

COMMUNITY SAFETY & PUBLIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

March 3, 2009 – 5:30 PM

City Council Chambers – Rouss City Hall

PRESENT: Councilor Michael Butler, Evan Clark, Milt McInturff, Les Veach and John Willingham; Vice-President Art Major; Mayor Elizabeth Minor; President Jeff Buettner. (8)

ABSENT: Councilor John Hill. (1)

President Buettner called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Approval of Minutes – Vice-President Major moved to approve the minutes from the February 3, 2009 meeting as submitted. *The motion was seconded by Mayor Minor then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

Community Safety Report – Chairman Minor

a. COPS Grant Program Information - Police, Chief Kevin Sanzenbacher

Chief Sanzenbacher presented the proposal to seek grant funding from the Department of Justice to hire 4 entry level police officers at 100% of salary for a 3 year period. The one condition is that at the end of the 3 years, the city must hire the officers. If the grant is approved, it will save the city \$600,000.00 over the 3 year period and bring up the staffing level of the police department. These officers will be put on the 4th shift that will begin at the end of this month and will be dedicated to community problems. Chief Sanzenbacher stated he would like to begin the application process when it begins at the end of March.

Councilor Hill arrived at 5:33 p.m.

Chief Sanzenbacher stated the fiscal impact to the city may not be as much as estimated for expenses because of the surplus in uniforms. The training expenses have already been calculated in the city's academy expenses.

Vice-President Major asked if the grant could be used to fund existing entry level officers. Chief Sanzenbacher stated the grant must be used on new officers. He will get confirmation on whether or not it can be used for officers who may be laid off due to furloughs or budget cuts.

Councilor Clark asked if there was a clause in the grant that released the city from the obligation of hiring the officers at the end of the 3 years because of budget. Chief Sanzenbacher stated he read it that way but he is trying to get confirmation from the COPS office. Councilor Clark stated that if the budget was not available in three years, natural attrition of employees would occur.

Councilor Clark moved to send the proposal forward to Council for approval. *The motion was seconded by Councilor Butler and passed 5/4 with President Buettner, Vice-President Major and Councilors Veach and Willingham voting in the negative.*

Chief Sanzenbacher informed the committee the department has received \$15,000.00 to purchase cameras that he would like to have installed on the Old Town Mall. He would also like to post the videos on line to help combat the community perception that the mall area is not safe.

Chief Sanzenbacher stated the state funding for the Detox Center has been cut. Detox provides a valuable resource for the department and it would be a significant harm to all of the agencies if it was lost.

Chief Sanzenbacher reminded the committee the Valor Awards Ceremony is scheduled for March 26th with dinner at 6 p.m. and the awards at 7 p.m. Thirteen people will be receiving awards that evening including Ricky Timbrook

Submitted Reports – Information Only:

- a. Fire Department – Chief Frank Wright
 - 2008 Annual Report
 - Fee For Service 2008-2009 Deposits

Chief Wright stated he was available to answer any questions the committee may have regarding the 2008 Annual Report or the Fee For Service information.

Public Services Report – Chairman Veach

- a. Downtown Utility Infrastructure Improvement Project update – Perry Eisenach, Public Services Director

Mr. Eisenach presented an update on the Downtown Infrastructure Project. He stated the project meets the goals set by Council for replacing the infrastructure and providing improved water/sewer, storm infrastructure and sidewalk replacement for economic development. Five bids were received with the lowest bid of \$9.8 million dollars from DLB, Inc. Mr. Eisenach provided a detailed breakdown of the cost for the project which included possible medians on Cameron Street. The application to the Virginia Resources Authority to borrow \$11.5 million of funds has been started. The cost of the project is included in the proposed 11% water and sewer rate increase discussed at a previous meeting. Mr. Eisenach presented the options for replacing the existing brick sidewalks and limestone curbs in the downtown area. A public open house has been scheduled for March 24th in the Exhibit Hall from 4 – 7 p.m. Council will need to make a decision on the design options at the April 7th Public Services Committee meeting. The work on Cameron and Braddock Streets will be complete by October 24th with the final project completed by June 26, 2010. The project will not have an impact on the Apple Blossom Festivities.

Councilor Clark stated he did not see the paving costs in the project list. Mr. Eisenach stated the paving will be funded from Highway Maintenance and is included in the proposed FY10 budget.

Vice-President Major asked if Mr. Eisenach is confident in the estimate for rock excavation. Mr. Eisenach stated the bid was for a lot more rock than what is expected to find.

Councilor Clark asked about the survival chances of the large trees when the water lines are replaced. Mr. Eisenach stated the work in the streets will not affect the trees. The service line replacements could have an impact on the roots but they will do their best to minimize the damage. The tree replacements will be handled similar to what happened on Cork Street. On Cork Street, 10 unhealthy trees were removed and were replaced with 47 trees. Staff will also make sure the new trees are not planted on top of the service lines to prevent future problems caused by tree roots.

- b. Request by Tree Commission to Reconsider Ordinance Amendments – Patrick Farris, Chairman, Tree Commission

Mr. Farris read a prepared statement presenting the suggestions made by the Tree Commission to amend the ordinance.

Mr. Williams stated he was not sure the proposal would be admissible because he did not know of any enabling legislation that would give Council the authority to delegate the issuance of permits in that fashion.

State code reads a charter gives you the authority to create advisory committees or boards which Council does but he does not know of any provisions to give the authority to make that type of delegation.

Vice-Mayor Butler asked if there was anything that required having a Tree Commission. Mr. Williams stated there is not and he believes the city satisfies the requirements for maintaining its status of Tree City by having an arborist or a Tree Commission.

c. Public Comments

No citizens were present to address the committee.

Other Items

- a. Mr. Godfrey reminded the committee about the joint meeting with the OTDB scheduled for Saturday, March 7th at 8:30 a.m. at the Godfrey Miller Fellowship Center.
- b. Closed Session – Motion to enter into Closed Session under Virginia Code §2.2-3711(a) 7 for discussion with legal counsel matters in litigation or pending litigation.

President Buettner moved to convene into closed session. *The motion was seconded by Councilor Willingham then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

Upon returning at 7:57 p.m., each member certified that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act were discussed during the closed meeting, and that only those public business matters identified in the motion which convened the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered during the closed meeting.

A roll call vote was taken, the ayes and nays being recorded as shown below:

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
Vice-Mayor Butler	Aye
Councilor Clark	Aye
Councilor Hill	Aye
Vice-President Major	Aye
Councilor McInturff	Aye
Mayor Minor	Aye
Councilor Veach	Aye
Councilor Willingham	Aye
President Buettner	Aye

Adjourn

With no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn at 7:57 p.m. was seconded by Councilor Clark and unanimously approved.