

City of Decorah Public Safety Committee and 28e Rural Fire Board Joint Meeting Monday, February 1, 2021 – 6:30pm.

Immediately following the regular session of the City Council (the meeting actually started at 6:35pm)

The City of Decorah Public Safety Committee met on Monday, February 1, 2021 at 6:35pm. 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 (12) 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

Joint mtg

1. Fire Chief and Volunteer Assoc. 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 are 25 full time and three probationary members in the association.

He reported 75 city and 75 rural calls this quarter.

2. Review of Association bylaws / revisions

Association president Steve Smith reviewed the bylaw and constitutional amendments as proposed by the Association.

Hadley asked about the youth program and it was noted it is defined by changes in the minimum age restrictions.

Neal asked about the minimum low number of volunteers in the association. What is the number that might cause alarm for the Department, and consequently, the City? There was general discussion but no definitive number.

3. Review matters of mutual concern

1. 28e agreement issues

Chief Ashbacher noted Engine #1 and Engine #10 are due for testing soon.

Dan Beard noted there were no mutual issues he was aware of. Bird concurred and advised the Council's committee he didn't feel there were issues open for discussion.

City

1. Fire Dept quarterly report

Chief Ashbacher noted there was nothing further to report.

2. Police Dept quarter report

Chief Smutzler reviewed several items in the PD. He noted he and his staff is working through an officer hiring process to include testing and certification.

3. Future equipment needs

Chief Ashbacher reviewed the need for new pass alarm equipment and said he is working to upgrade the 17-year-old apparatus.

There was general discussion about how to start a new station committee and Bird reviewed some of the early work already started.

He recommended a committee be developed with Mayor Borowski.

4. Building codes and rental inspections update

Bird introduced Greg Swanson; the City's new building official. Bird and Swanson gave a brief review of their timeline for code implementation.

5. Review of City Code sections 2.16 (police chief) and 2.48 (city manager)

There was lengthy discussion about the proposed code and changes to the language for each subsection.

Neal asked for input from the Dept Heads.

28e Rural Fire Board and Public Safety Committee

The 28e Rural Fire Board and the City Public Safety Committee met on Monday, February 1, 2021 at the same time as the city meeting.

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.
Louis Courtney, Bluffton Township.

There was no other business and the meeting adjourned at 8:28pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Proposed meetings for 2021

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~~ – February 1, 2021

April 19, 2021

July 19, 2021

October 18, 2021