



CITY OF HIGHLAND PARK

BOARD OF POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSIONERS

Return to Excellence

Hubbert Yopp
Mayor

BOARD OF POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSIONERS

Minutes of January 24, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 6:39 pm by Chairman Napoleon.

Roll Call:

Present: Chairman Napoleon, Commissioner Curis, Commissioner Watkins; Secretary Erica George, Chief Coney, Charles Lackey

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of October 18, 2017, were approved.

Fire Department

Chief Coney: "We had a young lady loose her son in the home due to a space heater. The space heater was near a blanket that ignited. The carbon monoxide is what killed him. Now they are trying to get space heaters to cut off automatically. The mom did not have heat in the home. I am looking to have a training session on these type of topics. However, Revival Tabernacle Church gave her a house behind the church but they are working on the roof before moving in. She did not have to pay for the house."

Chairman: "Does she work?"

Chief Coney: "Yes she has two jobs in nursing homes. She recently bought a car before the incident."

Commissioner Curis: "Can the gas company tell you every house occupied that does not have their gas on?"

Chief Coney: "Yes. We just had a house on Avalon that had an illegal hookup. It burned the house down. I asked him if he tried to get assistance. We are still installing smoke detectors to residents. Recently, we hired one male and one female full time employees. We have Detroit as support but we need our own staff."

Commissioner Watkins: "Are the numbers down this year?"

Chief Coney: "Yes. The last two fires were accidental and no arson fires. I have it mandatory that staff train for an hour a day six days a week, which lowers the cost of insurance rates. I watch what they eat as well. Most firemen have heart attacks in the bed due to bad health. When firemen or officers are healthy they feel better which helps them work better and can change attitudes. I am trying to organize a police and fire basketball game and donate the proceeds to families in need. This is also a morale booster. Tomorrow at 9:00 am we are taking fifty-five kids from George Washington Carver who have perfect attendance to the Recreational Center for them to participate in an obstacle course. Lastly, one fire fighter had cancer that came back so he had to resign and wanted to move up North."

Police Department

Lackey: "We have had recent promotions. There was an investigation that Mr. Weather did with Officer Dupree and he has now been demoted to P.O. We have several sergeants promoted based on seniority. However, we have had to discipline some officers such as Officer James Torre due to the incident at Coney Island. Again, he detained and arrested a citizen for filming him after being called to handle a disorderly woman."

Chairman: "Is there a written department policy on recordings or cell phones?"

Lackey: "There was a legal update class that officers were mandated to attend seven months prior to this incident but this officer did not attend. Now we are doing a virtual approved training series that officers can take and receive a certificate."

Chairman: "Does it discuss filming?"

Lackey: "That is apart of it along with many other trainings."

Commissioner Watkins: "Is it illegal to film an officer?"

Lackey: "No. As long as no one interferes with the police investigation. In our citizen complaints, we have seen a sixty percent decrease. Our internal complaints have went up because we are imposing discipline, which is good because now officers are reporting issues."

Commissioner Watkins: "What is the reason for the decrease?"

Lackey: "I can not say specifically."

Chairman: "Hopefully it is due to kinder officers on the street."

Lackey: "Another investigation was a bomb scare on Channel 4 news. A Lieutenant ordered an officer to move a bomb and that was investigated which resulted in disciplinary actions in the form of a two day suspension. The bomb was a World War II device that could have exploded."

Commissioner Watkins: "How did it get there?"

Lackey: "Allegedly there was a guy cleaning up and the former Mayor called in the finding of the bomb. Lt. Edwards arrives on the scene and instructs the officer to load the bomb in a truck and he was ordered to drive it to the station. Also, we have a couple of investigations but none are criminal. The old training reserve academy is under investigation due to the exchange of money. Recently, the Mayor's son was in the news. It was called in as a man slumped over the wheel. We have a complaint that police officers usage of force and the citizen was responsive when being taken out of the vehicle. We have two officers suspended which one was for a sexual remark made towards a lieutenant. The investigations are complete and will be submitted. This is the officer's first offense."

Chairman: "He is a reserve so I say he should be gone."

Lackey: "We had a reserve officer who was called by his daughter at home and stated she was being beat up by security guards in Livonia. He gets there and the daughter is outside. Instead of going to the daughter, he approached the door which was locked so he broke the glass. In this case, they did not charge him. We later found out that racial slurs were used towards the daughter which we think this is why the charges were not brought against him. Another officer had drugs in his house. Detroit Officers said they saw a man selling narcotics off his porch. I gave the officer the chance to go downtown and bring me the paperwork on his case yet he gave me paperwork for a different incident he was involved in. I believe he might be let go. Currently, that is all the active disciplinary actions. We attempted to use Axon for body cameras and they are the only system that triggers when weapons are pulled and vehicle cameras."

Chairman: "Do you get grant money?"

Lackey: "We do. We get about 10.8k. Axon will be approximately 14k a year. It is all cloud based so no deleting recordings. Also, the system can include a part where citizens can submit

complaints anonymously. So far, no homicides. We did have a party bus shooting and a couple people were arrested but no fatalities. We had a hit and run. The person was knocked out of his clothes and in critical condition.”

Commissioner Curis: “Great report and very complete. Do you review citizen complaints and can we get a copy?”

Lackey: “Yes, all complaints are sent to your Highland Park email which is first initial last name @highland parkmi.gov.”

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:46pm

Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 18, 2018, 6:00pm, 2nd Floor Conference Room, City Hall

cc: City Clerk