Ravenna City Council
Public Health and Safety Committee Meeting Minutes
May 11, 2026

The public meeting was held in person in City Council Chambers.

Council present: Council President Rob Kairis, Amy Michael, Paul Moskun, Tyler Marovich, Tim Calfee, Christina West, Matt Harper, Carmen Laudato

Also attending the meeting: Fire Chief, Mark Chapple; Service Director, Tim Contant; City Engineer; Bob Finney; Finance Director, Tami Lorence; Council Clerk, Chelsea Gregor; Human Resource Director, Heather Richkowski; Larry Silenius, Barbara Niemiller, Cliff Soudil, Cynthia Miller, Jen Davis

The Public Health and Safety Committee Meeting was called to order at 7:02 P.M. by Chairperson, Amy Michael.

The first item was a donation of 40 cases of Gatorade in the Fire Department.
Ms. Michael introduced a generous anonymous donation of 40 cases of Gatorade to the Police and Fire Departments. She expressed appreciation for the donation to the departments.

- The item was moved forward.

The second item was the purchase of 3 Life Pak 35's not to exceed $186,000.
Ms. Michael introduced the purchase of three LifePak 35 cardiac monitors for the Fire Department, not to exceed $186,000. She explained that the funds had already been budgeted for the purchase.
Chief Chapple stated that the current LifePak 15 units are outdated, nearing end-of-life, and will have limited parts availability in the coming years. He noted the new monitors would serve all three ambulances and provide advanced patient monitoring and electronic data transfer directly to hospitals. Chief Chapple also explained that a price increase was expected after September, making timely approval important.
Council members asked clarifying questions about functionality, trade-in value, and previous equipment purchases.
Chief Chapple also confirmed that the devices also function as defibrillators.

- The item was moved forward.

The third item was a contract with Montrose Ford.
Ms. Michael introduced a contract with Montrose Ford for the purchase of replacement police vehicles, including Ford Explorers and an F-150 pickup truck. She noted the purchases were budgeted.
Chief Chapple explained that the fleet is routinely rotated for safety and efficiency, and the addition of a pickup truck would improve operational capability for community outreach,

equipment transport, and training activities. He also noted the truck would provide a longer service life and fill functional gaps left by SUV cargo limitations.
Mr. Calfee asked about the model years of the vehicles being replaced, and the Chief confirmed they were 2022 models.

- The item was moved forward.

The fourth item was a contract with Hall Public Safety Upfitters.
Ms. Michael introduced a contract with Hall Public Safety Upfitters for installation of police equipment in the new vehicles.
Chief Smallfield explained that upfitting ensures consistency in equipment layout across all patrol vehicles, allowing officers to operate any unit safely and efficiently under emergency conditions. He also noted that some existing equipment would be reused in the SUVs to reduce costs, while the new truck would require a full upfit.

- The item was moved forward.

The fifth item was anonymous donation of $1,000 to the Police Department.
Ms. Michael introduced an anonymous donation of $1,000 to the Police Department and expressed gratitude to the donor.

- The item was moved forward.

The sixth item was an anonymous donation of $2,000 to the Fire Department.
Ms. Michael introduced an anonymous donation of $2,000 to the Fire Department and expressed gratitude to the donor for their generous donation.

- The item was moved forward.

The seventh item was the 2026-2027 School Resource Officer contracts.
Ms. Michael introduced discussion on School Resource Officer (SRO) contracts for the 2026–2027 school years. She explained that the contracts had been sent to the school board for approval and were expected to return to Council for review the following week. Ms. Michael noted that the contracts largely remain unchanged, with the only adjustment being standard salary increases for the two assigned officers, and confirmed there were no substantive changes to the program.
Ms. West asked for feedback on the expanded SRO presence in the schools, and staff and Council members reported very positive results from the addition.
Chief Smallfield described the program as highly successful, noting strong coordination between officers assigned to the schools, improved safety coverage, and reduced strain on patrol resources. He said officers were described as well integrated into the school environment and effective in their roles.
Council discussion then turned to concerns raised by residents regarding school closures and the emergence of private or alternative educational facilities.

Ms. Michael and others discussed how police calls from non-district schools or academies are typically handled by patrol officers rather than SROs, unless specific circumstances involve known individuals or threats.
Chief Smallfield confirmed that call volume from certain facilities, such as Maplewood, remains relatively low.
Mr. Moskun and others noted that as new educational facilities open, questions may arise regarding security responsibilities and whether private or charter institutions should contribute financially to policing or provide their own security.
Mr. Marovich and others emphasized the importance of ensuring public safety resources are not overextended, while also recognizing the need to respond appropriately when calls for service occur.
Ms. Michael raised concerns about the increasing demand on police services due to non-traditional schools and questioned whether such facilities could eventually be considered responsible for contributing to security costs if they generate significant public safety activity. She emphasized the importance of monitoring the situation and ensuring neighborhood impacts are addressed.
Public comment from Cynthia Miller highlighted that, regardless of school type, children are part of the community and encouraged continued discussion about shared responsibility for school safety and potential collaboration between public and private institutions.

- The item was moved forward.

The eighth item was an Opioid Fund donation to Axess Family Services.
Ms. Michael addressed a discussion of opioid settlement funds, specifically a proposed $5,000 allocation to Access Family Services to support transportation services for individuals being released from jail. She explained that the funding would help sustain a transportation program that reduces downtown disruptions caused by jail drop-offs and helps connect individuals, many of whom are opioid-affected, to appropriate services and facilities. Ms. Michael noted the program had been operating informally and successfully for about a year but required financial support to continue.
Mr. Kairis asked whether the funding would strictly comply with opioid settlement restrictions and whether it applied only to individuals with opioid-related needs.
Ms. Michael responded that the majority of individuals served are opioid-impacted and that the funding represents only a partial contribution to a broader transportation effort.
Ms. Lorence and Council members discussed compliance requirements and the need for documentation to ensure eligibility under settlement rules. Clarification was requested regarding whether all transported individuals must qualify under opioid-related criteria, and whether incidental transport of others would affect compliance. It was noted that final confirmation from legal counsel and the Mayor would be needed before full approval.
Mr. Moskun expressed support for continuing the program, citing its positive impact on downtown conditions and public safety.
Mr. Harper also supported moving the item forward pending final legal review.

- The item was moved forward.

The ninth item was a discussion regarding the Safety Director Position.
Ms. Michael introduced a discussion item regarding the Safety Director position, noting it was for discussion only and not intended for immediate action. She explained that the Safety Director role is currently held by the Mayor under the City Charter and outlined that the position includes oversight of the police and fire departments, emergency response operations, public safety administration, discipline, budgeting, contracts, and enforcement of safety-related ordinances. Ms. Michael raised concerns about the concentration of authority within the combined Mayor/Safety Director role and questioned whether the structure remained appropriate given the current size and complexity of the City's public safety departments. She referenced research and examples from other Ohio communities where public safety responsibilities are separated into a dedicated director position. Ms. Micheal suggested Council consider whether Ravenna should evaluate separating the Safety Director role from the Mayor, potentially even as a part-time position, as part of broader discussions about governance and future Charter Review considerations.
Mr. Harper stated he would like more time to consider the idea but was open to further discussion.
Mr. Marovich indicated the proposal warranted further reading and reflection.
Mr. Moskun supported the concept of having leadership with experience in both police and fire operations, noting the importance of relevant background for the role.
Mr. Calfee expressed a differing view, stating that his initial impression was not in favor of separating the Safety Director role from the mayor and that the current structure has functioned effectively.

- The item was for discussion only.

Management Update
Ms. Michael provided a brief management update, noting the departure of a recently hired police officer who chose to leave the department early in training, describing the separation as amicable and mutually understood. She also highlighted positive community visibility of police officers, including increased foot patrols and engagement with residents downtown, and concluded the meeting shortly thereafter.

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 8:10 P.M.

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council	**Amy Michael, Chairperson** **Public Health and Safety Committee**