



Public Safety Committee Meeting September 25, 2021

Members Present: Mayor Rohan Hepkins, Councilor Liana Roadcloud, Finance Director Nafis Nichols, Police Chief Anthony Paparo, Fire Chief Michael Diienno, Code Enforcement Officer/Emergency Management Officer Mary Nixon, and Public Works Director Jeffery Wilkinson,

Absent: Council President Latoya Monroe, Councilor Delores McCabe, Tax Collector Julianne James, Solicitor Charles M. Gibbs

Other Attendees: Denise Stinson, Donna Samuels, Mrs. Bradford

The Public Safety Committee Meeting was held via Zoom and started at 9:35 am.

Mayor Rohan Hepkins opened the meeting with a prayer.

Mayor's Rohan Hepkins: Revisited old business and discussed new business – Agenda included: school opening, the proposed Marijuana Dispensary, Fernwood/ Yeadon fencing upgrade, and the newsletter.

Fernwood/ Yeadon fencing upgrade - The dilapidated Fernwood/ Yeadon fencing has been an ongoing effort. Public Works Director Jeff Wilkinson and Ed Wallace, a representative from SEPTA have been in constant contact. As of last week, he's in the process of getting all materials ordered and once everything gets in they will be out to install the new fencing. Public Works has already erected a fence on the 400 block of Cypress and took down the old existing fence that was deemed unnecessary Mr. Wilkinson was informed to give SEPTA another call if he didn't hear from them in a couple of weeks.

School Opening/ School Safety – Mayor Hepkins discussed the deployment of police for school opening and closing. In the past ten years or so there have been issues with the opening and dismissal with rowdiness, where Yeadon and Darby kids were getting into fights, blocking traffic, etc... He suggested a police car during opening (7:30-8:30 am) and then again during closing (2:30-3:30 pm). Residents and crossing guards would also like for that to happen again. Police Chief Anthony Paparo stated that he currently has an order for all officers to be at the schools now that they are back in session. The officers also do “walk-throughs”. Also, crossing guard availability was questioned.

Mayor Hepkins stated that the deterrent of a crossing guard at the intersection of Church & MacDade hinders speeding by the Bell Avenue school. He stated that part of the reason it's so hard to obtain/retain crossing guards is because of the salary. Mayor Hepkins would like to increase the hourly pay of the Crossing Guards one or two dollars to make it closer to \$15, half comes from the school district and the Borough pays the other half. Mayor Hepkins asked Finance Director Nafis Nichols to check the finances to see if it is feasible.

Marijuana Dispensary - Councilor Roadcloud has been a leader in standing up for the residents regarding their concerns about the Marijuana Dispensary. The Senator has been looped in to the discussion to see what recourse the Borough could take to get it halted or moved to another location. It would add to the traffic between MacDade, Baily, Church Lane and over the bridge. There should be a substantial yearly fee paid to the Borough to have the location there. The Chief met with the owners to conduct a security survey. It has been suggested to buy a camera that will be Yeadon Borough Police

property to help monitor safety. They are willing to pay for the Police mini station to be repaired and surveillance cameras for the PD. Traffic concerns about Church Lane, Guenther, Whitby, & Revere were also discussed and they are willing to pay for any new signage that would be needed. The Chief suggested giving them 10 spaces in the Municipal Lot and charge them \$50,00-\$100,00 for the use of the parking spaces or give the residents parking permits on Guenther, Whitby, Revere & Church Lane so that ticketing customers that park there will be easier to identify. The Chief also stated that there are issues with the property that will probably prevent them from opening as planned. He also suggested drafting ordinances that a dispensary or any similar facility is limited to what is allowed.

Management: Finance Director Nafis Nichols stated that the Management and the Police Chief have been working together to hire new Parking Enforcement Officers. They have received several candidates and plan on presenting a person at the next meeting to Council. A parking analysis is being conducted about the revenue from the meters to see if the PEO is actually budget neutral. Currently Crossing Guards are currently making \$13.44/hour with a 3% increase. Management has is also currently looking into getting all employees that are under \$15 up to \$15/hour.

Police Department - Police Chief Anthony Paparo stated that he currently has an order for all officers to be at the schools now that they are back in session. The officers also do walk-throughs and since that has started the incidences of school fights and blocking of traffic have basically completely stopped.

Traffic issues have increased due to school reopening since being virtual for over a year. Parents are double-parking to drop and pick up their children. The school district has been contacted as well because the school buses are blocking the whole road way when they are picking up and dropping off children which increases traffic. Speed sign was placed on MacDade Blvd. a few times and have been moved around and placed in the areas with the greatest complaints. Temporary speed bumps are put around but cannot be placed on major roadways like Church and MacDade, although those areas are the most requested. PennDot was requested to do a traffic study on the intersection of Longacre and Church about making it a right turn only lane. The Police Department also just obtained a grant through PennDot for traffic enforcement which will allow officers to go out in 4hr. increments and for traffic enforcement around the schools and where there are road closures. Also proper signage to assist traffic was addressed as well as signage removal.

Staffing issues and call volume currently prevent the Police Department from permanently having an officer stationed at the schools during opening and closing. The PD is in the process of hiring new Part-time officers that will need to be fully trained before they are put out on the streets but upgrades have been made so that officers can do reports in the car so they can be stationed temporarily in certain locations for visibility. Chief Paparo stated that we were looking for two crossing guards and those spots were filled. Crossing guards have to be relocated from time to time and some have threatened to quit if they get moved. That becomes an issue when they dictate where they will and will not go.

We currently have one Parking Enforcement Officer at the moment and he is sometimes used as a Crossing Guard. The Chief, as well as other officers, hand out tickets and call the Parking Enforcement Officer (PEO) to ticket for things they see while on patrol. The Chief is in talks with Nafis about hiring another person for part-time PEO as well as to help with animal control. We issue an average of 900 tickets a month. We have the residents calling in parking issues as well.

Call volume is up because people are no longer afraid to contact the Police Department. The Chief discussed permission to advertise for hiring new officers for 2022. The Chief would like to set up an announcement for a test by the end of October, have the test sometime in December, have oral interviews/ Civil Service items done in January and start hiring in February/March.

Fire Department – October 8th is the date for the YFD's Annual Fire Prevention Open House at the station from 6:00pm – 9:00pm. There will be a live fire expo on the bottom lot, fire extinguisher demonstration as well as the Annual Fun Drive. The hospital has had a leadership change in the

paramedic department. Chief Smythe has retired; Tim Cavanaugh is currently acting Chief. The hospital is also facing staffing issues inside the hospital and in the paramedic department. They have not affected Yeadon but has increased our call volume. More volunteers are needed, there will be a recruitment video filmed and put on Social Media. Chief Diienno stated that the department does 80-100 fire calls a year and 150- 225 ambulance calls per month.

Councilor Liana Roadcloud suggested that the Newsletter could be utilized to apprise residents of quarterly safety tips such as how to utilize and update fire extinguishers for home usage, refill instructions/locations, and smoke detectors.

Public Works Department – The dilapidated Fernwood/ Yeadon fencing has been an ongoing effort. Public Works Director Jeff Wilkinson and Ed, a representative from SEPTA have been in constant contact. In regards to an updated timeline, as of last week, he's in the process of getting all materials ordered and once everything gets in they will be out to install the new fencing. Public Works has already erected a fence on the 400 block of Cypress and took down the old existing fence on the 400 block of Holly that was deemed unnecessary.

Mr. Wilkinson stated that he had ordered the paint back in June but Sherwin-Williams was extremely backlogged with orders and it was received the end of July. Public Works will start painting the lines this week starting primarily with the crosswalks around the schools and then dive into the other major intersections.

Sanitary Sewer line collapsed on Baily Road in between Commerce and Industrial. There is a traffic plan in place and it will be posted on Borough's website and social media so that when those streets are blocked off advance notice has already been given. Also Baily and Church will be rerouted so that the dig can be done in a timely and safe matter.

Code Department – no report given

Emergency Management - no report given

Comments – Councilor Liana Roadcloud asked if the residents that have their properties adjacent to the Yeadon/Fernwood Station were spoken to just to let them know where we're putting the fence and if they want to fence where their properties are they should also look into it but that's not our responsibility. Mr. Wilkinson stated that he had not, but would make it a point this week to go out and make contact with those residents.

Councilor Liana Roadcloud also asked about the possibility of using the school yards for the buses to drop and pick up children. She also stated that Valerie Cook-Henry, a School Board Director, has been closely working with the schools to come up with a plan for this issue and it would be a great idea to keep her in the loop and utilize her for school district issues.

Councilor Liana Roadcloud stated that she is in favor of paying the Crossing guards more, but we cannot put out more money if we aren't bringing in more money. She doesn't feel that parking is being enforced. She has stated that there are many times that she goes to the Municipal Lot and the meters are blinking with no tickets in sight.

Mrs. Bradford stated that all updates and important information should be first be reflected on the Borough website before/ or in conjunction with the social media outlets so that more people are aware and can possibly get more involved.

Meeting ended at 11:59 am.

Mayor Rohan Hepkins ended the meeting with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Quiana Braxton