

**PUBLIC SAFETY MEETING
MAY 4, 2016**

PRESENT

- Mayor Jill Boudreau
- Council Members
 - Mary Hudson
 - Mark Hulst
 - Joe Lindquist
 - Ken Quam
 - Dale Ragan
- Chief of Police Jerry Dodd
- CED Director Bob Hyde
- City Attorney Kevin Rogerson
- Finance Director Alicia Huschka

The Public Safety Committee Meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Council Member Mark Hulst. Public Safety Meeting Minutes from April 6, 2016, were approved and adopted.

JERRY DODD – CHIEF OF POLICE

DOG KENNEL UPDATE

- Provided slides of the various stages of the kennel.
- Original door design had to be changed due to water in kennels when raining
- Once new doors are installed, kennel is ready to go

- Working on front of Police/Court Campus
- Provided slides of same

PERSONNEL HIRING UPDATE

- Chief Dodd refreshed Mayor and Council on six phases of the hiring process
- Listed desired characteristics we look for when hiring employees
- Staffing levels haven't changed in last 20 years
 - Calls of service have gone up
 - Gangs, vagrancy, illegal narcotics, etc. have increased
- Last eleven employees hired, oral board to solo status was 13.98 months
- Of 183 candidates who tested in 2015
 - 73 invited to oral boards
 - 16 took polygraph exams
 - Job suitability assessments given to eight
 - Background investigations conducted on six
 - Psychological and medicals done on six
 - Six invited to Chief/Mayor interview
 - MVPD hired six officers
- Increased MVPD presence at job and career fairs throughout State

- Huge demand for police officers at all law enforcement agencies in State
- Continue to advertise in various media, social networks, websites, etc.
- 27 officers have left MVPD in last ten years
 - 12 retired
 - 9 returned home
 - 6 joined local LE agencies
 - 3 took non-law enforcement jobs
 - 3 resigned other than returning home
 - 2 failed FTO/probation
 - One death
- 24 officers have been hired over last ten years
- Three officers leaving in 2016
- Brandon Young promoted to Sergeant on 05/02/16
- Mikel Moore to be promoted to Lieutenant in June
- Two officer soon to complete BLEA
- One individual to be hired on 06/08/16; backgrounds conducted on three others
- Three officers recently completed their field training and are solo status
- Continue hiring, promotion, selection process as well as filling temporary positions

VAGRANCY IMPACT REDUCTION PLAN

- Chief Dodd provided copies of *Vagrancy Impact Reduction Plan* to Mayor and Council
- Provided soft statistics on vagrancy/homelessness/status (felons, drug abuse, mental issues, etc.)
- Impacts include unlawful camping on public/private land; squatting in abandoned or foreclosed structures; litter and human waste; discarded syringes; garbage left at campsites; public drinking and drug use; trespassing; etc.
 - Huge cost to criminal justice system to process defendants
- Discussion of overlapping “public safety” and “public health” issues
- Discussed specifics of Vagrancy Impact Reduction Plan

LAW ENFORCEMENT EMBEDDED SOCIAL WORKER PROGRAM

- Rebecca Clark from Skagit County Health Department in attendance and introduced by Chief Dodd
- More and more agencies recognizing police cannot solve vagrancy/transient issues alone; they need help
- Discussed various approaches used to address this issue
- City/County hopes to hire social worker to work together with Police Officers when dealing with homelessness (“low hanging fruit”)
- Proposal for two year pilot program to use 1/10 of one percent to hire social worker
- Chief Dodd turned meeting over to Mayor Boudreau and Rebecca
 - Job description has been written listing requirements
 - Cost per year with benefits \$90,000
 - County to cover 2/3 of cost; City to cover 1/3

- Minimal out of Department costs (jackets, uniform, radio, etc.)
- Would be first city in Skagit County to implement program
- Start the program; will find support as we go

BOB HYDE – CED DIRECTOR AND FINANCE DIRECTOR ALICIA HUSCHKA

- A draft request for qualifications for a Master Developer was reviewed with Council. Staff will continue to refine this RFQ before releasing it. This consultant could assist the City with moving from the planning phase to the “do” phase.
- Bob provided information/discussion on qualifications the City is looking for in this person or team.
- Provided slide on the sub-area plan being discussed with Council.
 - Two phases, each costing approximately \$35,000 for a total of \$70,000
 - Approximately \$140,000 for full project

ALICIA HUSCHKA – FINANCE DIRECTOR

- Alicia reviewed with the Committee the LIFT (Local Infrastructure Financing Tool)
- Defined and explained what LIFT is, the history, and how it works
- State awarded to City of Mount Vernon in 2008
 - \$500,000 per year for 25 years
 - City must match funds
 - Baseline year is 2009
- Discussed taxes and tax growth
- Provided slide/discussed important timelines and considerations
 - Extends expiration date of the LIFT program from 06/30/39 to 06/30/44
 - Latest date to issue bonds to maximize return is 06/30/19
 - Requires construction begin by 06/30/17 in order to impose state shared sales tax
 - Removes requirement that local governments must issue bonds
 - Requires annual reporting
 - Need to consider when to impose tax
 - Must be able to match state revenues with our local revenues
 - Want to maximize our returns
- Tax rate remains 8.5 percent but is redistributed
- City has many accomplishments to report to State

KEVIN ROGERSON – CITY ATTORNEY

- Discussed how various cities ban fireworks in emergency (hazardous) situations
- Made recommendations on language, penalties, etc. to be included in Mount Vernon’s order
- Council members preferred Bothell’s order
- Still have to wait one year for order to be effective
- Mount Vernon may be in minority of cities that have not banned fireworks over last ten years

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm

