

PENN TOWNSHIP
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
JULY 7, 2008

The Penn Township Public Safety Committee met on Monday, July 7, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. at the Penn Township Municipal Building. Present were Chairman Johnson and Commissioners Prieber, Goldsmith, Heilman, and Rewa. Also present were Manager Garvick, Acting Police Chief Rhodes and Fire Chief Cromer. The following items were discussed:

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None.

APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: The minutes of the June 2, 2008 Public Safety Committee meeting were approved as presented.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD: None

POLYGRAPH MACHINE: Chief Rhodes provided the Committee with a draft of an intermunicipal agreement between the Police Departments of Penn and West Manheim for the purchase and operation of a portable polygraph machine. He stated that they would both share the costs and benefits. The cost would be \$7,145.50 for the equipment and software. The training costs could be covered by a grant, with the exception of the officer's salary, and would occur at Fort Indiantown Gap. It is proposed that each municipality would share the maintenance costs and each would have one officer trained in the operation of the unit. Chief Rhodes believes that if the officer takes the training class in January the unit would be available for use by April. Chief Rhodes stated that there is money in the Bear Buddies and Child Abuse Prevention accounts that could be used for the purchase of the equipment. The Fraternal Order of Eagles stated that they support the purchase of the polygraph machine with the \$1,600 they donated this year. Chief Rhodes stated that one of the needs of child abuse investigation is a polygraph machine so he saw no problem using those funds. He is proposing to use fifty percent of the necessary funds from each account. The equipment, which includes a laptop computer with the appropriate software and electrodes, can be located in either municipality. With both departments having a trained officer, either department would be able to utilize both officers. Currently, any use of a polygraph has to be scheduled with the attorney general's office and or the Borough of Hanover. The complete training takes twelve weeks. Initial setup would cost the Township \$3,600. It was suggested the video arraignment room be used because it is the most sound proof room but Chief Rhodes is not sure how much it would cost to make it totally sound proof. There was some concern about the cost of software and hardware updates. The Committee recommended pursuing the purchase of the polygraph machine and the training of the officer.

POLICE OFFICER RESIGNATION: The Committee received a letter of resignation from Officer Denise Pratt effective July 5, 2008. She has accepted a position with the CSX railroad. The department is down to nineteen sworn police officers with the Civil Service Board working on a patrolmen eligibility list. Officer Jay Patel is now attending the police academy with graduation anticipated by the end of November.

POLICE CAR #15: Chief Rhodes provided the Committee with a proposal for the replacement of Unit 15, a 2006 marked Crown Victoria, which was totaled as a result of an accident on June 10, 2008. The car had 88,000 miles on it and was due to be replaced in 2009. The township will receive \$9,604.46 from the insurance carrier. Chief Rhodes reported that on the last competitive bid the purchase price for a new vehicle, including trade in, was \$26,218. He provided three options that included (1) purchasing a vehicle (either a 2008 Dodge Charger or Ford Crown Victoria) through the Government Cooperative Purchasing Program; (2) purchasing a non-police package previously owned vehicle; or (3) delaying the purchase of a new vehicle until 2009. There could be some problems with waiting until 2009 because of unforeseen mechanical or accident problems with the rest of the fleet. Chief Rhodes noted that he has test driven a Dodge and was impressed with its performance. His proposal includes an in-depth discussion of option one along with pictures of a Dodge police vehicle and a 2008 Los Angeles County Sheriff study of several police vehicles. He discussed the fuel consumption of the vehicles. There was some discussion about purchasing a Ford Mustang as an unmarked vehicle, which would be used for traffic detail and administrative duties. The Committee recommended waiting until next month to make a decision to give Chief Rhodes time to provide some more comparisons between the Dodge and Ford police vehicles.

POLICE AWARDS: Chief Rhodes provided the Committee with an outline for an Awards policy being proposed to improve department moral. The purpose would be to recognize outstanding performance by a police officer and provide specific awards for various types of service or valor. This is. The policy includes a procedure for selection and the different types of awards. It proposes participation by the Board of Commissioners through the selection process and the award ceremony being held at the March meeting of the Board of Commissioners. The proposed awards include medal of valor, special merit, wounded in combat, Chief's commendation, special achievement, live saving, traffic safety achievement, and officer of the year. There was some discussion about combining the fire fighters awards with the police officer awards. Chief Rhodes stated that previous accomplishments by officers should be considered for the first year's awards. There was discussion about the time frame for retroactively choosing these commendable acts. Chief Rhodes stated that some of the retired officers have performed admirable acts that were not recognized and he did not have a problem recognizing their past contributions to the department. It was noted that there are between six and seven retirees. It was also noted that about half of the current officers have minimal number of years of service and it would be good for them to realize the contributions made by their predecessors. The Committee recommended approving the request and recognizing retired officer who may qualify for the awards.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES: The Committee discussed using 823 York Street, the former Heston property purchased by the Township, for training purposes. It was suggested that some cross training between the emergency services departments be conducted. There may have to be some traffic control considered for any training activity that may occur. The Committee approved that both the Fire and Police Departments could use the property for training purposes prior to the demolition of the building.

NEW FIRE ENGINE: Chief Cromer noted that the new fire engine that was ordered ten months ago is about completed. He stated he would be leaving for Ohio on Wednesday for final inspection of the equipment. He will return on Thursday. The delivery of the vehicle

will be shortly thereafter.

RENTAL ORDINANCE: Chief Cromer stated that the Rental Unit Inspection Ordinance was discussed at last months Public Safety meeting with the Committee stating they would make a recommendation in July. There are several Pennsylvania municipalities that are currently using a similar ordinance. Manager Garvick stated that most of the administration of the ordinance would be done by the fire department. It will require some coordination between the administration and fire departments until a rental property list is established. Chief Cromer reported on the few inspections that he has conducted prior to the suspension of the Ordinance. Most of the landlords have notified Chief Cromer that they have repaired those problems that he identified. Chief Cromer stated that in most cases he gives the landlord thirty days to repair the problems. Manager Garvick noted that he was provided several court cases in which warrant less searches were not allowed. Chief Cromer asks for access to the property prior to entry and there is a procedure for obtaining a warrant, if necessary. Certain portions of ordinances have been shot down because of access issues. Chief Cromer stated that he is proposing that inspections be done by sector. It was noted that Chief Cromer has the right at any time to inspect a business without warning and that renting properties is a business. However, the Township will be informing property owners prior to access by the FD. Commissioner Heilman noted that his concern is not so much about the inspections but the fees associated with them. The Committee recommended continuing with the ordinance but not assessing fees.

SOUTH WESTERN BAND BOOSTERS: The Committee received a request dated June 13, 2008 from the South Western Band Boosters requesting the use of barricades and fire police at their Cavalcade of Bands competition to be held on Saturday, October 25, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. at South Western Athletic field. The Committee recommended approving the request.

CROP WALK: The Committee received a request dated June 27, 2008 from the Hanover Area Council of Churches for approval to conduct their annual Crop Walk on Sunday, October 19, 2008. The Committee recommended approving the request.

YORK ADAMS PAIN SPECIALISTS: The Committee received a letter from York Adams Pain Specialist commending the fire department for their help with fire extinguisher training.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey R. Garvick, Manager