

**THE CITY OF KENT, OHIO
HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE
WED., AUGUST 5, 2009**

This meeting of the Health & Safety Committee of Kent City Council was called to order on Wed., August 5, 2009, at 7:04 p.m., by John Kuhar, Chair.

PRESENT: MR. AMRHEIN, MR. DELEONE, MR. FERRARA, MR. HAWKSLEY, MR. KUHAR, MS. SHAFFER, MR. TURNER, MS. WALLACH, AND MR. WILSON

ALSO PRESENT: D. RULLER, CITY MANAGER; J. SILVER, LAW DIRECTOR; W. LILLICH, SAFETY DIRECTOR; J. PEACH, POLICE CHIEF; AND L. COPLEY, CLERK OF COUNCIL

ABSENT: J. FENDER, MAYOR

Dave Ruller, City Manager, explained the first issue, dealing with an identity theft policy, was being brought forward as they have to comply with new regulations. He said the City receives account information, and are subject to regulations for the protection of one's identity. He explained **William Lillich, Safety Director**, and **Jim Silver, Law Director**, have been working on this policy.

Mr. Silver said they previously distributed a copy of the policy. He said the federal government is mandating this policy from anyone who deals with personal information. He said this would apply to the entire City, but most to the Finance Department. He said the Police Department already redacts social security numbers. Mr. Silver said they will have some employee training in the next year, to tell people what to look for, and how to keep information secure. He said he does not know of any instances, thus far, where they have done something to cause anyone's identity to be taken.

Mr. Lillich said that all creditors must be alert to misuse. He said the intention is to alert people to watch for identity misuse, like when they apply with water service, using a fictitious name.

Mr. Silver said that they are requesting Council's adoption of this policy as an emergency.

There were no questions nor comments at this time.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE IDENTITY THEFT POLICY AS PRESENTED.

Motion made by Mr. Wilson, seconded by Mr. Ferrara, and carried by a voice vote of 8-0-1, with Mr. Kuhar abstaining.

Mr. Ruller said the next issue dealt with changes in their ambulance contract, adding that Mr. Lillich has been working on this, and is recommending a few fee changes, as well as an update to some of the terms of the contract.

Mr. Lillich said there are some updates in the contract proposal that will meet the requirements for Liferforce Management, as well as bring them into compliance with issues like identify theft. He said that Liferforce must adopt a policy, to protect the City's customers. He said the other inclusions in this revised contracts streamlined methods to deal with small issues in the handling of claims and appeals of claims. He said it gives them the ability to adjust, and enables the City Manager to designate someone to deal with that authority, rather than the Manager doing it every time. He said the Manager is the only authority, currently, to mediate the claims.

Mr. Lillich said a revised fee schedule was included in their information. He said that Liferforce recommended an increase of the amount charged for the ALS 2 service, which is the highest level of service. He said there is a description of this service in the ordinance, and it involves the execution of several elaborate processes. Mr. Lillich said the City does not recommend adoption of the rate change.

He said it would generate approximately \$5,000, but under current times, if the City recommended changes, that could be counter intuitive. Mr. Lillich said there has been an elevation of the accepted loaded mile rate as guided by the federal government. He said they are at \$7,00 per mile, currently and Lifeforce is recommending \$10 per mile. He said this would apply to every loaded run, while the increase in the ALS 2 rate would only apply to 40 runs annually.

Ms. Wallach asked if the mileage increase is recommended by Medicare, and Mr. Lillich said it is approved by them. He said that the Medicare rates are regulated by the HHS, and there is a formula for the region as to what was charged. He said this is the one that is approved and acceptable to them.

Mr. Lillich said they are also defining how they identify the poverty level. He said they are adopting the HHS standard for poverty, which is adjusted annually, on the basis of income and the number of people in the family.

Ms. Wallach asked if most ambulance runs go to Robinson or Akron, and Mr. Lillich said the ordinance requires transportation to Akron, if requested by the resident and if it could be accommodated. He said they are not always able to accommodate that request if the Emergency Rooms are closed. He said Robinson is their primary response hospital, unless it is more serious, and Akron has the Level I Trauma Units. Ms. Wallach asked if Robinson is eight miles, and Mr. Lillich said that was a good general number.

There were no audience comments and no further questions at this time.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE INCREASE IN THE LOADED MILES FOR THE AMBULANCE RATES, DECLINING THE INCREASE IN THE ALS2 AS RECOMMENDED BY LIFEFORCE.

Motion made by Mr. Wilson, seconded by Mr. DeLeone, and carried by a voice vote of 8-0-1, with Mr. Kuhar abstaining.

Mr. Silver said the contract also needs to be revised and approved. A motion was made, but Chair Kuhar said that was in the previous motion.

Mr. Ruller said the next issue is the Bryne Justice JAG Recovery Grant. He said they came to them previously, with the intention of applying, and had to give the indication on how to use the funds. He said the awards have been made, and they were now requesting authorization to accept the money, and authorization to enter into an agreement with Portage County. Mr. Ruller said that based on some of the comments made, particularly with respect to the Citizens Academy, they have revised and reduced it in scope. He said they have included some new training, which is the outgrowth of the community issues they have discussed previously.

Mr. Lillich said a number of funds are available through a variety of grants that have been received by the Police Department, and the available funds total \$83,618. He said when they first met, they talked about using 2008 CDBG funds for neighborhood policing, but those funds have expired because of the program currently in operation. He said they discussed program areas when they presented it previously, and displayed the amount of funds they intended to use, along with their current recommendation. He said a few things have happened to change their recommendations.

Mr. Lillich said they were limited with respect to the new K-9, and had the opportunity to pick "the pick of the litter" with their trainer. He said they picked a real beauty, and had to pay for it right away. He said the Police Chief used forfeiture funds for the canine's acquisition, with the remaining funds coming from the JAG grant. He said the Bike Patrol component is virtually the same.

Mr. DeLeone asked what the dormitory fee was, with respect to the K-9, and Mr. Lillich said it is for the handler, during the training.

Mr. Lillich said the Bike Patrol component includes the cost of doing training, upgrading of the bikes, and adding specialized uniforms and equipment.

He said with the Citizens Police Academy, they now have three sessions. He said they re-examined their expenses and scaled it down.

Mr. Lillich said the most noteworthy component is the Community Policing component, as there is significant interest about what goes on. He said originally, they allocated \$37,700, but with the other adjustments, it is now up to about \$55,000. He said that is not solely the time spent doing the policing, but includes a training program that is being put together and will involve specialists in the field of community policing. He said all officers will be trained, adding some have previous training. He said the newer officers receive training at the basic academy, but this training is more advanced and involved.

Mr. Lillich said they finalized their policy statement, and distributed it to them at this time, for their review in their leisure. He said they feel very positive about the results and successes it can bring.

Ms. Shaffer asked how many officers are involved in the bike patrol, and how often they are out. **Jim Peach, Police Chief**, said they have thirty officers in the patrol division, and all will be participating. He said that they had bike patrolling about twelve to thirteen years ago. Chief Peach said they have about six officers who are enthusiastic, and will train and equip them.

Mr. Hawksley asked if they are out in pairs, and Chief Peach said that even though they have forty-two on staff, they are significantly understaffed. He said this will not replace the cruiser, but is intended to augment that patrol. He said when they do have extra officers, they will have some on bike patrol. He said they had one officer who worked almost a full eight-hour shift on the bike. He said they are not currently dealing with injuries and/or time off, and take advantage of that opportunity when they can afford to do so.

Ms. Shaffer asked if they foresee using them in the evenings, like the 4th of July, and Chief Peach said they have used them in the evening. He said they help with traffic control at parades, and they are fully capable to do patrolling at night. He said they have used them in locations where there has been a series of break ins. Chief Peach said they have used them in other areas of town, such as the west and south sides, and other special needs areas.

There were no comments nor questions at this time.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE JAG GRANT INFORMATION AND ALLOCATION, AS PRESENTED.

Motion made by Mr. Wilson, seconded by Ms. Shaffer, and carried by a voice vote of 8-0-1, with Mr. Kuhar abstaining.

Hearing no further business before this Committee, Mr. Kuhar adjourned this meeting at 7:21 p.m.

Linda M. Copley, Clerk of Council

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

- 1) **TO AUTHORIZE THE IDENTITY THEFT POLICY, WITH THE EMERGENCY CLAUSE.**
- 2) **TO AUTHORIZE THE INCREASE IN THE AMBULANCE "LOADED MILE RATE," DECLINING TO INCREASE THE ALS2 RATE; AND AUTHORIZING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CONTRACT WITH LIFEFORCE.**
- 3) **TO AUTHORIZE THE JAG GRANT INFORMATION AND ALLOCATION AS PRESENTED.**

