

## **City of Decorah Public Safety Committee and 28e Rural Fire Board Joint Meeting Monday, October 5, 2020 – 6:30pm.**

*Immediately following the regular session of the City Council (the meeting actually started at 6:55pm)*

The City of Decorah Public Safety Committee met on Monday, October 5, 2020 at 6:30pm. Chairman Emily Neal called the meeting to order and the following answered roll: Ross Hadley, Steve Zitterguern, and Andy Carlson. Others in attendance: Mayor Lorraine Borowski, Steve Luse. Staff, Fire Chief Mike Ashbacher, Jeff Ode, Police Chief Dave Smutzler, and City Manager Chad Bird.

There were nine (9) people on the Zoom telecast.

*The meeting was held electronically pursuant to Iowa Code section 21.8 – In circumstances where such a meeting is impossible or impractical due to concerns about COVID-19 and social distancing for the safety of Council members and the public.*

### **Agenda**

Joint meeting with the public safety committee and the 28e Rural Fire Association Board of Trustees

*City*

#### **1. Fire Dept quarterly report**

*Chief Mike Ashbacher gave those in attendance a report of the Association's and Dept's activities over the past several months.*

*He noted there were 29 rural and 28 city calls. He said there many unique and different calls this year. Two calls for service were received related to the river or water rescues.*

*He said new member testing and certification is in process.*

#### **2. Police Dept quarter report**

*Chief Dave Smutzler provided a report on his department's activities since the last meeting.*

*He noted the department staff is training on firearms, participating in bias training, and CPR.*

*He praised Officer Nick Yaneff for leading arms training and bringing that back on track.*

*Chief noted the dept has taken a "team photo" for the first time in many years.*

*He also said the 911 / dispatch center transfer has gone well and they are currently in the software development and installation process.*

#### **3. Update on fire training facility**

*Chief Ashbacher shared ongoing improvements and work taking place on the training center. He said the training facility has been a big success and is much appreciated.*

*He reviewed some of the details of ongoing construction and improvements and various ways the facility may be used for training for both PD and FD.*

*He also noted there is a grain bin training facility and opportunity and he thanked a local farmer for donating grain for the facility.*

*Chief invited the rural trustees to come and see the training facility and perhaps demonstration.*

4. Update on upgrade of water rescue equipment

*Ashbacher reviewed the dept's water rescue equipment including the drone and the new river boat.*

*He explained some of the features of the boat and its ability to navigate the river with low water levels – as designed.*

*He also noted the drone's recent failure related to software issues.*

5. Future equipment needs

*Ashbacher reviewed the dept's most pressing need is for updated pass alarm equipment. He stated most of it is older quality. He said most of it was purchased in 2003 – 17 years, well beyond useful life.*

*Smutzler noted a need for improvements to the firing range.*

6. Building codes and rental inspections, hiring process

*Bird provided an update and noted the hiring process is in full swing. He hoped to have a candidate identified by the end of November.*

7. Review of City Code sections 2.16 and 2.48

*Bird reviewed this item and noted there was desire from the council to amend the code relating to the staff reporting structure of the police chief to the city manager.*

*Smutzler raised questions related to discipline authority.*

*Bird also distributed research about Decorah's comparable cities in regard to organizational structures.*

*There was general discussion and the committee agreed to continue discussion at a later time.*

## 28e Rural Fire Board and Public Safety Committee

The 28e Rural Fire Board and the City Public Safety Committee met on Monday, October 5, 2020 at 7:55pm.

The City of Decorah Public Safety Committee met on Monday, October 5, 2020 at 7:55pm. Chairman Emily Neal called the meeting to order and the following answered roll: Ross Hadley, Steve Zitterguern, and Andy Carlson. Others in attendance: Mayor Lorraine Borowski, Steve Luse. Staff, Fire Chief Mike Ashbacher, Jeff Ode, Police Chief Dave Smutzler, and City Manager Chad Bird.

Rural Fire Board representatives in attendance included:

Gary Smorstad, Glenwood Township;  
Daniel Beard, Pleasant Township;  
Jim Ludeking, Springfield Township;  
Rick Monson, Highland – Hesper Township;  
Tony Meyer, Decorah Township;  
Wayne Wicks, Canoe Township.

Absent:

Louis Courtney, Bluffton Township.

*Joint*

1. Fire Chief and Volunteer Assoc. report

*Ashbacher referred to the report given to the City committee and noted no changes.*

*There were no questions from the Rural Trustees.*

2. Review matters of mutual concern
  1. 28e agreement issues

*Ashbacher said there were a few maintenance issues on Engine #1 and it was in for service work.*

*He reviewed the need to work on turnout gear replacement and upkeep.*

*He again discussed the grain bin training and offered a tour for any of the Rural Trustees or city council members.*

In other business:

*The Rural Trustees wondered if the meetings and agendas could be rearranged so that the rural items and discussions could occur first on the agenda, ahead of the city discussion items.*

*They also wondered if the meetings could be held on the third Monday of each quarterly monthly schedule to better allow for the Trustees to review and pay their claims.*

*Bird stated since the pandemic has resulted in the second and third quarterly meetings to be canceled, he recommended the 28e committee vote to waive the required meetings for 2020 as a result of the pandemic.*

***Motion by Beard and second by Neal to waive the required meetings for 2020 and reflecting in the minutes the 28e committee met in October but not in January, April, and July of 2020 due to the issues involved with the COVID-19 pandemic.  
Roll call vote: Ayes, unanimous.  
Motion passed.***

There was no other business and the meeting adjourned at 8:18pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Proposed meetings for 2022

*At least quarterly per the 28e agreement*

*The joint board would like to consider the third Monday after the regular city council meeting (October 23, 2018).*

January 18, 2021	or February 1, 2021
April 19, 2021	or May 3, 2021
July 19, 2021	or August 2, 2021
October 18, 2021	or November 1, 2021