

DeWitt Charter Township

Public Safety Committee

1401 W. Herbison Road

DeWitt, MI 48820

January 19, 2010 minutes

Thomas Hendrickson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: David Seeger, Thomas Hendrickson, Thomas Leonard, Sava Vosovic

Members Absent: Bonnie Oetman

Also Present: Chief Russell - PD
Chief Koos - FD

AGENDA

Seeger moved; Vosovic seconded the approval of the agenda. Motion voted and carried.

MINUTES

Seeger moved; Leonard seconded the approval of the January 20, 2009 minutes with the correction of the spelling of “program” in those minutes. Motion voted and carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

A discussion was held concerning the cancellation of the 2009 mid-year PSC meeting because of the lack of agenda items.

NEW BUSINESS

1. *Election of Officers.* Current PSC Chairperson is Thomas Hendrickson. Current PSC Secretary is Bonnie Oetman.

Trustee Seeger moved; Leonard seconded to reinstate Mr. Hendrickson as Chairperson. Motion voted and carried.

Chairperson Hendrickson moved; Trustee Seeger seconded to reinstate Ms. Oetman as Recording Secretary. Motion voted and carried.

2. *DTFD Apparatus Committee.* The Apparatus Committee was formed early in 2009 and has met a number of times since then. Personnel on the Committee visited vendor shows and area fire departments to view apparatus.

The original goal of the Committee was to replace the department's current tanker and current pumper, combining those apparatus into a single pumper/tanker apparatus. After further meetings, and after speaking with vendors, the Committee refocused on the question of “how does DTFD operate”. This led to the decision to purchase two separate vehicles; a pumper and a tanker.

It may not be financially feasible to purchase both apparatus at the same time, but the decision to go ahead and send out specs for both a pumper and a tanker was made. When the specs are returned a final determination of apparatus purchase will be made. It is likely that the pumper will be the priority; the tanker being secondary. The purchase cost will be the determining factor.

Perhaps the pumper will be purchased this year and the tanker purchased next year. Chief Koos is hopeful that the specs will go out later this month following Manager Taylor's corrections. DTFD did apply for a federal grant for a combination pumper/tanker under the Homeland Security Grant Program. Chief Koos has since received an email that DTFD's request was favorably reviewed, and that the grant application was being moved forward for further processing following the Chief's response to additional questions. The fire department's original grant application request was for \$450,000. The grant program staff has cut that back to \$275,000. The Township's share of the grant, if approved, would be \$13,750 (95% from the grant program and 5% from the Township).

Chief Koos has since responded to the email questionnaire that would modify DTFD's request to reflect a purchase of a pumper separate from the tanker, and requesting that DTFD use any grant money for the purchase of separate trucks. If DTFD does not receive the grant, one thought was to borrow against the water fund money, and then pay back that fund rather than assuming a conventional loan.

The cost of each vehicle was discussed. Chief Koos stated that the cost of each vehicle would be determined following the return of the bid specifications, but that in 2008 the Laingsburg Fire Department purchased apparatus that would suggest a cost to DTFD of a few thousand dollars more for the purchase of separate apparatus than would the cost of purchasing a combination pumper/tanker apparatus. The cost of apparatus' has increased due, in part, to environmental additions to the vehicles that add approximately \$20,000 to the cost. Chief Koos suspects that the cost for a pumper would be approximately \$200,000, and that a tanker would be less than \$200,000. The current, older apparatus would be sold.

Chief Koos responded to a question about the SAFER Grant, which puts a full-time employee in a position for three years after which time the Township would pay the employees salary. The Board of Trustees was not willing to support this employee after SAFER Grant expired.

3. DTFD Recap of 2009. A hand-out was given PSC members indicating the number of DTFD emergency responses and when they occurred by day of the week. Chief Koos discussed how the shifts operate, as reflected on the hand-out and the breakdown of emergency run responses during those shifts. Shift 1 is Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Shift 2 is Monday through Friday 5:01 pm to 7:59 am, and Shift 3 is Friday at 5:01 through Monday at 7:59 am. During Shift 1 there are three (3) part-time personnel covering both stations, in addition to the Chief.

If paid-on-call staff is around during an emergency call they respond from their homes. There is no requirement that this staff remain available at specific times to respond to emergency calls. The department has 29 paid-on-call personnel, three (3) exclusive medical personnel, and two (2) Auxilliary personnel. Chief Koos discussed the total number of emergency responses by the department in 2009.

The Fire Department held a Fire Prevention Open House in October. The attending kids were given passports at the Open House which were stamped as they traveled to the various educational stations. At the end, each kid received a certificate and was given a computer disk with their picture, while dressed in fire gear. The FD Open House was a great success.

The Auto-aid Agreement with DeWitt Area FD, Bath FD, and Looking Glass FD for fire related calls is working well. It is very reassuring to know that other departments are automatically coming to the scene of a fire.

4. DTPD Recap 2009. Officer Bill Darnell reported back to work in November 2009. Officer Darnell was a 2008 Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police Award recipient. The police department is glad to have Officer Darnell back.

DTPD received a grant for \$12,754 to initiate a Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). The grant was award in November 2009. These volunteers will patrol the parks, cemeteries, Township owed properties, and assist with traffic control at the Granger Meadows Celebration,

for example. Responsibilities may be added to the group as time goes on. The grant money will be spent on a golf cart, radios, uniforms, and training.

Over 30 people signed up to volunteer, although the final number of volunteers will be less than that number; perhaps 15. Chief Russell has held an initial meeting wherein eight (8) people attended. It seems as if many of the original 30 people are "snow birds".

DTPD also requested grant monies for an \$110,000 crash truck to be used at accidents and for crime scene investigations. The departments call volume for accidents, in some months, is 50% of all calls for that month. At this time DTPD relies on the fire department to help at accidents; handling traffic control, for example. The grant was denied as it did not include language that indicated that the crash truck would be used county wide.

DTPD also applied for a grant for report writing software. The software costs approximately \$65,000. PD's share of this price tag is more than they are willing to absorb, as such the department has cold feet on the purchase at this time.

Chief Russell reviewed the 2009 December report. The department's annual report will have additional information on the department's activities in 2009.

TRUSTEE REPORT

The Police Department's and Fire Department's renewal millage is this year, and will be placed on the ballot for August 3rd. There will be a one mil renewal for police and a one mil renewal for fire. A discussion was held concerning the ramifications should this proposal fail.

The Township still has a fund balance and is holding its own. Looking forward to 2011 and beyond, it is unknown what the State of Michigan revenue sharing will be, and what effect property tax adjustments will make to Township revenues. The reassessment of property taxes (commercial and residential) is an on-going function of the Assessor's Office.

EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS and OTHERS COMMENTS

A discussion was held concerning the role of members of the PSC relative to the millage renewal. In the past a brochure explaining where the money goes had been developed.

The committee discussed meeting in the spring; perhaps in May or June.

Seeger moved; Vosovic seconded the adjournment of the meeting. Motion voted and carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Frederick H. Koos
Fire Chief

Lori Fox
Fire Department Secretary