

Public Safety Meeting Minutes

DATE OF MEETING: May 21, 2020

PRESENT: Susan Kovas, Annie Reid, Mayor Wanda Stringfellow, Chief Eric Williams, Chief James Jackson, Carlos Williams, and Stephanie Jackson

Meeting was called to order by: Susan Kovas at 3:03 PM

Prayer: Prayer was led by Annie Reid.

I. **Item Discussed:** New Business---Report Fire Chief James Jackson

It was discussed that Chief Jackson did have an Engine Truck leaking water. He stated that it was being fixed during the time of the meeting. Chief Jackson reported that the ventilation system that was discussed in previous meetings was operable at both fire stations. Chief Jackson discussed that he is still losing employees. He stated that after May 26, 2020, he will still be down four firefighters. He stated that two positions are posted at this time and will close soon. He discussed that Don Wood is preparing grants to help with the purchase of educational materials for the Department. Mrs. Kovas asked if the 3% raise he mentioned last week in the budget workshop will affect his guys. He explained that it would not affect them. Mrs. Reid commended Chief Jackson and his Department on their hard work for the City of Chester. Mrs. Kovas asked if he had enough equipment for his officers for the COVID-19 pandemic. Chief Jackson stated that he has a two-week supply of COVID-19 PPE for his Department.

Action Taken: No Action was taken.

II. **Item Discussed:** New Business---Report Chief Eric Williams

It was discussed that Chief Williams was doing good on the PPE equipment for the Department. Chief Williams commended Fire chief Jackson for his Departments hard work on the scenes that the Police Department just faced. Chief Williams did discuss some community programs that the Police Department was involved in. He discussed that they participate in Birthday Parades, Parades for students, and Parades for Teachers. He discussed the COPS Program. It stands for Coronavirus Outreach Program. He stated that this program is where the citizen calls for a service to have items picked up. The citizen must make a grocery list and provide the money and an officer will go to the store to do the shopping. He discussed that they are also picking up medications also. Chief Williams mentioned that he had picked up some succulent plants to be given out to the community. He stated to the committee that the Police Department had received 1,000 masks from the Rock Quarry.

Action Taken: No Action was taken.

III. **Item Discussed:** Patrol Officers

Chief Williams stated that he is down five officers. He stated that he must fill one position and the other four are in Class I training. Chief Williams gave an update on the Dawson

incident, and where the investigation is at this point. Chief Williams gave an update on the York Street incident and where the investigation is at this point. Carlos Williams commended the Fire Chief for his guys professionalism on scene. He also commended the Police Chief for the Departments hard work. Carlos Williams asked Chief Williams if he could get the information out pertaining to all the community stuff that the Department is doing because he is tired of the council members stating that the Department is not doing anything. He asked Chief Williams to provide flyers to him to give out in the community. Carlos Williams stated that the City should not be cutting the Police budget, and that they need all the officers. Carlos named three essential Departments for the City, and they were Police, Fire, and Public Works. Mrs. Kovas asked Chief Williams if he had all the software that was needed to assist in all investigations. Chief Williams stated to her that he did not have certain software particularly, TLO (Transunion). This software is built to assist in GPS tracking, substance information, and location. Chief Williams stated that the software is \$250-\$280 per month. Mrs. Kovas asked Mrs. Jackson to investigate this for the Police Chief.

Action Taken: Carlos Williams made the recommendation to hire for the one patrol officer. No vote or action was taken.

Mrs. Jackson stated that she wanted to give some information about the position. She stated that the position is for \$33,000 but after benefits and retirement the position would be \$60,000.

Mrs. Reid asked if the Victim Advocate was receiving what she needed in a timely fashion for the victims. Chief Williams stated that he would assist her with city budget if she needed supplement.

Mr. Williams stated that he does not agree with council members not supporting the Police Department and making statements about them not doing nothing.

IV. **Item Discussed:** Marked Police Cars

Mrs. Kovas asked Chief Williams how many unmarked cars he has, and Chief Williams stated seven. Chief Williams stated that he has several that are being marked and should be ready Friday.

V. **Item Discussed:** Walmart

Mrs. Kovas asked how Walmart was going. She stated that every time she rides by there, there are a lot of vehicles. She stated that she was told that citizens are not adhering to the directions that are being implemented. Chief Williams stated that as of May 14, 2020 the Department no longer works Walmart as security.

VI. **Item Discussed:** Grants

Chief Williams discussed that he has completed three grants. The grants are the Department of Justice grant, MASC grant, and the COPS grant. The COPS grant will bring on four officers for three years. He stated the total is \$700,000.

Miscellaneous: Mayor Stringfellow asked how many families have been serviced through the COP program. Chief Williams stated that the daily average is 6-7 families but monthly it could average 25 families. Mayor asked Chief Jackson about the fire alarms and carbon monoxide alarms. Chief Jackson explained that he could only give out one of each per household at this time. He stated that the Red Cross program may be able to help when COVID-19 is over. Mrs. Kovas asked that the Chief Williams keep in mind the Special Needs Programs in the upcoming summer.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:43 PM

These minutes were prepared by:

MaKeesharia S. Tobias 5-22-20