

TOWN OF SCHERERVILLE

SCHERERVILLE, INDIANA

BOARD OF SAFETY MEETING

March 7, 2024

The Board of Safety Meeting was called to order by Eric Graf at 6:30 p.m., in the Schererville Police department Meeting and Training Facility, 2 E. Joliet Street, Schererville, IN.

Attendance was taken with the following Board Members present: Eric Graf, George Kouros, David Eenigenburg, and David Jaroszewski. Staff members present: Police Chief Peter Sormaz, Deputy Chief of Police Steven McNamara, Fire Chief Robert Patterson, Deputy Fire Chief David Meyer, and Recording Secretary Stephanie Bottiger. Also present: Attorney Alfredo Estrada, Town Manager Jim Gorman, and Director of Operations Andy Hansen.

THEREUPON, Amendment of the Agenda

Chairman Graf requested from the Board members present a motion to amend the Agenda, under Old Business, election of new Secretary for the Board of Safety. Motion made by Mr. Kouros, seconded by Mr. Eenigenburg. Motion carries (4 – 0).

THEREUPON, Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Jaroszewski made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 1, 2024 Public Meeting, seconded by Mr. Kouros. Motion carries (4 – 0).

THEREUPON, Correspondence

ITEM A. PD – Thank-you letters

Chief Sormaz informed the Board he received two thank-you letters. The first was from D.P. Fredericks thanking officers for their service. The second one was from Frank Sparkle thanking Officer Zemburski for his professionalism during a call for service.

ITEM B. FD – Thank-you letter & cookies from Tri Kappa

Chief Patterson advised the Board he had received a thank-you letter and a tray of cookies from Tri Kappa in appreciation of what the firefighters do.

THEREUPON, Old Business

ITEM A. PD – Emergency Hire Process Update

Chief Sormaz informed the Board he had recently received the approval from the Indiana Public Retirement System (INPRS) to hire their final emergency hire candidate, Keith Hickok. He went on to add that Officer Hickok has five years previous experience as an officer, most recently with the Clay County Sheriff's Department. Chief Sormaz reminded the Board members the swearing in would take place on March 18, 2024 at 6 pm, as discussed in the Study Session.

ITEM B. FD – NONE

ITEM C. Election of New Secretary

Chairman Graf requested a motion from the other Board members for the position of Secretary for the Board of Safety. Motion for the nomination of David Jaroszewski for the position of Secretary made by Mr. Kouros, seconded by Mr. Eenigenburg. Motion carries (4 – 0).

THEREUPON, New Business

ITEM A. FD – None

ITEM B. PD – Policies for review

Chief Sormaz requested the approval of the Board to approve three policies: Law Enforcement Phlebotomy, Property and Evidence Control, and Use of Force. Chief Sormaz reminded the Board several months ago, the Use of Force Policy was updated, which had been mandated by the Law Enforcement Training Board (LETB) to be implemented by January, 2024. He went on to add that the LETB gave departments an additional six months to update or implement any other language to the policy. Chief Sormaz stated the Attorneys had been over the policy and it was ready for approval. The CALEA (Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies) Customer Service Manager recommended the department implement an exculpatory evidence section for the Property and Evidence Control policy. Finally, the Law Enforcement Phlebotomy Policy states that instead of Officers taking the suspect to the hospital for a blood draw, the blood would be drawn by an Officer. Officer Voss recently attended this class. Motion made by Mr. Jaroszewski to approve all three policies, seconded by Mr. Kouros. Motion carries (4 – 0).

ITEM C. PD – Corporal and Sergeant Promotional Registers

Chief Sormaz advised the Board they could approve both the Corporal and Sergeant Promotional Registers at the same time and both lists would be good for two years. Motion made by Mr. Jaroszewski, seconded by Mr. Kouros. Motion carries (4 – 0).

THEREUPON, Reports

ITEM A. Police Chief

Chief Sormaz advised the Board of the notification of the upcoming retirement of Timothy Arvanitis. His last day will be April 19, 2024.

Chief Sormaz informed the Board, a soft interview room was donated by Project Beloved. Project Beloved strives to “educate, advocate, and collaborate to change the conversation about sexual assault and empower survivors to find their voices”. The soft interview room was implemented in the Detective section of the building and is room number 88 in the United States. He thanked Project Beloved for donating the room.

At this time, Chairman Graf requested Chief Sormaz notify the Board if a retirement party will be held for Sgt. Arvanitis, to which the Chief replied, he would let them know.

Chief Sormaz stated all the reports were in the packet.

For the month of January, 2024, the Patrol Division responded to 1,557 incidents and took 82 accident reports. There were 163 total arrests. The Patrol Division filed 237 charges of which 74 were Class A Misdemeanors, 38 were Class B Misdemeanors, 56 were Class C Misdemeanors, and 69 were Level 6 Felonies. The Patrol Division served 81 total warrants. They performed 647 traffic stops resulting in 378 citations issued of which 123 were local ordinances and 255 were state infractions. 451 warnings were also issued. The Patrol Division performed 156 vehicle searches, of which 31 were K9 vehicle searches. There were 150 Proactive Patrols.

For the month of February, 2024, the Patrol Division Reports were unavailable.

For the month of January, 2024, the Criminal Investigations Division filed 38 criminal charges, of which 17 were felony and 21 were misdemeanor. 8 were filed in Schererville Town Court, 29 were filed in Lake County Court, and 1 was filed in the Lake County Juvenile Court. The breakdown of the 71 cases being investigated by the Criminal Investigations Division for January: 27 Miscellaneous, 9 Theft/Shoplifting, 8 Fraud, 4 Drugs/K9/Overdose, 1 Sex Offense, 1 Auto Theft, 0 Burglary/Home Invasion, 2 Battery/Domestic/Fight, and 19 Ordinance Violations.

For the month of February, 2024, the Criminal Investigations Division filed 72 criminal charges, of which 39 were felony, and 33 were misdemeanor. 11 were filed in Schererville Town Court, 46 were filed in Lake County Court, and 15 were filed in the Lake County Juvenile Court. The breakdown of the 82 cases being investigated by the Criminal Investigations Division for February: 44 Miscellaneous, 24 Theft/Shoplifting, 5 Fraud, 1 Drugs/K9/Overdose, 0 Sex Offenses, 1 Auto Theft, 3 Burglary/Home Invasions, and 4 Battery/Domestic/Fight.

For the month of February, 2024, Schererville Police Officers attended 281 hours of training.

For the month of January, 2024, the Animal Control Division had 31 calls for service, 0 bite reports, and took in 4 animals.

For the month of February, 2024, the Animal Control Division had 25 calls for service, 1 bite report and took in 3 animals.

ITEM B. Fire Chief

Chief Patterson advised the Board the reports were in the packet.

For the month of January, 2024, the Schererville Fire Department performed 31 inspections, responded to 308 incidents of which 254 were EMS related, 21 were Fire related, 29 were Alarms/Investigations, and 4 were Fire Prevention, Inspections and/or trainings. They also attended 501.50 hours of training.

ITEM C. Attorney – NONE

THEREUPON, Board Members Mr. Kouros

Mr. Kouros commended both the Fire and Police Departments for doing a great job at the Sherwood Lake Apartment fire on February 29, 2024.

THEREUPON, Business from the Floor NONE

THEREUPON, Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Eenigenburg made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Jaroszewski. Motion carries (4 – 0). The meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

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ERIC GRAFF  
SCHERERVILLE BOARD OF  
SAFETY CHAIRMAN  
A TRUE COPY

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GEORGE KOUROS  
SCHERERVILLE BOARD OF  
SAFETY VICE CHAIRMAN  
A TRUE COPY