

The regular meeting of the **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE** for March 2021 was held tonight via web-conference, Chairman Brockington presiding. Members present were Commissioners Areman, Holland, Pransky, Rappoport, and Zygmund-Felt and Ex-Officio member Norris.

Staff present via web-conference were: Robert Zienkowski, Township Manager; Alyson Elliott, Assistant Township Manager; John Frye, Chief of Police; Scott Lynch, Fire Marshal and Kenneth Hellendall; Director of EMS and Emergency Management Coordinator. Also present was Joseph Bagley, Esq., Township Solicitor.

Mr. Bagley announced the Board met in Executive Session twice prior to tonight's meeting to discuss personnel, potential litigation and matters which if discussed in public would violate a lawful privilege, potential purchase of property and discussion of emergency preparedness and protection of public safety.

Mr. Brockington called the meeting of the Public Safety Committee to order at 7:45 p.m.

1. **Receipt of Committee Meeting Minutes**

Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously received the Minutes from the Traffic Calming Committee held December 8, 2020.

2. **Report of the Police Chief**

A. Chief Frye reviewed the Police Clearance and Juvenile Clearance Reports for the month of January 2021.

Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously received the Report of the Police Chief.

B. **Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners:** Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously recommended the Board of Commissioners approve a purchase order for Verizon Wireless to cover monthly contractual charges in the amount of \$12,500.

Mr. Pransky inquired about the details of the Verizon Wireless purchase order. Chief Frye stated Verizon provides the unlimited data internet connection for the mobile data computers and the modems used for the programs that are in all police vehicles.

C. **Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners:** Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously recommended the Board of Commissioners approve a purchase order for Safe City Solutions, a testing company that the Department would like to utilize for the Sergeant's Exam up to the amount of \$7,620.

Chief Frye summarized that the exam is given every two years for internal candidates with at least five years of service within the Department. Typically there are about 20 officers that take the exam which consists of a written exam and oral interview. The officer's entire background is reviewed to assist in making the decision. The Chief then makes the final determination. In the Chief's past experience, the one who scores 1st is promoted while the others will remain on the list for two years, depending on the number of Sergeant spots available. The last exam expired December 2020. Currently, there are 11 Sergeants and two are assigned to each squad.

D. **Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners:** Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously recommended the Board of Commissioners authorize the purchase of twenty (20) ballistic vests from Starr Uniform Center, a COSTARS vendor, in the amount of \$17,000, for which the Police Department will be reimbursed 50% from the Patrick Leahy Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant.

2. **Report of the Fire Marshal**

- A. Mr. Lynch presented the fire report for the month of January 2021 and the minutes of the Fire Board Meeting from February 4, 2021.

Ms. Rappoport requested that going forward the number of outside companies that respond to Cheltenham calls be included in the reports.

Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously received the report of the Fire Marshal and the Fire Board Minutes.

3. **Report of the EMS Director**

Mr. Hellendall presented the EMS reports for the month of January 2021.

Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously received the report of the EMS Director.

- A. Presentation by Cornerstone Adminisystems, Inc. regarding the provision of Ambulance Billing and Subscription Services.

Mr. Hellendall introduced Ivy Alderton from Cornerstone and Assistant Chief Jessica Barto to answer any questions regarding the billing system. EMS would see an increase of about 10% in revenue by outsourcing the billing to Cornerstone. Cornerstone's fee would be 7% and they would only be paid on what they collect. The term of contract would be one year with the ability to extend up to five years with no increases. The contract has an anticipated start date of May 2, 2021. They would also be using the same collection agency that the Township currently uses. Ms. Alderton said the 10% increase in revenue is standard, and they have a dedicated EMS staff which sees everything from beginning (receiving the patient care report from Cheltenham EMS) to end (collecting funds). They have a good relationship with the local insurance companies and have a patient hotline that is answered by a National Academy of Ambulance Compliance (NAAC)-certified patient account team. Mr. Norris & Mr. Brockington asked about an expense savings that were noted in previous meetings. Mr. Hellendall stated there would be an elimination of a full-time position and savings of \$5K-\$6K in computer programming beginning in 2022.

- B. **Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners:** Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously recommended the Board of Commissioners award a contract to Cornerstone Adminisystems, Inc. to provide Ambulance Billing and Subscription services from May 1, 2021 through December 31, 2022 with options to renew for five successive one-year periods at the same percentage fee as the first year for each renewal period.

4. **Report of the Emergency Management Coordinator**

- A. Mr. Hellendall presented the Emergency Management reports for the month of January 2021 and added that Public Works employees are still listed in phase 1C for vaccinations. Mr. Hellendall, along with other Public Works Departments, will be writing to the Montgomery County Health Department encouraging them reconsider vaccine categorization of Public Works personnel, as multiple managers expressed this is an issue that could shut down town infrastructures. The Federal Government sees public works employees as First Responders, but the Commonwealth does not. Mr. Hellendall encouraged the Committee to speak to State or Federal legislators to encourage their support.

Mr. Hellendall stated they are receiving many phone calls regarding the COVID-19 vaccine and are working with local people on vaccine distribution. Township employees in 1A are covered. Mr. Brockington asked if the County has any plans to get vaccinations to the homebound. Mr.

Hellendall said there is now a County mobile unit on the road for low-income elderly people in County facilities; one facility in Cheltenham has been referred to the County for this service. After multi-family residential sites have been vaccinated, the County will vaccinate homebound individuals. A vaccination site is set to open across from the Willow Grove Mall. People can register online or by phone, but availability will depend on the number of vaccines received from the State. Pre-registration is not yet available.

Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously received the report of the Emergency Management Coordinator.

- B. Review and approval of the Hazardous Materials Contract with Lewis Environmental. This is a no-cost contract to be used on an as-needed basis. Ms. Rappoport asked if there was a rate sheet and wanted to know what the cost was in the past years. Mr. Hellendall said there is no rate sheet because every hazardous material incident is radically different but he will ask the Accounting Department to determine what was paid in the past and send to Ms. Rappoport. Lewis Environmental will bill directly to an auto, trucking, and railroad company but Cheltenham is ultimately responsible if they do not pay.

Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners: Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously recommended the Board of Commissioners approve a Hazardous Materials Contract with Lewis Environmental.

5. **Report of the Township Manager:**

Mr. Zienkowski updated the Committee on the status of the solar stop signs and 25 mph stencils. The stencils have been ordered, and will be placed when the weather breaks. Mr. Clewell confirmed that the stop signs came in and will be installed as soon as possible. Mr. Brockington asked that photos be taken of the new stop signs and posted on Facebook. Residents near these new signs will be notified and the Township will monitor for any issues and feedback. One crosswalk sign has been ordered as well.

Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously received the Report of the Township Manager.

6. **Old Business:** None.

7. **New Business:** None.

8. **Citizens' Forum:**

Rhonda Isser, 7307 Twelfth Street, expressed thanks to Public Works, Police, EMS and Fire during the past year working through COVID-19.

Art Gordon, 8206 Forest Hills Drive, expressed that he and members of the Ogontz Fire Company will attend the Board of Commissioners meeting to read a statement asking that the Commissioners pause consideration of the proposed Ordinance amendment. He asked the Commissioners to let the public weigh in as there is an impact on public safety. The closest stations to Ogontz are not arriving on scenes first, that mutual aid companies are coming from further away to assist. He said fellow fire fighters are doing a valiant job but response could be better with Ogontz responding. He asked that the Commissioners pause consideration of the Ordinance amendment, review Ogontz's status, and reinstate them or give them time to fix it before considering the proposed action.

Mr. Gordon asked who he should contact if there is a mistake in meeting minutes. Mr. Bagley said any mistakes can be directed to the Chairman of the Committee prior to the adoption of the minutes. He also noted that wording of minutes are up to the Board or Committee.

Tom Mullian, 1112 Church Road, gave a brief statement on serious traffic issues he experienced on Church Road. Mr. Brockington thanked him for his statement and many of the Commissioners feel the same way. The Traffic Calming Committee focuses on local roads and the Township has no control over state roads. Mr. Brockington will be inviting State Representative Nelson to attend the next Traffic Calming Committee meeting and noted that Rep. Nelson is reaching out to PennDOT to address these issues. Ms. Rappoport requested a patrol car to sit along Church Road to enforce speed. Mr. Zienkowski sent correspondence to PennDOT to look into this and Rep Nelson's office will be scheduling a meeting with staff, residents, Springfield Township and a couple other communities.

Emily Steinberg, 411 Randall Road, asked if citizens would be able to attend the meeting with PennDOT regarding Church Rd. Mr. Zienkowski will encourage residents to be invited because it is better to hear directly from those who are directly affected.

There being no further business, upon motion of Mr. Norris, and unanimously approved by the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.



Robert Zienkowski
Township Manager

per Eileen Wass