

SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES
JULY 18, 2023

The Safety Committee meeting was held on July 18, 2023 at North Royalton City Hall, 14600 State Road. The meeting was called to order at 6:45 p.m.

PRESENT: Committee Members: Chair Mike Vos, Vice Chair Jeremy Dietrich, Heidi Webber; **Council:** Paul Marnecheck, Joanne Krejci, John Nickell; **Administration:** Mayor Larry Antoskiewicz, Fire Chief Robert Chegan, Police Chief Keith Tarase, Finance Director Jenny Esarey, Law Director Tom Kelly; **Other:** Ken Krejci, Joel Spatz.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of June 20, 2023 Safety Committee minutes. Moved by Mr. Vos, seconded by Ms. Webber. Vote: Yeas: 3 Nays: 0. **Motion carried.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Police & Safety Report

See report.

Chief Tarase advised that there is a Civil Service exam open until August 21st on the National Testing Network (NTN). He reported that all Flock cameras have been installed. There have been a number of traffic complaints received from Council, in which he requested that complaints from residents be referred to the Police Department's Traffic Unit. He went on to say if the residents do not feel comfortable contacting the Police Department, it would be helpful if Council could try and obtain some details; such as, approximate time frames of the violations, or specific vehicles, so we can narrow down our enforcement.

Mr. Nickell mentioned that the Flock cameras are much smaller than he expected. Mr. Vos asked if there have been any more crimes solved with the help of the Flock cameras. Chief Tarase explained that they have been used in a number of investigations. We are getting the feel of the system, as to where vehicles are located, as well as the directions of travel when searching for cars. We are having an issue with notifications of alerts, which the company's technical support is working on. Mr. Vos inquired about having an update on the Flock cameras to be included on the monthly stats. For example, if we are solving crimes and the value they are providing to the community. The residents would be able to see how their money was invested. He brought up the past three crimes that were solved last month. Mr. Vos would like to be able to be open with the residents about it.

Mr. Marnecheck asked about the public audit and expressed his gratitude. He shared that a resident really appreciated that, whereas they had been concerned about the Flock cameras. He pointed out the section under additional information for recent success stories. He wanted to know who would be the one to add the successes of the program, whether it would be Flock or North Royalton Police Department. Chief Tarase indicated it would likely be both. He agreed that we can submit those to Flock and they can update it accordingly.

Ms. Webber wanted more clarification about the speeding complaints from residents and how to handle those. Chief Tarase clarified that it would be easier if the residents call the Police Department. That way, if officers have questions, they can deal directly with them and narrow down what we are looking for. Residents can call the main Police Department number and ask for the traffic unit; the non-emergency number. Mr. Nickell mentioned that speeding is probably a common complaint. He noted that people sometimes want an officer to sit in an area, which we probably cannot do. Chief Tarase commented that we do have the speed signs out and are moving them around. The Mayor reiterated that if residents do not feel comfortable calling the non-emergency number, Council can get details from the resident, such as the time of occurrences, etc. Mr. Dietrich shared that he saw the officer on the bike going after someone recently. He expressed that he had

never seen a motorcycle pick up so quickly; they are watching things. He has witnessed people speeding as well.

2. Safety Town

Chief Chegan brought up past discussion about putting the project in phases, which we have done. The goal is to get phase 1 complete this year. We discussed reducing the cost and to utilize the schools and City Services pertaining to labor, not the materials. He went on to say half of that cost was the first phase. We are looking at breaking down the cost of that phase. We had another lead on some funding through our Safe Kids Coalition, however their funding got taken away. That is funding that both of our departments are highly involved in through the Safe Kids and working with the hospitals. Both of our departments won numerous awards. It took us down a road that we were unable to look for additional funding. We do have a state fire prevention grant that we are going to seek in the near future. We have several other Fire Department grants we are working on as well; that is the goal for phase 1. We will be doing more donations and solicitation at Home Days. The other fundraiser we were planning is with the Browns again, in which we had to cancel two meetings; we have not met with them. It was his hope that we will have more in writing by September.

3. Fire Report

Chief Chegan mentioned that the department is still sponsoring our Annual Food Drive that we do every July, which started roughly 8-9 years ago. In the past, we would have this in December however, in speaking with the food pantry, that is usually the most generous time for people to give. Therefore, they realized that was not the best time when they needed the extra food, which is why we changed it to July. Also, when we did it in December, we did so at Drug Mart and it was really cold. Currently, we have people do it for us in our lobby, which is full of items. It has been going great and we have until the end of the month.

Chief Chegan discussed the run volume, which has been statistically even from last year with no change. Last month we reported on a lot more structure fires; significant calls have gone down. We swore in a new member on July 7th and he is finishing his second week of training. The officer will be on day shift for 5-6 weeks and it is a lateral transfer; he is doing well. The Chief expects no more new hires for a while. We are set for another year before anyone leaves.

We are still working on the new CAD System that is being implemented through the County, along with the 911 System. Chief Tarase's department is working on a lot of internal training, because they have the reporting system. We are still working on it on our end as well. In the future, as a reminder, ODNR is the authority having jurisdiction for gas wells. Chief Chegan noted that we are more than happy to help our residents with any concerns or issues that come from them. He would appreciate those issues being referred to him. He has good contacts with the ODNR and the gas wells themselves.

Pertaining to our hydrant maintenance, it is complete for the year. The additional man power helped us dramatically. We will do the data entry in our reporting system, and any maintenance issues or needed repairs will be sent to Cleveland Water. If a hydrant needs repaired, you will see a different color hydrant usually. Then they will do landscaping a couple of months after they put a new hydrant in; or the spring of the following year. Anything that comes from our list, they will take care of it. They contract out the installation of a hydrant if needed, and also the landscaping. We will be back in the fall, like usual; in November. One of the codes that we do, is if that hydrant has a slow or no drain, we mark that. If the water is still going to be in the barrel, we will pump it out. We monitor this is because once November comes, we are going to pump all of those just to make sure the water is out of the barrel; they tend to freeze. This brings our chances down of having frozen water. Some times they may have to replace the hydrant if the drains are blocked underneath, where the main attaches to the hydrant. The hydrant painting is expected any day now; no later than next week. They will be debating which city to start at. Again, they should be starting next week at the latest. If he receives a start date, he will send an e-mail out. He believed that it took them 7-10 days the last time, in order to get all of those done.

4. K9 Support Dog

Officer Jezior introduced the K9 Support Dog, Luna. She is an adorable, five-month-old Goldendoodle from Franklin County Animal Shelter. She was adopted two weeks ago. She was cleared after an upper respiratory infection that she got from the shelter; therefore, she was home for a couple of weeks. She is awesome and she does great with the kids. She was great with the Safety Town kids. She sat very well and has shown no aggression. She is very well behaved. Franklin County plans to get her in their training to obtain the official certification. The school district took in \$1,000 from the Lions Club. Also, we received another \$500 from Las America's Restaurant in Bedford Heights. All of the startup costs have been covered. Officer Jezior is going to try to implement an officer reading with Luna and visit K-4 at the Elementary School, whereas she would go in and read to the kids. She is in contact with the teachers and principal. The dog is scheduled to get groomed next week.

Mr. Dietrich inquired about how long the training is. Officer Jezior indicated the one with Franklin County is roughly one week. We are going to do our own training, the Good Citizens Academy, which will be completely covered by the donations. Ms. Krejci wanted to know if they would spend most of their time at the Elementary School or move around school to school. Officer Jezior indicated they plan to go school to school. Her main office is at the High School and she will be there every day; which is her primary responsibility.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Retirement of K9

Mr. Wos indicated that he had a few questions from residents on this, as well as a few inquiries from Councilmen. We have added this topic, the retirement of the K9 Unit, Bear. People were wondering why Bear was retired. Chief Tarase explained that it was a decision he made, in looking at the use of the dog and a number of factors. Basically, we were not getting the use out of the K9 that we thought we would have. Circumstances have changed since 2019 as far as drugs, which the dog was for; drug detection. The Chief noted that the drug culture has changed. It was a tough decision however, one that he felt was best for the department.

Mr. Dietrich asked if Bear's age was five. Chief Tarase agreed, stating that he was a 1 ½ year old in 2019. He continued that we tried to find him another department, but were unsuccessful. Mr. Dietrich asked how much money was being saved by not having Bear. To his recollection, he was paid for and trained, with food being donated by The Natural Pet. Chief Tarase clarified that the only money going toward Bear was any extra medical expenses that were not routine; that were not donated. Everything else was covered. We do take care of some of his toys or training equipment, but the rest had to do with the officer and the vehicle. He was uncertain as to the savings. Mr. Dietrich wanted to know if there was an extra fee associated with the officer. The Chief indicated that you get one half-hour of over time every day. Ms. Krejci inquired about where Bear went to. Chief Tarase explained that he stayed with the handler, which he is now a pet.

Mr. Marnecheck asked if this would allow any resources to be freed up, such as the K9 vehicle for Officer Jezior to utilize. Chief Tarase clarified that it did free up a brand-new vehicle. She could use it, however that type of vehicle is not required for Officer Jezior's dog. Mr. Marnecheck asked if Officer Jezior uses a regular vehicle. The Chief indicated she has a car assigned to her that she can use for the dog; it does not need to be within the kennel that the patrol K9 needed. Mr. Marnecheck wanted to know if another vehicle got added to the pool. Chief Tarase explained that Officer Jezior has an old vehicle that has been recycled a couple of times, as School Resource Officer vehicle. Mr. Marnecheck asked if he picked up some man power. As discussion ensued, it was apparent that it freed up another officer who can transport someone in their vehicle, and not have to have another officer come to do it. Mr. Marnecheck pointed out that there is more benefit to it than just the financial aspect. Chief Tarase agreed, money was not involved in his decision.

REMOVE FROM AGENDA

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mr. Wos, seconded by Mr. Dietrich **to adjourn the July 18, 2023 Safety Committee meeting.**
Yeas: 3 Nays: 0. **Motion carried.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

North Royalton Police Department

Incident	# of for June 2023
MVA FATAL	0
MVA DEER	2
MVA HIT SKIP	3
MVA INJURY	0
MVA NON INJURY	26
MVA PRIVATE PROPERTY	5
PHYSICAL ARRESTS	14
SPEEDING CITATIONS	46
THEFTS (Includes Attempts)	16
SUNDAY NOISE COMPLAINTS (Mower/Leaf Blower)	0

