

Minutes for the February 1, 2022 Safety Committee meeting

In attendance:

Councilman David Phares - Chairman
Councilman Charlie Malta - Committee member
Councilwoman Theresa Bisbee - Committee member
Safety Director/Mayor - Rich Regovich
Councilwoman Natalie Antosh
Councilwoman Monica Koudela
Police Chief Brian Turner
Fire Chief Joe Tennyson

Meeting began at 6:30pm

Party/Event Centers

Chairman Phares stated that the first agenda item was to make a recommendation to send the issue of party/event centers to the Planning Commission for further review. The Planning Commission has seven members and can have public hearings.

We reviewed the suggestions for rules and regulations for party/event centers from the previous Safety Committee meeting. These suggestions included no alcohol allowed, if alcohol is present then security is needed, limit to how late the party can last and possibly limiting these types of businesses to two since two are already operating in the City.

We will also pass along the forms that the City uses to rent out their facilities and the form that Bayridge Condos uses for their facility.

Police Chief Turner wanted to make sure that a provision was added that the business owner was responsible for obtaining security for their events because the Chief could not guarantee that his guys would do it.

Councilman Malta inquired about people bringing their own alcohol to these events and Mayor Regovich stated that it is legal to bring your own alcohol even if the business does not have a liquor license as long as it is not being sold.

Mayor Regovich also suggested that we look at making the penalties for not following the rules tougher.

The Committee agreed unanimously to pass the issue of party/event centers to the Planning Commission.

Marijuana Dispensaries

Chairman Phares began by stating that Wickliffe, Eastlake and Mentor-on-the-Lake all have ordinances pertaining to this issue and they are all alike and are drawn from the Ohio Revised

Code. We could use these as a model to put in place our own ordinance. Chairman Phares also stated that he would like to pass this issue to the Planning Commission for further review.

Mayor Regovich explained the process of getting a marijuana dispensary and how difficult the State makes it. If we choose not to do anything then we would fall back on the Ohio Revised Code which is very strict. We need to keep an eye on what the State is doing in regards to legalizing it but he also feels that a dispensary would have a positive financial impact on the City.

The Committee agreed unanimously to pass the issue of marijuana dispensaries to the Planning Commission for further review.

Fireworks

Chairman Phares stated that we currently have an ordinance in the City, 549.10(f)(2), that prohibits the discharge of fireworks in the City. We can stick with that or we can go with the law that the State is going to pass in July which allows for 20 separate days to discharge fireworks. We would have to repeal the City ordinance.

Mayor Regovich feels that this type of ordinance is impossible to enforce. Chief Turner agrees. During the Fourth of July weekend they just go from call to call. He feels that maybe if the State legalizes it that people will get it out of their systems or maybe not. He is afraid that people will assume that on July 1st it will be legal.

Mayor Regovich would like to see research on firework use in states where it is legal. He wonders whether making it illegal just makes people want to do it. He has heard about states that have never prohibited fireworks not having a problem.

Councilman Malta feels that the State mandated 20 days is too many - maybe just make it the week before and after the 4th of July. Chief Turner thinks maybe we should take this opportunity to be harder on those that violate the State mandated ordinance. If people see that they can set them off on these days and not have the police bother them, then maybe that is the solution.

The Mayor feels that if we stay with the State requirement of 20 days then we will probably be consistent with all the surrounding cities.

Chief Turner feels that if we make residents aware that these are the guidelines set by the State and these are what the City is following, then any violation will result in consequences. He would like to have a zero tolerance policy if you get caught doing it outside of those 20 days. He feels that we should look at making it easier to enforce the law also.

Councilwoman Antosh is against them completely. Her neighbor is constantly setting off fireworks and he never gets caught. They bring in a professional with huge amounts of

fireworks. They land in the woods, on people's houses etc. People line up on 305th Street to watch.

Fire Chief Tennyson wondered if there is a fireworks injury law that maybe some kind of assault charge could be made. Mayor Regovich asked the Fire Chief if there is data on firework injuries. He said there are very few.

Chairman Phares asked Chief Turner if you go back to a house the next day, could you cite the homeowner? He responded that you have to see them actually do it. Witnesses would come into play if they were doing an ongoing investigation but it's difficult to get that point. Video would be the same thing.

The Safety Committee will keep looking at these suggestions and try to come up with a solution to the fireworks issue.

Meeting adjourned at 6:58pm.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David Phares".