment used so as not to interfere with the conduct of the meeting. Any person intending to make such recording shall notify the Chair forthwith. All Documents referenced or used during the meeting must be submitted in duplicate to the Chair of the Committee, pursuant to the Open Meeting and Public Records Law. All documents shall become part of the official record of the meeting.

I. Review and Approval of the Minutes of Prior Meetings.

- July 29, 2020
- December 14, 2020

II. Department Updates

- Building Department
- Public Health Department
- Police Department and Animal Control
- Fire Department and Ambulance

- III. #10400, An Application by Blake Motors, for a License to Buy and Sell Second Hand Motor Vehicles, Class 2, on 412 Main Street (*In City Council and Referred to Public Safety, 3/1/2021*).
- V. Adjournment.

NOTICE: The listing of Agenda items are those reasonably anticipated by the Chairman which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

CITY COUNCIL OF GARDNER

Craig R. Cormier

COUNCILLOR CRAIG R. CORMIER
Chairman, Public Safety Committee

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Committee Chairman Councillor Craig Cormier called the Public Safety Committee meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. via Zoom. Committee members Councillors Karen Hardern and George Tyros were present.

Also present were Chief of Police Richard Braks, Fire Chief Richard Ares, Public Health Director Lauren Saunders, Building Commissioner Roland Jean, and City Clerk Alan Agnelli.

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §20, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Public Safety Committee was conducted via remote participation on Zoom. The audio recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings will be posted on the City's website as soon as possible after the meeting and the meeting was broadcast live on Gardner's YouTube Channel.

Minutes of Prior Meeting(s).

On a motion by Councillor Karen Hardern and seconded by Councillor George Tyros, on call of the roll, it was voted to accept the Minutes of the May 18, 2020 Public Safety Committee Meeting, as printed.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Building Department Report to the Public Safety Committee

- To date we have issued 402 Building permits, 257 Electrical permits, and 175 Plumbing and gas permits representing a total revenue of \$ 206,607.00.
- In addition, to-date we have done 725 inspections across all departments including virtual inspections. Virtual Inspections were implemented during the time that my staff worked from home and while not ideal, they were helpful in keeping projects going.
- Following an inspection on May 5, 2020 including myself, Chief Ares, and our alternate Electrical inspector Shaun Dame, the power was cut to the building at 2-10 Parker Street due to unsafe conditions. The roof is in poor condition and leaks profusely. In addition, there are electrical issues dating back to 2015, which still have not been resolved. The owner was notified and to date has not made any repairs.
- Building disinfecting has been happening twice a day at City Hall in an attempt to keep the Coronavirus at bay and to my knowledge, there have been no cases in the building. It should be noted that my maintenance staff continued to work full time during reduced hours at City Hall in order to keep the building disinfected and safe.
- We are currently preparing the building for a re-opening, plans include sneeze guards where applicable, as well as stanchions and signage to keep contact with the public to a minimum.

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- We have a prospect for our part time inspector, he is currently going through the process of gaining permission to test for certification. Should he gain said permission he will be hired and training will begin immediately.
- A recent leak in the water main coming into City Hall forced replacement of the exterior shut off valve as well as a pressure reducer and four new valves for the interior. The leak was contained and there was no resulting damage.
- Work is being scheduled in the annex to repair/replace walls and ceilings damaged during a roof leak, the cost of the repairs is being covered by an insurance claim.

Public Health Department Report to the Public Safety Committee

COVID-19:

- We are still participating in two weekly calls with DPH and COVID Command Center for state updates. It will be important to hold a flu clinic this season and stress the importance of the flu vaccine to the community.
- We continue to work with all businesses, groups, churches, sport leagues, etc. to offer guidance on latest COVID protocols and guidelines. There have been many cancelations of large city events due to COVID-19 and restrictions on gatherings. Since Governor Baker announced tip line we have seen an increase in complaints that we have had to investigate. Sometimes we get complaints directly and other times they come through the Department of Labor Standards (DLS) or the AGO. The complaints have all been about local businesses. Complaints are investigated and we follow up with DLS and address the business as necessary.
- Schools – Still no decision on going back to school. Three potential options: Either full in person with safety guidelines, hybrid (combination of in person and remote) or all remote. We will most likely not see a full in person return of students.
- GPS Safety Committee – working on safety plans and precautions for fall. The group is looking at things such as PPE and PPE concerns, protective measures such as Plexiglas and isolation room locations, air quality in the schools, reopening protocols, and trainings for staff.
- New Travel Policy in MA- All visitors entering MA, including returning residents, who do not meet an exemption are required to complete a MA Travel Form prior to arrival, unless individual is visiting from a lower-risk state (CT, NH, RI, HI, NJ, VT, ME, NJ). Individuals must quarantine for 14 days or produce a negative COVID-19 test results that has been administered up to 72-hours prior to arrival in MA. If test is not received prior to arrival individuals must quarantine until they receive a negative test. Failure may result in a \$500 fine per day.

OTHER:

- Housing and food establishment inspections have ramped back up and we have resumed doing in home housing inspections with proper PPE. Septic and percolation testing has increased due to the season.

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Police Department Report to the Public Safety Committee

- First and foremost, I would like to thank and acknowledge the first responders who have continued to operate throughout an unprecedented time in the history of Gardner and our nation. Dispatchers, Firefighters, EMS personnel, Animal Control, Police and members of our civilian administrative support staff has endured great changes and ensured the efficient and safe operation of city departments. All through the pandemic, these essential workers have taken the necessary precautions and successfully performed all the duties they have received during a national movement, pandemic, and call for defunding and reform. I am extremely proud of the men and women that I work with and alongside when I see the resolve they exhibit despite the daily changes, challenges, and pervasive demonization of a profession.
- I would be remiss not to acknowledge the support of the other city departments, and particularly Acting Mayor James Walsh, Acting Mayor Elizabeth Kazinskas and Executive Assistant to the Mayor Rachel Stephano for their understanding and support during unparalleled times. Each have and continue to commit countless hours throughout these challenges as new changes unfold. I have great confidence, as I've observed a seamless transition, and would additionally like to thank Mayor Michael Nicholson for reaching out on day 1, and many more times since. Mayor Nicholson has provided a clear direction that we need and appreciate as we continue to meet the needs of the community together.

POLICE DEPT

- Officer Alexa Morgan graduated the 31st ROC Recruit Officers Course in Reading on July 2 and is now in field training with an FTO Field Training Officer to ensure her knowledge of the city.
- Recruit Anthony Webb is currently in the 11th ROC in Randolph completing week 6 of 20 and is scheduled to graduate in November 2020.
- The police department has two additional officer vacancies from FY20 that need to be staffed.
- The Police Department applied for and was awarded a JAG Grant dedicated to reimbursable costs for Law Enforcement relative to responding to the coronavirus (\$50,933).
- In comparison to 2019: Accidents down 26.48%, Offense Calls down 3.24%, Arrests are up 3.8%.
- The police department has operated within the appropriated budget for FY20.

DISPATCH

- Laurie Lyons retired from the Communications Director position, effective June 30th and the process of filling this position is in the final stages. 29 applicants, narrowed to 4 interviews. Our current Dispatch Personnel are well trained and particularly capable multi-taskers who are constantly seeking out the best methods to incorporate, train and excel in ensuring call safety. Despite the vacancy of 2 positions, the center has performed at an exceptionally high level of efficiency. Interviews for the 2 open positions will occur ASAP.

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ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICERS/SHELTER

- Animal Control was also a department that continued to respond to related calls, provided care for animals in shelter and ensured an often overlooked area of public concern was addressed within our community. The ACO's also cover the towns of Ashburnham, Hubbardston and Westminster.
- ACO Alanna Meserve was hired in the position of Animal Control Officer in May 2020.
- The shelter has required several updated in FY20 and will receive a new epoxy finish on the floor and walls of the kennel area in late August 2020.

CIVIL DEFENSE

- Emergency Management Director Paul Topolski has been an invaluable asset to departments within the city throughout the pandemic. As the primary liaison with FEMA and MEMA, Paul scheduled and ran multi-agency pandemic update meetings for city departments and originally secured the necessary PPE that was distributed to first responders. As the liaison between outside agencies, Heywood Health Care and City Departments, Paul ensured vital updates were relayed to all departments as well as opportunities to secure depleting PPE supplies. Paul met with city departments to discuss the process for offsetting costs with MEMA and FEMA.

Fire Department Report to the Safety Committee

- As with every aspect of life, the COVID-19 pandemic has had an effect on fire operations. The station has been closed to the public since March 16th.
- Other than vacant buildings or safety concerns, routine inspections were suspended until June 23rd. A great deal of effort was put in to procure Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). I put into place several General Orders and Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs) to provide for the safest operations possible. Daily cleaning procedures were upgraded. Personnel are screened twice per day for symptoms. I am happy to report that due to these requirements, and buy-in by the Firefighters, that we have not had a single case of virus infection in our staff. It is my sincere hope that we will continue that trend.
- Since resuming inspections, the acting Fire Prevention Officer has been very busy catching up on inspections that were allowed to be deferred by the State.
- We did have one Firefighter resign on May 23rd to take a job with another fire department. We also still have our Fire Prevention Lieutenant out on extended injury leave. He is in the process of medically retiring but that also has been delayed due to the virus. I am hoping he is able to complete his documentation soon so we can move forward replacing both his position and the other open firefighter position.
- Captain Lagoy was injured at an accident at his home in May. He required knee surgery and so is currently out on extended sick leave as well. I have moved the senior Lieutenant to the position of Acting Captain until Captain Lagoy is able to come back. Right now he is expecting to be able to return to administrative office duties only, sometime toward the end of August or September. He is expecting to be back to full duty before the end of the year.

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- All of these openings have once again created overtime to fill vacant positions. I have moved people and filled acting positions to minimize the need for overtime at the pay rate of Lieutenants.
- I have been in contact with HR regarding the hiring of firefighters but unfortunately the Civil Service process is time consuming.
- I have applied for two FEMA grants, one for self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) and another that is restricted to COVID related items. I am attempting to get face mask respirators on that grant. I have not received notification on either grant yet.
- Tower 1 had to have extensive repairs to the hydraulic system, as well as brakes and springs. This approximately \$11,500.00 repair was essential to the continued safe operation of the truck.
- Our ambulance service continues to be successful. The City Auditor shows \$102,525.62 in revenue after all expenses have been paid. This shows we are providing the ambulance service and 8 Firefighter/EMTs to the City at no cost to the taxpayers. I have provided a breakdown of our incidents for January 1 through June 30, 2020 with this report.

#10295, An Application by Gardner Ten Pins, Inc., 560 West Broadway, for Renewal of a Bowling Alley License (In City Council and Referred to Public Safety, 7/6/2020).

On a motion Councillor George Tyros and seconded by Councillor Karen Hardern, on call of the roll, it was voted to recommend to the City Council to grant to Gardner Ten Pins, Inc., 560 West Broadway, a Bowling Alley License for the period expiring April 30, 2021.

Adjournment.

On a motion Councillor George Tyros and seconded by Councillor Karen Hardern, on call of the roll, it was voted to adjourn at 4:40 p.m.

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DECEMBER 14, 2020

Committee Chairman Councillor Craig Cormier called the Public Safety Committee meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom. Committee members Councillors Karen Hardern and George Tyros were present.

Also present were Chief of Police Richard Braks; Acting Fire Chief Greg Lagoy; Public Health Director Lauren Saunders, and, City Clerk Alan Agnelli.

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §20, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Public Safety Committee was conducted via remote participation on Zoom. The audio recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings will be posted on the City's website as soon as possible after the meeting and the meeting was broadcast live on Gardner's YouTube Channel.

Minutes of Prior Meeting(s).

On a motion by Councillor Karen Hardern and seconded by Councillor George Tyros, on call of the roll, it was voted to accept the Minutes of the August 26, 2020 Public Safety Committee Meeting, as printed.

II. Department Updates

Public Health

- OpenGov software, licensing wrapping up. New software has been successful for DPT.
- Prevention position has been posted, closes 12/18. Interviews after holidays
- January – waste contract proposals
- Covid testing on Monday 12/7 – 427 people tested
- Current community clusters – prison, Wachusett manor
- Contact tracing back up, too many cases
- EDS Drill was Wednesday 12/2, great turn out, and everyone was in attendance. BOH staff, Police, fire, EMS, Civil Defense Coordinator, board member, school nurses, Wachusett MRC, and the Mayor stopped by. We had a follow up meeting Friday to go over supply list. (EDS plan recommendations)
- Drive through tents ordered
- Working with purchasing on other supplies
- Also part of EDS drill for this year is to complete a document regarding essential personnel for EDS vaccination clinic. Identify number of staff in each department and also an average number of family members based on census data.
- Getting numbers from POC from each department.
- Schedule of vaccination

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PHASE 1 – December – February

In order of priority

- Clinical and non-clinical healthcare workers doing direct COVID-facing care
- Long term care facilities, rest homes and assisted living facilities
- Police, Fire, EMS
- Congregate care settings (including shelters and corrections)
- Home-based healthcare workers; Healthcare workers doing non-COVID facing care

PHASE 2 February-April

In order of priority

- Individuals with 2+ comorbidities (high risk for COVID-19 complications)
- Early education, k-12 transit, grocery, food and agriculture, sanitation, public works, public health workers
- Adults 65+; Individuals with one comorbidity

PHASE 3 April/May +

- Vaccine available to general public

Police Department

- The police department has been high functioning and well spirited throughout the trials and tribulations of 2020.
- On December 4th officers were recognized for exceptional service and lifesaving incidents which occurred the previous year. The presentations have been put off since the cancellation of the April banquet.
- As essential workers, our department continues to address all issues as they arise with particular PPE concerns for everyone's safety.
- Officer Anthony Webb is our newest officer in the police department, he is in the process of field training and his permanent appointment has been requested for approval at the December 21, 2020 City Council Meeting.
- Two recruit officers have been selected and enrolled in the MPTC Academy in Randolph, MA beginning February 8, 2021. The recruits are Alexandria Laderoute and Dennis Siaw. With the addition of these two as officers the department will have filled all vacancies incurred since the beginning of 2019.
- A plan to add several additional officers over the next few years will replace the five vacancies that the police department previously experienced in the preceding years, primarily due to the layoffs in 2001.
In comparison to 2019: accidents - down 21.2%, Offense Calls - down 4.82%, Arrests - down 1.29%
- The police station is now approaching 6 years old and items, such as lighting and cameras have been in need of replacement due to failure resulting from meeting or exceeding life expectancy.

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- The police department, Dispatch, Animal Control and Civil Defense are all operating within the requested and appropriated budgets.

Dispatch: Our new Communications Director Jennifer Law has been well received and has done an exceptional job meeting the expectations of her position. Director Law has brought several new positive changes to the communications position.

Dispatch is in the process of hiring two new positions to fill vacancies. Several experienced applicants are being considered for fulltime and part-time positions. The compliment of Dispatchers are exceeding many of the expectations for service and continue to meet all the needs presented to them.

Animal Control Officers and Animal Shelter: The three ACO's continue to respond to all calls and provide assistance and care for those in the community. The ACO's, by contract, also cover the communities of Ashburnham, Hubbardston, and Westminster. ACO's and shelter staff ensure the shelter is staffed and well maintained. Several new additions have occurred to update the shelter look and efficiency. The new ACO van has been ordered and we await its arrival which replaced the 2007 van. An order for disposal of city property will follow.

Civil Defense: Director Paul Topolski has addressed all concerns throughout the pandemic and continues to assist with any reimbursable and the acquiring of PPE.

Fire Department

PERSONNEL

- Chief Richard Ares has retired as of September 30, 2020 after over 47 years of service to the City of Gardner.
- I took over as Acting Chief as of October 1, 2020.
- Currently there are three (3) vacant Firefighter positions (One due to a resignation in July who accepted a job at another Fire Department, one due to a resignation in September for personal reasons, and one due to Chief Ares' retirement.) The hiring process continues, we have selected the only remaining local candidate on the current Civil Service list and he is expected to start work in early January, 2021. He is not expected to complete Recruit Training at the Massachusetts Fire Academy until the summer of 2021. A new Civil Service Firefighter Exam is tentatively scheduled for January, 2021 which will hopefully produce more local candidates to fill vacant Firefighter positions. The hiring process continues to be hampered by the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- The Lieutenant on Injury Leave since September 2019 continues to work his way through the retirement process, again this is being delayed due to the Pandemic.
- Overtime expenditures continue to be high, mainly due to the issues noted above. In the past six weeks we have also had multiple Firefighters quarantined due to both on and off duty exposures to COVID-19, which has resulted in overtime to back fill their

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shifts. These expenditures should be reimbursable through the CARES Act and/or FEMA.

VEHICLES

- The new 2020 Chevrolet Tahoe purchased with funds approved by the Council to replace the accident-damaged 2010 Ford Expedition has been delivered and is in the process of being up fitted with emergency lighting, radios, and other equipment. It will be going into service as Car 1 (Fire Chief's vehicle) in January 2021.
- The three Fire Department support vehicles that were traded in with the purchase of the new Tahoe have been picked up by the dealer. (2003 Dodge Ram pickup, 2004 Chevrolet Tahoe, 2010 Ford Expedition).
- Tower 1 (2002 E-One 95' Tower Ladder) has returned to service again after repairs. Electrical system repairs and another rear suspension component failure repair were completed by Five Star Fire in Hartford, CT at a cost of \$9,800.00. This is in addition to the \$11,500.00 reported by Chief Ares in July. Also, eight new rear tires were installed by Pete's Tire Barn at a cost of \$5000.00. While the tire replacement was planned regular maintenance, most of the other repairs were not expected and have taken up a significant portion of the Fire Department Repairs & Maintenance budget. Tower 1, while still in good overall condition, is now approaching 19 years old. Unexpected repairs like this are more common in a vehicle this age.

FEMA ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT (AFG) UPDATE

- Training has been completed by all Firefighters, and the new MSA G1 Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) have entered service. This is a huge upgrade from older SCBA units from multiple manufacturers that they replaced. Gardner Firefighters are now equipped with state-of-the-art SCBA that meet the latest safety standards. All older units were traded into the dealer as part of the purchase.
- This 2019 AFG grant award, along with the 2017 AFG grant award for the purchase of the new Engine 3, total just under \$750,000.00. Chief Ares worked diligently to secure this funding. The City has benefited greatly receiving this much needed equipment at a cost of 10 cents on the dollar.

SOUTH GARDNER FIRE STATION BOILER

- The boiler at the South Gardner Fire Station recently failed a State Inspection due to a water leak. The source of the leak cannot be determined due to asbestos insulation on the boiler.
- This boiler is original to the building, dating to 1934, and is need of replacement. Royal Steam Heater Co. has been contacted to evaluate the boiler and provide guidance and a price quote to begin the replacement process.

COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

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- Fire Department operations continue to be affected by the Pandemic. There has been a surge in ambulance transports of confirmed and suspected COVID-19 positive patients compared to the numbers seen in the spring. Strict personal protective equipment (PPE) procedures are in place to protect Firefighters.
- We continue a rigorous disinfection protocol of all Fire Department vehicles and ambulances, and the Fire Station itself on a daily basis. We also have strict infection control procedures in place at all times. The front lobby of the Fire Station remains open to the public for official Fire Department business during regular business hours.
- We continue to source PPE through reputable sources to have enough supply on hand. At this time, we a sufficient supply on hand for at least 60 days.
- Most Pandemic supplies are eligible for reimbursement from the CARES Act and/or FEMA.
- Vaccines are on the way for healthcare workers, and local public safety workers are expected to be included in this group.

III. #10369, Applications for Motor Vehicle Dealers Licenses, Class I (In City Council and Referred to Public Safety, 12/7/2020).

On a motion by Councillor Karen Hardern and seconded by Councillor George Tyros, on call of the roll, it was voted to recommend that the following Applications for Motor Vehicle Dealers Licenses, Class I, be granted for the period January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021:

- (a) Rob's Dyno Service, LLC, 268 Coleman Street
- (b) Salvadore Chevrolet, 442 West Broadway
- (c) Salvadore Chrysler-Dodge-Jeep-Ram, 442 West Broadway

IV. #10370, Applications for Licenses to Buy & Sell Second Hand Motor Vehicles, Class 2 (In City Council and Referred to Public Safety, 12/7/2020).

Police Chief Braks reported that Gardner Five Star Auto Sales, located at 407 Chestnut Street, has been functioning at present capacity and that he is uncertain how there is capacity for more vehicles on the site. He said that the Building Commissioner uses the Building Code for determining square footage for vehicles; that there has been an issue with the dealership parking vehicles along the public way, and that the Fire Department would also need access.

On a motion by Councillor George Tyros and seconded by Councillor Karen Hardern, on call of the roll, it was voted to recommend that the following Applications for Licenses to Buy & Sell Second Hand Motor Vehicles, Class 2, be granted for the period January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021:

- (a) AC Auto Clinic, 411 Parker Street
- (b) Brian's Auto Sales, 549 West Broadway
- (c) Gardner Five Star Auto Sales, 407 Chestnut Street

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- (d) JPJ Automotive, LLC, 78 East Broadway
- (e) J. Wood, Inc., 361 West Street
- (f) Mike's Auto, 251 East Broadway
- (g) Osagi Enterprises, LLC, 43 Toby Street
- (h) Ric's Radiator Repair Used Car Sales, 800 West Broadway
- (i) Riverside Auto, 65 Riverside Road
- (j) Salvadore Chevrolet, 249 Timpany Boulevard
- (k) Salvadore Chevrolet, 421 West Broadway
- (l) TJ & Sons Auto Sales, 537 West Broadway
- (m) Wilson Auto Sales, 119 Pearson Boulevard

V. **Application of Chair City Auto Sales, 144 Pearson Blvd, for a License to Buy & Sell Second Hand Motor Vehicles, Class 2.**

On a motion by Councillor George Tyros and seconded by Councillor Karen Hardern, on call of the roll, it was voted to recommend that the Application of Chair City Auto Sales, 144 Pearson Blvd, for a License to Buy & Sell Second Hand Motor Vehicles, Class 2, be granted for the period January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

VI. **#10371, Applications for Licenses to Deal in Motor Vehicle Junk, Class 3 (In City Council and Referred to Public Safety, 12/7/2020).**

On a motion by Councillor George Tyros and seconded by Councillor Karen Hardern, on call of the roll, it was voted to recommend that the following Applications for Licenses to Deal in Motor Vehicle Junk, Class 3, be granted for the period January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021:

- (a) Osagi Enterprises, LLC, 43 Toby Street
- (b) Riverside Auto, 65 Riverside Road

Adjournment.

On a motion Councillor George Tyros and seconded by Councillor Karen Hardern, on call of the roll, it was voted to adjourn at 9:46 a.m.

License Application
Processing Fee - \$200.00



CITY OF GARDNER, MASSACHUSETTS
City Hall - Room 121 - 95 Pleasant Street
Gardner, MA 01440-2630
Tel: 978-630-4058 Fax: 978-630-2589

Date Received
RECEIVED
2021 FEB 23 PM 12:38

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
GARDNER, MA

APPLICATION FOR LICENSE TO BUY AND SELL SECOND HAND MOTOR VEHICLES

New Renewal Class 1 - Class 2 - Class 3 (Circle all that apply to this Application)

1. Legal Name of Business: Blake Motors
(Name as registered with the Secretary of the Commonwealth's Corporations Division. If individual or partnerships enter names)

2. Doing Business As: _____
(If conducted under any name other than the Applicant's Legal Name. An active Business Certificate must be on file with the City Clerk)

3. Business Address: 412 Main St Gardner, MA 01440
(Complete street address where business will be conducted and P.O. Box, if any)

4. Business Tel. 978 790 8006 Cellular _____ Fax _____ E-Mail _____

5. Is the business an individual, partnership, association or corporation? Individual

6. If an individual, state full name and residential address: Russell kevi Blake
73 Eli Dr Winchendon, MA 01475

7. If a partnership, state full names and residential addresses of all partners: _____

8. If an association or corporation, state full names of the principal officers:

President _____

Secretary _____

Treasurer _____

9. Are you engaged principally in the business of buying, selling, or exchanging motor vehicles? yes

a. If so, is your principal business the sale of new motor vehicles? NO

b. Is your principal business the buying and selling or exchanging of second hand motor vehicles? yes

c. Is your principal business that of a motor vehicle junk dealer? NO

d. Is your principal business that of a "Repairs"? NO

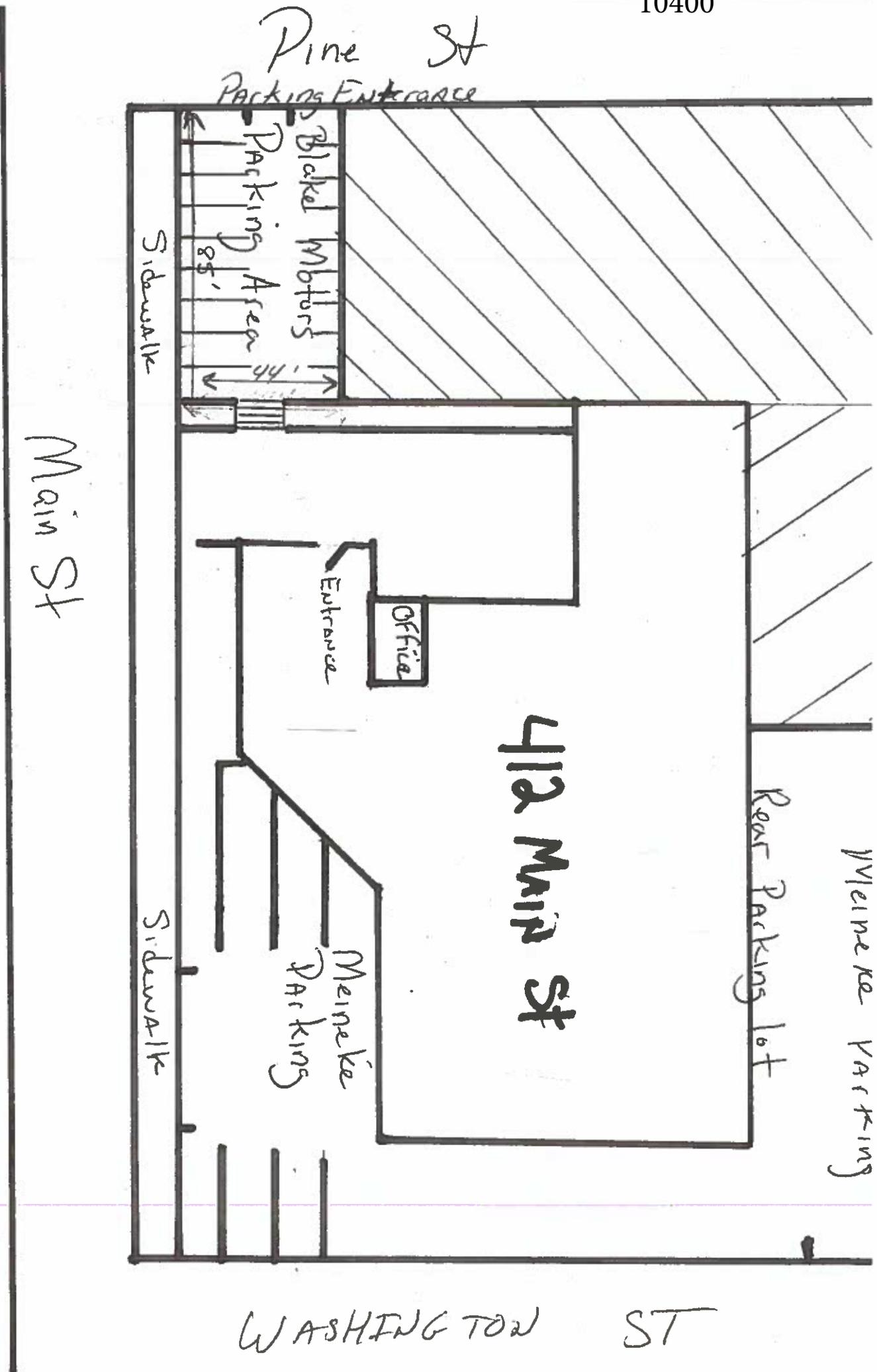
e. Is your principal business that of "Repossession"? NO

9. Provide a complete description of all the premises to be used for the purpose of carrying on the business:

Parking lot on the corner of Main St and Pine
St. Office located @ 412 MAIN St

10. Are you a recognized agent of a motor vehicle manufacturer? YES _____ NO X

If yes, state the name of the manufacturer: _____



WASHINGTON ST

Main St

Meineke Parking

Rear Parking lot

412 Main St

Meineke Parking

Office

Entrance

Blaked Motors

Parking Area

Pine St
Parking Entrance

Sidewalk

Sidewalk