

CITY OF UNIVERSIY HEIGHTS, OHIO

MINUTES OF SAFETY CMMITTEE MEETING

March 7, 2022 DRAFT

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Present were: Councilman Justin Gould, Chair; Mayor Michael Brennan; Vice Mayor Michele Weiss; Law Director Luke McConville; Councilmen Brian King and John Rach; Councilwomen Barbara Blankfeld and Sheri Sax; Police Chief Dustin Rogers, and Fire Chief Robert Perko.

Agenda Items

1. Discussion Regarding Ordinance 2022-13 (Enacting Codified Ordinance Section 1286.13 Entitled “Manufacture, Distribution and Sale of Fireworks Prohibited”)

Chairman Gould summarized that this ordinance had been discussed previously and that the setting off of fireworks was to be enforced by the police department; this legislation is to be enforced by the fire department. Matters to be clarified are the State regulations as related to the City’s requirements.

Fire Chief Perko stated that he is waiting to hear from the State Fire Marshall regarding the definition of storage and whether or not there would be restrictions against approved exhibitors who would be technically storing fireworks on site. Among issues discussed were commercial displays, the density of the city, safety, the types of fireworks that would be acceptable, retail sales, and the fact that vendors store fireworks in trucks for a number of hours on site. Concern was to make certain language in the legislation was in sync with State requirements.

It was agreed that passing this ordinance now “as is” would be the thing to do, rather than have the Law Director draft something that might contradict the State Fire Marshall; the Fire Marshall has not yet established parameters, but once in place an exception could be made. It was also mentioned that this legislation is aimed more toward the sale of fireworks, citing a possible example of a retailer opening shop and selling fireworks with the possibility that the city would not have a law in place to address or monitor that. In response to Chairman Gould’s question of whether committee members and/or the administration had any reservations about the discussions, there were none.

Motion by Mr. Gould, second by Ms. Sax, to pass Ordinance Section 1280.13 entitled Manufacture, Distribution and Sale of Fireworks Prohibited, with the proposed amendment from the Law Director, to Council for adoption.

Discussion regarding the exception list in ORC pertaining to certain types of firework devices, including toy firearms. It was believed that the City’s ordinance mirrored same. It was requested

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that exceptions in 1.4(g) are carved into this legislation explicitly. Chairman Gould requested that Law Director McConville make that amendment. Mr. McConville agree to do so.

Mr. Gould amended his motion to pass Ordinance 1280.12 entitled Manufacture, Distribution and Sale of Fireworks Prohibited, to include the proposed retail amendment proposed by the Law Director, as well as the amendment clearly stating that the exceptions should be added as they are consistent with the City’s local ordinance allowing use thereof. On roll call, all voted “aye”; the motion passed.

2. Discussion Regarding Approval of Lexipol Invoices from Police and Fire Departments in the amount of \$25,483.96, to Include Departmental Satisfaction of Lexipol Services and Any Need for Supplemental Services.

Chairman Gould stated that this is an opportunity to visit with both the Fire and Police Chiefs to ensure that they are satisfied with the services provided by Lexipol.

Police Chief Rogers provided a comprehensive explanation of the benefits of the service, pointing out that policies are kept up-to-date including constitutional law, civil rights, etc. The Policy Manual is an important component and the service it provides is a tremendous help in tracking current policy and training including video support, software curriculum, a wide range of social issues training and cultural awareness. It was pointed out that community as well as federal/state standards are being implemented. Cooperation with Councilwoman Sax and an advisory board has assisted in this regard.

Fire Chief Perko noted that a lot of the points made by Chief Rogers are critical to the Fire Department as well, adding that Lexipol Services have been an integral part in assisting management. Chief Perko stated that an unique benefit is that it provides a public safety standard, noting that there are similarities between some of the policies and procedures between police and fire, such as harassment and bullying. He noted that this provides cooperation and awareness to neighboring fire departments. Operational and accreditation issues were discussed.

(There was some discussion here regarding accreditation and facilities, but inaudible)

Mayor Brennan stated that the Fire and Police Chiefs brought this to the City as a way of improving policies and procedures, and four years ago when they came the City was not using Lexipol or anything like it. He added that both departments have benefitted from this action, and that he is satisfied with same, noting that it is important that both Chiefs Perko and Rogers are satisfied. With reference to the accreditation issue, Mayor Brennan stated that he would be happy to review this with the Chiefs. The mayor added that there may be merits to looking at a facility study that was mentioned.

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Motion by Mr. Gould, second by Mrs. Blankfeld, to submit to Council for approval the Lexipol expenditure of \$25,483.96 for the Police and Fire Departments. All voted “aye” and the motion was passed.

3. Discussion Regarding Proposed Motion by Council to Approve Fire Department Applying for Grant Opportunities Related to Public Safety During FY 2022, to Include Information from Law Department Regarding State of the Law Regarding Grant Notice Requirements.

It was noted that there is no ordinance to approve here, and that this was a holdover from the prior administration. There was no motion regarding this item.

Mention was made of possibly hiring someone to write/acquire grants in the future; also hiring of a city planner in the future.

4. Continued Discussion regarding Proposed door-to-Door Sales (“No-Knock”) Registry

Mr. Gould noted he had discussed a “no-knock registry” with Mayor Brennan and Chief Rogers, adding that other municipality mayors who may have implemented such a program through NOPEC were being contacted for comparison. Through NOPEC’s program, administrative costs would be absorbed by NOPEC as they manage the registry. Issues relating to the policy were discussed including safety of residents and appropriate remedies for offenders, i.e., those posing as service/utilities personnel in an effort to enter he home under false pretenses.

It was agreed that this item would be added to next month’s agenda.

There being no further business to consider, the meeting adjourned.

Submitted by,

Jeune Drayton
Assistant Clerk of Council

Justin Gould, Chair
Safety Committee