

**VILLAGE OF MOUNT HOREB
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING**
Via videoconference
August 17, 2020

MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Public Safety Committee was called to order by Chairman Jason Fendrick at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, August 17, 2020. Attendance was noted as follows: Committee members Steve Holum, Mike McNall, and Cathy Scott were present; Committee member Jessica Jackson was absent. Police Chief Doug Vierck and Village Administrator Nic Owen were also present. Tracy Lien served as recording secretary.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by M. McNall, seconded by S. Holum, the Committee

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the June 15, 2020, regular meeting as printed and distributed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no requests to speak at this time.

POLICE CHIEF REPORT

Chief Vierck provided an update on activities and plans for the Police Department.

Update on School Resource Officer

Some school districts are terminating their relationships with school resource officers in light of recent and ongoing national and local events. The Mount Horeb Police Department and School District are moving forward with adding the SRO, Officer Rosemeyer, who will be a resource for the community and the school. Officer Rosemeyer has established virtual office hours so staff and students can interact with him from outside the schools. He is creating videos for staff, students, and parents and is working on safety and security assessments of the buildings while students are not present. He is attending training on subjects including anti-bias, school safety, diversity, and mental health. In addition, he sits on the School Safety Committee and Mental Health Committee.

Update on Staffing

Officer Robie Blankenship retired last week after 23 years with the Mount Horeb Police Department and 31 total years in law enforcement. With his departure, the Department will lose much experience and knowledge. Management has started efforts to fill the position and is in the background process with a candidate from the eligibility list; if the candidate passes the background investigation and pre-employment tests, he will start field training on September 14, 2020.

The three officers hired in 2020 have completed field training and are doing well.

The internal selection process for the two positions of Sergeant was completed. One officer was promoted to evening shift sergeant, and another officer was offered the night shift sergeant position but declined because he was unwilling to move to third shift. The other two candidates did not meet the requirements. Management has elected not to fill the night shift sergeant position from outside the agency and instead will delay adding a second sergeant until 2022 so current Mount Horeb officers can attend training and development and qualify for the position.

Stewart Lake Park

There have been increased calls related to alcohol and drug use at Stewart Lake Park, which is outside the jurisdiction of the Mount Horeb Police Department. Representatives from the Dane County Park Rangers and Friends of Stewart Park are looking for ideas to stem such issues, and a suggestion was made for the Mount Horeb Police Department to patrol the area, which is in the jurisdiction of the Dane County Sheriff's Office. Chief Vierck has not yet addressed this suggestion with the Dane County Sheriff's Office. He requested feedback from the Committee regarding the Mount Horeb Police Department patrolling the area of Stewart Lake Park from time to time.

The following comments were noted:

- Would the Village of Mount Horeb be compensated for patrolling the area and/or receive revenue from any tickets issued? Chief Vierck noted that the preliminary idea is only to drive through the area to provide a police presence, which should have a deterrent effect. He will take the suggestion of charging for services to discussions with the Dane County Sheriff's Office.
- Patrolling Stewart Lake Park would have an added benefit to the Village since most patrons of the Park drive through the Village. Establishing a police presence there could deter activity such as fighting in the parking lot and help prevent people from driving through the Village impaired or injured.
- It is logical for the Mount Horeb Police Department to patrol the area since it is close and easy to drive through and turn around.

Chief Vierck stated he would initiate contact with the Dane County Sheriff's Office on the subject of Mount Horeb Police Department patrolling Stewart Lake Park.

In response to a question, Chief Vierck explained the overlapping jurisdictions of the Mount Horeb Police Department and the Dane County Sheriff's Office. Callers reporting incidents in Mount Horeb are directed to the Mount Horeb Police Department. Dane County deputies have concurrent jurisdiction and make arrests in Mount Horeb when investigating incidents that start in their jurisdiction.

UPDATE ON PEDESTRIAN CROSSWALK SIGNAGE AND OPTIONS AT SPRINGDALE AND EIGHTH STREET

Chief Vierck stated that he placed this item on the agenda to update the Committee and so the subject was not left hanging. He has consulted with N. Owen and Public Services Director Jeff Gorman since the June 2020 Safety Committee Meeting, and he provided the following update:

- The cost to install flashing lights is \$6,000 per crosswalk; to outfit Springdale & Eighth Street would total \$24,000.
- Records indicate there has been one serious accident at that intersection in the past ten years.
- The 15 MPH signs discussed at the June meeting are there but two blocks out and obscured by trees.
- Speed data has not been collected from the speed trailer at the subject intersection. The tracking angle reads speeds from a distance where the speed limit is higher, which skews the data.
- School grant funding is not available at this time; options include budgeting for the lights or continuing to monitor and consider at a later time.

After reviewing and discussing options, the Committee provided the following direction:

- Check into grants for funding the project when they become available.
- Deploy speed trailers at the subject intersection when school starts.
- With school starting virtually, there is less urgency to get something in place. Monitor the intersection and put this topic on the Public Safety Committee agenda when schools reopen.
- If lights are installed, develop criteria to aid decision-making when requests are received for lights at other intersections.
- Check restrictions and, if allowed, move the 15 MPH signs to be more visible. Check the feasibility of removing the tree that restricts/obscures visibility of the sign.
- Consider painting markings on the street; e.g., PED XING or 15 MPH or SLOW DOWN.
- Determine at what point traffic lights should be installed at an intersection. This is a topic for the Public Services and Public Safety Committees. If traffic lights are installed, there will be requests for similar changes at other locations, so criteria will need to be established; e.g., number of pedestrians, amount of traffic.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

These agenda items/updates were requested: (1) Outcome from discussions with Dane County Sheriff's Office regarding patrol of Stewart Lake Park; and (2) Guidelines/criteria for installing enhanced traffic signals at intersections.

There was a suggestion to address heavy truck traffic on residential roads, specifically posting weight limit signs and fining violators. N. Owen stated that road weight limits should be addressed by the Public Services Committee. Chief Vierck stated that the Police Department enforces those laws and noted that the fines are assessed by weight and one recent ticket was almost \$4,000.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Public Safety Committee is scheduled for Monday, September 21, 2020, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by C. Scott, seconded by S. Holum, this regular meeting of the Public Safety Committee adjourned at 6:27 p.m.

Jason Fendrick
Chairman
Public Safety Committee