



## **SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MAY 23, 2011**

**Committee Members Present:** Donald Nicolard  
Ken Braman  
Bill Mowery (Excused)

**Also Present:** Todd Bergstrom  
Rick Ryland  
Fire Chief Mike Schultz  
Karla Richards

The Safety Committee convened on Monday, May 23, 2011 at 9:02 AM in the Council Chambers of the Safety Administration Building. The meeting was called to order by Donald Nicolard, Safety Chairman.

### **General Topics of Discussion**

#### **Discussion on Fire and EMS Levies-Resolution of Necessity**

Mr. Nicolard stated he was surprised with Mr. Bergstrom's previous comments of not knowing about the Fire Levy PAC. Mr. Nicolard stated that initially it was thought this replacement levy could be one issue, but as it turns out that is not the case. There was detailed discussion on the increasing trend of call volume and Mr. Ryland stated that last week it was double digits all day long. Chief Schultz noted that since 2007 our call volume has increased 13.5%. Mr. Ryland discussed the current 4.6 levy is still split at 2.6 mils for the Fire Dept. and 2.0 mils for the EMS division. This revenue remains the same no matter how much growth and call volume we experience. Chief Schultz stated its like trying to run our station with paychecks from 1996 and 1988 for those levy values; you just cannot do it. Mr. Ryland stated that tight now the current levies are bringing in approximately 2.6 mils in today's money. Mr. Nicolard noted the replacement levies are for the exact same amount of mils, a total of 4.6 combined. Mr. Ryland stated that last week the Fire Dept. saved two (2) lives and if we were not staffed 24/7 those lives would not have been saved. Mr. Bergstrom asked how much revenue does the current 4.6 mills generate each year and Mr. Ryland replied about \$841,000.00 right now and the replacement levies would take us up to about \$1,100,000.00. Mr. Ryland discussed the potential lengths for the levies and that making them permanent as they are now is too far out and they don't get addressed again like they should. If were do these with a five (5) year limitation then that means Council will have to readdress this before that five (5) year is up.

Mr. Ryland noted that according to the recent 2010 Census results, we are one of only four (4) other communities that experienced a population growth. Chief Schultz noted that near the end of the five (5) years he would have to come back to Council and show them exactly how all of the money for these levies was spent. Chief Schultz stated he could do that now and he can account for just about every penny in his budget. Mr. Nicolard stated that if these older levies were done at five (5) years instead of permanent we could have addressed them with only a 1.0 mill with no problem. Chief Schultz stated that last Friday we had five (5) trauma patients transported to various hospitals all within 45 minutes. Chief Schultz discussed the fire training and the fact that our team has the expertise to do more. There was discussion about the ISO ratings and that now we are mostly at six (6) and nine (9). Mr. Bergstrom stated the five (5) year plan makes a lot of sense, but is nervous that it may not generate enough revenue. Mr. Ryland stated he is extremely confident the 4.6 mils will be enough. Mr. Nicolard stated that approximately \$400.00 a year is not a lot to pay and that it was imperative that these are five (5) year levies. Mr. Ryland stated that this shows more credibility to your residents. Mr. Bergstrom cautioned that this could be a risk after the five (5) years if the residents do not approve to renew it. Mr. Ryland stated it's a choice by the residents for the level of service that they are willing to live with and pay for. Mr. Ryland stated if not renewed in five (5) years, then we have to make cuts in shifts and eliminate coverage, no more 24/7. There would be no coverage from 12:00 midnight to 6:00 AM. Mr. Nicolard stated the PAC is trying to build a public relations program for Police and Fire to keep them visible and in touch within the community and informed with the residents. Mr. Nicolard stated he wanted to see this PAC active and strong throughout the next five (5) years if not longer. Chief Schultz discussed the free pizza program the department is doing in the community with Pizza Hut. If you order a large pizza and a Fire Dept. employee delivers the pizza and is permitted to inspect your smoke detector, your pizza is free. Chief Schultz stated he keeps a very tight eye on the spending and we have received a ton of grant money for new equipment. There was discussion about the rapid response to putting out the fire at Grace Church and how most insurance adjusters, inspectors where amazed the church was still standing, which usually does not happen. Mr. Nicolard noted that Chief Schultz was at a funeral the day of the big fire and because of the excellent training, it was someone else who initially handled that fire. Mr. Ryland stated that initially he recommended a 4.9 mill for both Fire and EMS but after reviewing all of the numbers, he realized 4.6 would be sufficient. Chief Schultz discussed other community's budgets for their Fire Dept., and ours in comparison is very low. Mr. Braman stated the residents would vote to approve a five (5) year levy faster than a permanent one. Mr. Ryland stated that if our growth continues as we expect, then in five (5) years we may not need to renew at 4.6 mils, it could be less than that, maybe like 4.0. Mr. Dennis McGlone, a Norton resident, stated he liked the five (5) year plan and that when it comes time for a renewal those almost always pass by the voters, its not a new tax. There was discussion on how much the new 4.6 mils would cost a homeowner, and Mr. Ryland stated he believed it was \$4.60 per \$1,000.00 in valuation. Chief Schultz stated some people pay more each month to have a cell phone. Mr. Nicolard moved to change the drafted legislation from a continuing period of time to five (5) years for both the Fire and EMS levies, seconded by Mr. Braman. Mr. Nicolard indicated this would be addressed later this evening at tonight's Council Meeting during Committee of the Whole portion.

Roll Call:      Yeas:            Nicolard, Braman  
                     Nays                None  
                     Excused:          Mowery

Motion passed 2-0.

**Unfinished Business:**

None

**New Business:**

None

**Public Comment-Non Agenda Items**

None

**Adjourn**

There being no other business to come before the Committee Work Session, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 AM

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Donald Nicolard, Safety Chairman

**\*\*NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE NOT VERBATIM\*\***

**All Committee Meetings will be held at the Norton Safety Administration Building, unless otherwise noted.**