

**Ravenna City Council Public Health and Safety Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**August 12, 2019**

The Public Health and Safety Committee Meeting was called to order at 5:44 P.M. by Andrew Kluge, Chairman. Present were: Matt Harper, Paul Moskun, Rob Kairis and Joe Bica. Also attending the meeting were Mayor Frank Seman; Finance Director, Kimble Cecora; City Engineer, Bob Finney; Director of Public Service, Kay Dubinsky; Fire Chief, Geoffrey Cleveland; Police Chief, Jeff Wallis; Larry Silenius of 123 North Walnut Street, Ravenna, Ohio; Clifford Soudil of 434 Woodland Street, Ravenna, Ohio; Deena Tannert of 784 East Main Street, Ravenna, Ohio; Tim Calfee of 910 Murray Avenue, Ravenna, Ohio and Christina West of 732 Eastland Avenue, Ravenna, Ohio.

Mr. Kluge said the first item on the agenda is a discussion of the dispatch staffing.

Chief Wallis said he's been chief for two years and part of the thing they struggle with is finding a sustainable way to maintain staffing and keep appropriate levels of part-time staff and fill the schedule with dispatchers. Two months ago, Randolph approached about possibly coming on as a member; they are leaving Stow and looking for other options. That got them to reexamine the scheduling and how they are staffed. Over the summer, they really ran into several issues with people being off sick, vacations, covering vacations, etc. They started looking at how they could possibly better manage that and come up with a better solution. One of the solutions they talked about was getting rid of the part-time dispatchers, taking the money allocated for that and the money allocated for the overtime for part-time and using that towards two fulltime positions. Having the extra positions will allow to staff each shift with three people, bringing the numbers up from eight to ten. Currently there are four shifts that they cannot fill every week. It's a Monday and a Tuesday; there are two shifts each of those days they cannot fill with fulltime employees because of the way they are staffed, with days off. Having the two extra fulltime employees would cover that time off and have people who have more ownership of being in the department. Right now the part-time staff there really isn't any incentive for them to work more. This summer, with the dispatchers working 12 hour shifts, they get burned out. One of the things that would really help with the overtime in the future would be to have more staff; allowing for three assigned to one shift with one off if need be. If they are adding another fire department, that means they are dispatching for ten fire departments and one police department. The influx of calls and number of calls dispatchers get daily are starting to increase.

Mr. Moskun said he totally agrees with that request.

Mr. Cecora said he thought they would introduce it tonight and discuss it further at Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Bica said he would personally like to see a model of what the current part-time along with the two fulltime positions with benefits, etc.

Mr. Cecora said he took the composite budget for 2020, rolled it up, the annual healthcare, weighed it against two fulltime positions along with the benefits, if they can cover the spread. It's going to be more and can they cover that with a new client.

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Mr. Bica said a new client isn't going to offset that.

Mr. Cecora said that it offsets the increase if they flip it from part-time to fulltime. The scenario is going to show a gap and the cost is going to go up. However, that cost increase is more than covered by bringing on a new client. He doesn't know what the amount will be for overtime and right now they are doing shift fill. If there are issues with filling with the part-time available, they are doing shift fill. He'll take a look at it and prepare it for Committee of the Whole and discuss it later.

Chief Wallis said the way it works right now there are only two assigned per shift. Then there are two who work a night and a day power shift to offset that but they still cannot cover for those shifts. If one person takes the day off they either have to fill that with part-time or pay overtime. Same with the patrol. If there are five officers assigned to a shift and there is a shift minimum of three on patrol, one or two can take the night off and it doesn't lead to overtime. But with the dispatch, it's always an overtime or part-time issue. If they are staffing it with three, there may be nights where if somebody takes a night off, they're not having to fill that with overtime.

Mr. Bica said he is very pleased to hear Randolph may be joining them.

There being no questions or comments, it was decided by those present that the issue would be referred to the Committee of the Whole for further action.

Mr. Kluge said the next item on the agenda is the EMS Grant.

Chief Cleveland said this is a yearly grant that comes from the collection of seatbelt fines in throughout the State. They have been awarded \$3,340.00 and now need to accept the funds.

There being no questions or comments, it was decided by those present that the issue would be referred to the Committee of the Whole for further action.

Mr. Kluge said that he just asked that the city chickens be left on the agenda as a standing item for discussion. He did have a conversation with Ms. Rider who was here making the presentation. Diane Smith pointed him in the direction to find where he could actually see one of these in action.

Mr. Bica said he wasn't at that meeting and asked where they stand with it and what do they continue to discuss?

Mr. Kluge said they are discussing it. The asked to go see one. He was telling Ms. Rider that places like Cleveland, Ohio City, Akron allow them but in the those other areas, there is a very close relationship with the Health Department. Even though the cities are allowing for the chickens they are saying (1) there has to be so many acres on a parcel; (2) there is a permitting

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process through the Health Department and there might be a fee. The Health Department would then be responsible for checking on that but then there is also some enforcement from the City. If there are noise complaints, if they find out the cleanup isn't being kept up, etc. He has a lot of questions as to how they might enforce something like that. It is an interesting proposal and it would be nice and he knows some people who were here at the meeting were behind it but there are a lot of questions that need to be answered before moving it on.

Mr. Bica said that for hundreds of years there have been chickens in the City. His parents can remember it. He's very much for this. He just doesn't think they need to over-legislate something that is so basic and was part of life for hundreds of years here.

Mr. Kluge asked what the minimum space requirement would be. He owns .6 acres compared to somebody like Mr. Bica who owns seven. There is a big difference. The old house they lived at they were at less than a quarter acre. Where do they draw the line. Then with Mr. Finney and zoning, they can have one temporary structure. Would that chicken coop be considered a second temporary structure? He thinks there has to be some legislation in place.

Mr. Bica said there are a lot of cities that do this very successfully and have very few problems. When he looks back at the Italian community at the south end, those were very small lots and there were chickens. He doesn't see it as an enormous problem. He can see if there are complaints. He would object to allowing roosters in the City. He thinks there is legislation in other cities where they could follow their example on something that is very ecological and forward thinking, he thinks, going back to a more grassroots type of environmental issue.

Mr. Kluge said he agrees and if they think they can get answers to the questions. After further discussion, it was decided by those present a work session will be scheduled for Monday, August 26.

Mayor Seman said by way of information, the first meeting with the Police Unions will be this week. It will be a basic meet and greet type of situation. The three unions have elected to bargain separately this year rather than together. The initial meeting will be with all three unions where they will probably talk about general concepts being looked at.

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 6:04 P.M.

**ATTEST:**

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Clerk of Council

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Andrew Kluge, Chairman  
Public Health and Safety Committee