

CITY OF GARDNER, MASSACHUSETTS
CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF AUGUST 2, 2021

Committee Chairman Councillor Craig Cormier called the Public Safety Committee meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. in the Mayor's Conference, Room 128. Committee member Councillor Karen Hardern and George Tyros were present.

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

I. Review and Approval of the Minutes Meeting.

The City Clerk request more time for the meeting minutes. More time was granted and the minutes will be at the next Public Safety Meeting.

II. Department Updates

Building Department

- We have been making a bunch of repairs on the building recently and to the City Council Chambers
- The mahogany doors to the annex have been taken off to be refurbished because they have been neglected since 2009. He invites everyone to take a look when they are finished because they are came out really nice
- There have been a couple of demolitions recently with 264 Pine Street and five East Broadway. Both are going to be repurposed
- 5 East Broadway is going to be a commercial building and 264 Pine will be a single family home

Public Health

- The new contract for waste started on July 1st
- The transfer station has some updates. They have redesigned it and reconfigured the flow that seems to be working out well
- There is a new part-time attendant down there
- Last week they started doing the mowing and vegetation control
- The health department has new software for inspectional services that the staff is training on
- The full opening inspections are done. Every week they do testing on the Greenwood Pool and Kendall Pond, there are no issues.
- They passed a recycle grant this year, so basically they go over all the recycling benefits, the city gets a rating and they will get grant money for the next year. The grant is used to purchase recycled toters, rain barrels, and compost bins
- COVID numbers are up a little. Gardner was at 0.71 positivity rate last week. The state is 0.88, so we're not too bad here locally but continue to watch the contact tracing

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- The Council on Aging is starting a little task force for seniors. Mike Ellis has asked the Director to be part of it as well as some from Heywood and CHC
- National Night out is tomorrow. It is a big prevention event that they do every year in the city
- Keep Gardner Beautiful is October 2nd where they clean up the city, nip collection, and all the trash. She will be filming a GETV show with Dianne LeBlanc

Fire Department

PERSONNEL

- Lieutenant Robert Jacques has retired from the Gardner Fire Department as of May 23, 2021. He was appointed Call Firefighter in 1995, Full-time Career Firefighter in 2000, and promoted to Lieutenant in 2014. He also worked as a 911 Dispatcher for the City from 1994-2000. Acting Lieutenant Kenneth Chase has been selected to permanently fill the vacancy, his promotional paperwork is being processed at this time.
- Probationary Firefighter Daniel Quinn graduated the Mass Fire Academy Recruit Training 10-week program on July 22, 2021. He was presented the Richard N. Bangs Award for being the outstanding recruit in the class. He has returned to work as a full-fledged member of the Firefighting Force and has been assigned to Group 4.
- Four new Firefighter candidates have been selected and are scheduled to begin work on August 9, 2021. They are Joshua Urato, Christopher Dauphinais, Jamie Henderson, and Patrick Swensen. They will all be attending the Mass Fire Academy Recruit Training Program later this fall, which is a shorter time frame than anticipated, which is good news.
- Another Firefighter resigned from the Gardner Fire Department effective July 30, 2021. He accepted a job with another area Fire Department. The hiring process will be started immediately to fill this vacancy.

VEHICLES

- As mentioned at the June meeting, Engine 2 (2011 International/Rosenbaur 4X4 Pumper) experienced a major engine/turbo failure. That repair has been completed, the bill came in just under \$19,000.00. The amount was able to be covered within the FY21 Fire Department budget. Engine 2 is now undergoing the fire pump repair (reported in the May meeting). Unfortunately, when the pump was disassembled, more internal damage was found, the estimate has changed from \$3300.00 to \$9150.00. Much of the internal damage appears to be due to corrosion, which has been an on-going issue with this truck in particular.

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GRANTS UPDATE

- Equipment ordered with funds from the FY21 MA Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant has been delivered and is being placed in service.
- The Fire Department was notified last week that our FY20 FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) application was approved. The grant award totals approximately \$49,000.00 for a new Fire and Carbon Monoxide Alarm system for Fire Headquarters. This will replace the current system, which is original to the building and outdated. The annex building, which currently has no alarm system, is included. A Radio Box will also be added, which will transmit a signal to the Gardner 911 Dispatch Center at the Police Station whenever there is an alarm activation. The AFG grant program requires 10% of the award to be funded by the City.

SOUTH GARDNER FIRE STATION BOILER UPDATE

- Tighe & Bond and Weston & Sampson have both provided estimates for project oversight and design services, with Weston & Sampson being the lower estimate. We will be moving forward on this project, at this time awaiting funding.

HEADQUARTERS ROOF REPAIR

- Currently obtaining cost estimates for repairs to the roof from contractors.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC UPDATE

- The number of EMS calls involving patients with either confirmed or suspected COVID-19 remains low at this time. Personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies are sufficient at this time. COVID-19 PPE and disinfection procedures are based on CDC guidelines.

Police Department

- The newest Officer, Alexandria Laderoute graduated on July 2nd and will appear before the City Council with a permanent appointment
- We had a resignation effective July 31st by Sergeant Warren Walter who took a private sector job
- Police reform is significant and it is required by our department for updates and create policies and training to meet standard
- Our department has met all the criteria that have been requested
- We just completed our junior police academy last week
- There were 11 recruits who participated
- Lynn Barrieau made a significant donation and always supported the kids projects
- Our officers get involved in this program with the kids and it is a very successful program

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- Wanted to say that he is proud of the men and women in the Police Department, they have done an extraordinary job
- Animal Control has recently taken on the teamsters as a union representative
- Their staffing, currently due to vacancies, time off and training, things are a little light right now. All of their duties have been covered and they do a great job and work well together to ensure the safety of pets and homeowners
- Civil Defense Paul Topoloski has been working with FEMA regarding the COVID 19 reimbursement possibilities

III. #10471 – A Communication from the Traffic Commission relative to An Ordinance to Amend Code of th City of Gardner, Chapter 600, Section 24, Thereof, Entitled “Parking Prohibited on Certain Streets.”

Councillor George Tyros would like to send a letter to the residents of Summer Street. It will be a significant change to their lifestyles, future street traffic and things of that nature and it will be good to get their feedback.

Councillor Karen Hardern said that she does not support taking away parking spaces after speaking with some of the residents in the area.

On a motion by Councillor George Tyros and seconded by Councillor Karen Hardern, on a call of the roll, it was voted to send a letter to the residents on Summer Street to get their feedback.

IV. #10474 – An Application by Auto Mart, 182 West Street, for a License to Buy & Sell Secondhand Motor Vehicles, Class 2.

Police Chief Braks said that they don't have any pending issues that would stop them from receiving the license.

City Clerk Siriphan also said that they are in “good standing” and they are up to date with their taxes.

On a motion by Councillor George Tyros and seconded by Councillor Karen Hardern, on a call of the roll, it was voted to recommend that Auto Mart be granted a License to Buy & Sell Secondhand Motor Vehicles, Class 2, at 182 West Street.

V. #10478 – An Application by Gardner Ten Pins, Inc., 560 W Broadway, for a Bowling Alley License.

City Clerk Siriphan said that they are in “good standing” and that they are up to date with their taxes.

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On a motion by Councillor Karen Hardern and seconded by Councillor George Tyros, on a call of the roll, it was voted to recommend that Gardner Ten Pins, Inc. be granted a Bowling Alley License.

VI. **#10516 – A Communication from the Traffic Commission relative to A Measure to Adopt M.G.L. Chapter 90, Section 17C Establishment of 25-Miles-Per-Hour Speed Limit in Thickly Settled or Business District in City or Town.**

Police Chief Braks did speak with Deputy Chief and he put this forward because it would be a valuable tool for the city to be able to utilize dropping speed limits in certain areas of the city. He is in favor of adopting the recommendation.

Mayor Nicholson said that this would count for roads that are also not listed in the ordinances.

On a motion by Councillor Karen Hardern and seconded by Councillor George Tyros, on a call of the roll, it was voted to recommend to the Council to adopt A Measure to Adopt M.G.L. Chapter 90, Section 17C Establishment of 25-Miles-Per-Hour Speed Limit in Thickly Settled or Business District in City or Town.

VII. **#10517 – A Communication from the Traffic Commission relative to An Ordinance to Amend the Code of the City of Gardner Chapter 600, Section 54, Thereof, Entitled “Obedience to Isolated Stop Signs.**

Police Chief Braks said this is to clean up some wording in the ordinance. It’s more of a housekeeping and clarity.

On a motion by Councillor George Tyros and seconded by Councillor Karen Hardern, on a call of the roll, it was voted to recommend to the City Council to adopt An Ordinance to Amend the Code of the City of Gardner Chapter 600, Section 54, Thereof, Entitled “Obedience to Isolated Stop Signs.

VIII. **New Business**

Councillor Craig Cormier would like to thank the departments and their employees for their reports and all their work keeping the city safe and protected. It is greatly appreciated.

Adjournment.

On a motion Councillor Karen Hardern and seconded by Councillor George Tyros, on call of the roll, it was voted to adjourn at 9:05 a.m.