

VILLAGE OF GRAFTON
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 13, 2011

The Public Safety Committee meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Grant.

Committee members present: Jim Grant, David Liss and David Antoine

Staff/Officials present: Police Chief Charles Wenten, Trustee Sue Meinecke, Trustee Lisa Harbeck (6:10 p.m.), and Administrative Assistant Pat Hofstad

PERSONS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD

None

REQUEST FOR 4-WAY STOP INTERSECTION / BRIDGE STREET AND BOBOLINK AVENUE

A request for a 4-way stop at Bridge Street and Bobolink Avenue was discussed at the November meeting. This item was tabled pending discussion with the Village Engineer.

Dave Murphy, Village Engineer, does not support adding a stop sign on Bobolink Avenue. Chief Wenten noted this is more of an enforcement issue, and he will work with residents and continue to monitor speed.

Motion by Trustee Liss, seconded by Chair Grant, to deny the request for a 4-way stop sign on West Bridge Street at Bobolink Avenue. Approved unanimously.

REQUEST TO HIRE POLICE OFFICER FOR VACANT POSITION

Chair Grant stated this item was placed on the agenda at his request. He said that Chief Wenten was requested to find funds in his budget to fund the vacant police officer position, which he did. The Village Board has since voted against hiring for the position, and there has been an effort to move these monies into the contingency fund.

Another issue that Chair Grant discussed that has adversely affected the Department, due to the loss of an Officer, is less time available for Sgt. Podewils to be in the schools. He distributed a letter from Grafton School Superintendent Dr. Jeff Pechura. Chair Grant had asked Dr. Pechura to give his thoughts on having Sgt. Podewils available in the schools. Dr. Pechura was very complimentary regarding Sgt. Podewil's presence at the schools, which he states "is paramount for building and sustaining the positive relationships among the Grafton Police Department, Grafton School District, and greater community. He plays a major role in helping to resolve school and community issues that never see the light of day. Without a Police Resource Officer, or any reduction in that particular allocation, I am fearful of the fallout for both our schools and the community."

There was discussion on overtime. In 2011, overtime is \$40,000 over the 2010 number. Chief Wenten did point out that this excess is not entirely attributed to the vacancy. Chair Grant said excess overtime can cause mistakes, and for a Police Officer, this becomes a safety issue.

Trustee Meinecke questioned why the Police Department was the only department who was asked to reduce their budget.

Trustee Liss said if Officer Thompson would not have resigned we would not even be having this discussion. It was discussed that an additional officer was approved by the Village Board in 2007. At that time, the Chief requested 2 additional officers. One officer was to address the growth to date and one officer to address the future growth of the Village. He said he would not ask that this vacancy be filled if it was not necessary.

Trustee Harbeck brought up the additional services needed for the new hospital, which was not constructed in 2007 when the additional officer was approved.

After brief discussion Chair Grant advised the issue is that the money is in the budget to hire an officer April 1, 2011, the overtime has doubled this year over last, and he is concerned regarding the availability of Sgt. Podewils in the schools.

Motion by Trustee Liss, seconded by Trustee Antoine, to recommend the Village Board authorize to fill one (1) vacant police officer position, with a start date no earlier than April 1, 2012. Approved unanimously.

All Trustees were invited to ride along with an Officer. Chief Wenten was thanked for this opportunity.

REQUEST FOR 4-WAY STOP / 11TH AVENUE AND MAPLE STREET

This request was discussed at the November meeting, and tabled pending input from the Village Engineer. Village Engineer Murphy agreed with this request, citing pedestrian safety would be enhanced.

Motion by Trustee Antoine, seconded by Trustee Liss, to recommend the Village Board approve an ordinance amending Section 10.32.010 / Stop Intersections to include a 4-way stop at 11th Avenue and Maple Street. Approved unanimously.

REQUEST TO ACCEPT DONATION OF EQUIPMENT

Chief Wenten reported that Captain Gabrish has graciously offered to donate exercise equipment and a 12 gauge shotgun to the Department. The shotgun would be used as a less lethal weapon, and is a welcome donation.

Motion by Trustee Antoine, seconded by Trustee Liss, to recommend the Village Board accept the donation of equipment from Captain Joseph

Gabrish to the Police Department for an estimated value of \$1,050.00.
Approved unanimously.

OVERTIME COMPARISON

The overtime comparison was previously discussed during the Police Officer discussion.

POLICE DEPARTMENT STATISTICS / NOVEMBER

Chief Wenten acknowledged some challenges with the new software not counting certain calls for service that had previously been counted. The actual number of calls for service reported is higher than reported because an accurate statistic is difficult to obtain. This issue is being addressed. All other statistics are accurate. Chief Wenten pointed out that statistical data distributed during 2012 budget discussions, the Grafton/ Cedarburg and 2008-2010 Grafton calls for service statistics, is accurate because it was compiled using the previous software (Global software) which was/is shared by both communities.

NEW BUSINESS

Trustee Harbeck voiced a request from a resident at 1619 Falls Road. This person is legally blind, and asked for a sign indicating a blind person lives in the area placed at 16th Avenue and Falls Road. This item will be on next month's agenda.

ADJOURN

Motion by Trustee Antoine, seconded by Trustee Liss, to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m. Approved unanimously.