

MINUTES
PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
DECEMBER 9, 2020
Via Zoom

- I. The meeting was called to order at 5:50 PM by Chairperson Councilmember Ben Keathley after some technical difficulties.

- II. Roll Call:

Councilmember Ben Keathley, Ward II, Chairperson, Councilmember Mary Monachella, Ward I. Councilmember Dan Hurt, Ward III, Councilmember Tom DeCampi, Ward IV, Councilmember Mary Ann Mastorakos, Ward II, Councilmember Michael Moore, Ward III, City Administrator Mike Geisel, Chief Ray Johnson, Captain Michael Thompson, Captain Cheryl Funkhouser, Captain Dan Dunn.

- III. Approval of Minutes

The Committee members reviewed the minutes of the August 11, 2020 meeting. Councilmember Monachella motioned and Councilmember Hurt seconded to approve the minutes. The motion carried 4-0.

- IV. Maryville University Housing of Students in Chesterfield – Update

Chief Johnson reviewed a current agreement between the City of Chesterfield and Maryville whereas 136 university students are housed in Chesterfield (the Drury Hotel). The university students attend classes at the university but safety issues for the students while in Chesterfield are part of the agreement. There have been no issues reported to the police department to date. At this time, students have left the hotel for winter break. The students will return to the same rooms they occupied at the hotel when they return. The policies outlined in the agreement will continue for the next school semester as planned.

- V. Deer Hunting Ordinance

Chairperson Keathley led a discussion regarding the current ordinance regulating bow hunting in Chesterfield.

Chief Johnson reviewed the statistics of the results of hunting to date and the final results of 2019. The hunting process is going well with 88 properties currently participating in the program. It is expected that the total number of deer harvested will surpass last year.

Chairperson Keathley voiced concern regarding the notification of contiguous neighbors. Chief Johnson noted that the notification process includes the request for the hunter to retrieve animals if they happen to wander from the registered property. To date this process has worked well.

Chairperson Keathley requested that the notification forms include a place for the signature of the contiguous property owner noting they have been notified along with the clarification regarding the retrieval of a dead animal.

The committee members continued to discuss this issue. Councilmember Hurt asked if the process needed any change or if there have been any complaints and/or problems with the current process. Chief Johnson replied that there have been no reported issues regarding notification of private property owners. There was one issue reported when a subdivision began hunting on common ground and several property owners claimed they were not notified. This was addressed with the trustees of the subdivision who registered the common ground.

Councilmember Keathley motioned and Councilmember DeCampi seconded to require property owners' signature on the notification of contiguous neighbor and that copies of those signed forms be part of the hunting registration.

Discussion continued with all members of the Committee voicing support for the program. Councilmember DeCampi, who himself is a bow hunter, voiced his opinion that the requirement of signatures on the form will not hinder the program. It was agreed that if a contiguous neighbor refuses to sign, this will not stop a hunt on the registered property.

After discussion, the motion carried 4-0. There is no modification to the ordinance needed and the notification to contiguous neighbor form will be modified to add signatures.

V. Enforcement of COVID-Relation Regulations

Chairperson Keathley asked Chief Johnson the purpose of the Chesterfield Police Department's presence at the scene of the recent closing of a Chesterfield restaurant by the St. Louis County Health Department due to Covid restrictions.

Chief Johnson noted that the Police Department officers were only on the scene to "keep the peace" in case the situation escalates.

Chief Johnson informed those present that the Police Department has an internal directive to all officers regarding situations such as this and has made it clear that the Chesterfield Police Department does not enforce St. Louis County Health Department regulations.

Chairperson Keathley asked that this directive be made available to the public. Chief Johnson replied that he would do so.

City Attorney Graville noted that the St. Louis County Police Department is also only acting in a "stand-by" role for situations like this.

Discussion continued and members of the Committee agreed that it would be a good idea to inform citizens and especially businesses in Chesterfield of the policy. Mr. Geisel said that a Resolution is not necessary but a recommendation from this Committee would result in the City staff taking appropriate action to notify the appropriate people and businesses.

Upon unanimous recommendation from the Committee members, City staff will alert citizens and the business community by utilizing the City website, the City newsletter, various social media platforms and requesting that the Chamber of Commerce assist by notifying their members.

VI Other – Flash Flooding Conway Road

Councilmember Mastorakos requested information on any improvements to Conway Road after a recent flash flooding incident this past August. Chief Johnson reported that the City Public Works Department had requested that St. Louis County install warning signage, and this has been done. Chief Johnson also reported that police officers follow a protocol regarding shutting down roadways when flooding occurs. However, Chief Johnson noted that this type of flash flood that occurred in August is not a frequent problem. During continued discussion Chief Johnson noted that movable arms and blinking lights have been suggested but must be approved by St. Louis County because Conway Road is a County roadway.

After discussion, the Committee members agreed that this item is site specific. The Police Department will continue to monitor this site during times of flash flooding. Chairperson Keathley asked that City Administrator Geisel, Chief Johnson, or Mr. Jim Eckrich to notify him if there is anything else the Public Health & Safety Committee can act upon to improve this site proactively. To that end, the City will contact St. Louis County and request they review the site and give consideration to possible additional safety measures such as water-height activated blinking lights or movable gate arms for road closure.

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:01 PM