

VILLAGE OF FONTANA ON GENEVA LAKE
WALWORTH COUNTY, WISCONSIN
Protection Committee
Monday, March 15, 2021

The virtual meeting of the Protection Committee was called to order at 5:00 pm on Monday, March 15, 2021 by Chairman Dave Prudden.

Committee Members Present by phone: Chairman Prudden, Trustee Petersen, Al Kaminski, Robert Moravecek (joined 5:50), Joe Corso (joined 05:04), Mark Gerard

Committee Members Absent: Jim Carroll

Also, Present by Phone: Fire and Rescue Dept. Chief Wolfgang Nitsch, Police Chief Jeff Cates, Jon Kemmett, Stephanie Klug, Theresa Loomer, Pat Kenny, Greg Blizzard, Suzy Brady

Approval of Minutes: July 20, 2020

Trustee Petersen/ Gerard 2nd made a MOTION to approve the minutes from July 20, 2020 as presented, and the MOTION carried without negative vote.

Visitors Heard

None

General Business for Consideration

None

Fire/Rescue Department

Monthly Report

The monthly report was emailed out by Scott Peterson and there were no questions.

Staffing Update

Chief Nitsch stated that Jaclyn Hall has taken a job with Caledonia Fire as a full-time fire fighter/paramedic. Chief Nitsch and Metro Manager Dave Fonder will be conducting interviews this week for the four applicants that applied for the position of fire fighter/paramedic. Nitsch stated that, as suggested by exit interviews, a prevailing reason for members leaving is that Fontana does not offer retirement benefits. This might be something for the village to consider offering in the future if they would like to keep good quality employees as full-time fire fighter/paramedics.

Paramedic Academy Training for Cody Heindl

Chief Nitsch explained that Cody Heindl would like to go to paramedic school. Paramedic school is one year, and the cost is between \$3,000 to \$5,000. This is not a training the Village has helped with financially in the past. Chief Nitsch is looking to see if the Village would like to have Heindl enter a contract that would sponsor him through paramedic school, the Village would pay for it, however, if he decided to leave shortly after completing the schooling, does not graduate, or does not complete the course for any reason, he would then be responsible to reimburse the Village. Trustee Petersen/Gerard 2nd made a MOTION to support the enrollment of Cody Heindl in paramedic school and direct Loomer to contact Attorney Thorpe about whether a sponsorship contract is permissible, and the MOTION carried without negative vote.

Update and Recommendation on Medical Billing Service and Proposals

Chief Nitsch stated that EMS Billing is the billing company the village is contracted with until 2022. EMS Billing charges 11% on regular collection for rescue calls and up to 33% on any items

sent to a collection agency. Just recently, EMS Billing sold to a new company, Andre Medical Billing who indicated they would let the village out of their current contract, if requested. Metro is the current EMS/Paramedic service provider, and they work with Professional Billing Services (PBS). Village Administrator Theresa Loomer has been in contact with both Andre and PBS billing services and after negotiations Andre has offered a 4% billing charge with an annual automatic renewal and a 90-day out clause, and PBS has offered a 4.1% billing charge with a 3-year contract and a 60-day out clause. Both contracts are comparable in billing rates and services offered.

Trustee Petersen/Kaminski 2nd made a MOTION to recommend Village Board approval of the EMS Billing contract as jointly recommended by the Administrator and Fire Chief after through review of the contact terms and subject to attorney review, and the MOTION carried without negative vote.

Update on Fundraisers and Equipment Purchased with Donated Funds

Chief Nitsch stated he is unsure if fundraisers will continue to happen with the current COVID issues. With the last donated funds, the Fire Department purchased a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV). It has sonar and live stream video for when they are needed out on the lake to help locate people or equipment. Trustee Prudden suggested that any fundraiser the Fire Department has that they let the Protection Committee know so everyone is aware of the event.

Update on Fire/Rescue Boat

Chief Nitsch stated the fire/rescue boat is in Superior, WI at Lake Assault Boats. The new engines for the boat came in and are scheduled for installation next week along with rewiring. They will not know if all components of the boat are working properly until the rewiring is complete. Nitsch expects to have the boat back in Fontana by the middle of April. Nitsch stated that they have had the Ice Boat out this winter a couple of times, not for rescues but for training. The boat is running well with no issues.

Police Department

Monthly Report

The year-to-date incident summary list was emailed out and there were no questions.

Video Gaming Machines

Chief Cates stated that video gaming machines is a topic that continues to surface, and it was brought up more recently by one of the local businesses. The Village currently has an ordinance prohibiting the operating of any video gaming/gambling machines. Cates contacted the Department of Alcohol and Tobacco who stated even if the Village were to remove the ordinance, the video gaming machines would still be illegal. Having the ordinance allows the police department to enforce violations.

Commercial Businesses Operating on VOF Waters

Chief Cates wanted to bring this up for discussion again. In past years there was a boat rental business that was operating off the Village's Municipal launch and the Village enacted an ordinance to prohibit that. Most recently, the Lakefront and Harbor Committee was approached about offering to give rides on the ice in an airboat. The Lakefront Committee told the organization that the Village was not interested in having that in Fontana, but the company parked their truck and trailer in Williams Bay and came over by boat on the ice and operated in the village's waters off Lake Street. Cates is looking for a recommendation to create an ordinance to prevent companies like this coming in and being a potential liability issue. Cates has agreed to research this a little more to see if it is something that the Village can even regulate.

Boat Launch Signage Proposed by Abbey Harbor

Eddie Snyder from the Abbey Harbor contacted Chief Cates about putting up some signage that would direct boat launch traffic to the Municipal launch instead of the Harbor launch. One suggestion Cates had was a sandwich board sign that would be posted on the weekends in the median of the boulevard directing boats in the right direction. Prudden suggested that Cates investigate this a little more and report his finding back to the committee at the next meeting.

Fontana Municipal Court Pre-Trials

Cates pointed out that the Village now has a new judge, Judge Sullivan, who has a law background. The Village current pays between \$4,000 – \$5,000 a month for prosecution fees to legal counsel. The Village attorney is present twice a month for court dates to conduct pre-trials. Cates spoke to Judge Sullivan and they both agreed that it would be a significant cost savings to either appoint a court officer, such as the Chief or the Judge to conduct the pre-trials before court or the night of court. Any defendant that would come in and an agreement could not be reached would be referred to the prosecuting attorney. Loomer pointed out that there could be conflict if the court officer is also the one that issued the citation. Cates stated if he is the court officer then it would typically not pose any conflict since he does not normally issue citations.

Kaminski/Gerard 2nd made a MOTION to recommend Village Board approval to allow Chief Cates, his designee, or Judge Sullivan to perform pre-trials as opposed to having legal counsel perform pre-trials and the Village no longer requires the prosecuting attorney to be present at the general court dates unless a hearing is set, and the MOTION carried without negative vote.

W. Main and Mill St. Parking

Chief Cates stated that Suzy Brady, who owns Blue Heaven Ice Cream spoke to him about possibly having the 24-hour parking on W. Main and Mill St. changed to 1 or 2-hour parking and having a handicap stall added. Brady is concerned about the parking stalls being taken now that the new condos on W. Main St. are occupied. Chief Cates recommended keeping the parking as 24-hours throughout the Village instead of changing it in certain areas. He is open to creating a handicap stall on the corner of W. Main and Mill St, however, he is unsure if it can be made ADA compliant. Loomer and Cates agreed to research what would be needed to have a handicap stall added.

Stop Signs on Third Avenue

Pat Kenny stated that he has been approached by residents asking the necessity to have a stop sign at every single intersection on Third Avenue. Trustee Prudden discussed that there is a lot more foot traffic on Third Ave and it is a safety issue. Cates brought up that the stop signs were put in at the end of the season last year so he would like to give them a whole summer as a trial run to test them out. He also pointed out that after the stop signs were installed that he received letters from residents with positive feedback about the stop signs being installed. Trustee Petersen feels that by adding these additional stop signs, the boat traffic is using the Boulevard more, instead of going down Third Avenue.

Set Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date was scheduled for Monday, April 19, 2021 beginning at 5:00 pm

Adjournment

Kaminski/Corso 2nd made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 6:05 pm, and the MOTION carried without negative vote.

Minutes prepared by Stephanie Klug

Note: These minutes are subject to further editing. Once approved by the Protection Committee, the official minutes will be kept on file at the Village Hall.

APPROVED: 12-20-2021