



City of Highland Park

Board of Police and Fire Commissioners

Return to Excellence

Hubbert Yopp
Mayor

BOARD OF POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSIONERS

Minutes of November 17, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm by Chairman Ryan Johnson.

Roll Call:

Present: Chairman Ryan Johnson, Commissioner Michael Curis, Commissioner Brenda Hicks, Commissioner RJ Watkins, Commissioner/Secretary Erica George, Chief Erik Hollowell, Chief Thomas, Lt. McMann, Dir. Lackey

Open Remarks

I want to formally welcome Chief Johnny Thomas. I know you were an asset to the city of Detroit and I know you will be an asset to Highland Park. I would like to welcome city council.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of September 15, 2021 were approved.

Fire Department

Chairman: We just received statistics from the fire department so please review.

Chief Hollowell: The statistics you received via email breaks down the times well and how many runs we had and what they were for. Thank you to Director Lackey. Council is close to sign off on a brand new ladder truck. The truck will be here next week.

Chairman: This is a new truck and not refurbished?

Chief Hollowell: Yes, brand new truck.

Chairman: Any updates on the medical response?

Chief Hollowell: I think having another company with them would help which will help with the wait time.

Commissioner Curis: Thank you for the statistics. Can we get a comparison to last year so we can see if we are trending worst or better than the last year?

Chief Hollowell: Yes.

Commissioner Hicks: How was the Halloween weekend?

Chief Hollowell: We had no fires and one incident.

Chairman: Do you have anything to add?

Lt. McMann: We had a great time over the Halloween weekend. We had so much participation that we ran out of candy and had to buy more. We had a collision but everything else was good. We got a couple new cars. We are hoping to get them outfitted soon. We plan to send a few

reserves to the academy in January. We are close to closing a contract with police to hopefully bring more people to the department. We are still working on charges for homicide cases.

Chairman: Are we behind with getting the cars?

Lt. McMann: Due to COVID, parts are on back order so cars are in different stages. We hope by the end of December everything will be done.

Police Department

Chairman: I would like to give this time to the new Chief.

Chief: I am happy to be here and want to make sure this department is the best in the city.

Chairman: Typically, the commission wants to see statistics from the police department. We would get complaints but it depends on how you want this process to go with Director Lackey.

Commissioner Curis: Thank you and welcome aboard.

Commissioner Watkins: Thank you for joining us and welcome aboard.

Internal Affairs

Director Lackey: I want to welcome Chief Thomas. He came in the door and went to work. He is putting things in place the way they are supposed to be.

Chairman: There was an incident on Woodward with a 3-4 car pileup. The delay was 15 minutes late and I had to call some cars to come to the scene.

Lackey: We met with Detroit last week. We are working on legal matters. They are excited about Chief Thomas being on board. We had a good experience this visit and Detroit responded well to his transition in this position as well. I think we will see a drastic improvement.

Chairman: Can we find out from the people involved what time they called? I want to keep track of the delays. I want to prevent any dangerous situations.

Lackey: The meeting was about the ability to track those runs which we do not have now. We will be able to get statistics on dispatch times, etc.

Commissioner Affairs

Chairman: Do we have any Commission Affairs?

Commissioner Hicks: I am happy to have a new chief on board. Can he tell us a little something about himself other than his professional background?

Chief Thomas: I graduated from an HBCU. I have two children with my wife. I have spent a lot of time in Detroit and Highland Park.

Public Comments

Councilmen Bates: I heard Lt. McMann mentioned getting this contract completed and I want to know if this delay will occur next year.

Lt. McMann: We ran into a problem with the language and the contract is good for two years. We hope to be ahead of this contract before it expires.

Councilmen Bates: Do we have this on the council's agenda?

Lt. McMann: It should be on the next agenda.

Councilmen Bates: The public wants to see what type of runs the city is going on so the public and council can understand these runs. We want to be able to address any further resources.

Lt. McMann: We have the capability to provide that information. As Dir. Lackey stated, we are in the process of getting technology in place so we can get these statistics to you. I know the chief is very statistically driven.

Chief Thomas: With the enhancements we are working on with Detroit we will be able to provide those statistics monthly.

Commissioner Hicks: How are you planning on sharing this information with the public?

Chief Thomas: We can share the information online, community meetings, etc.

Dir. Lackey: When Deputy Chief Tolbert was here he wanted to get this information out as well. As long as administration allows us to get it out there we will get the information out.

Councilmen Armstrong: The biggest concerns of officers coming to the city is past practice. What will we do different?

Chairmen: The hiring issue is difficulty across the country. Our officers do not make a lot of money compared to other municipalities. The officers are being live scanned now. Also, departmental information is being shared amongst other departments which was not happening in the past.

Lt. McMann: The standards are higher now compared to the past. If you have questionable matters in your personnel file. MCOLEs could deny you. Now, it is in the guide that departments would need to go to the previous department to pull their file.

Councilmen Armstrong: I have talked to officers. The pay is not their major concern. In compared to other communities they are making more money. I think looking at retired officers and I will be happy to go out there myself.

Chief Thomas: I would be happy to have a seat with you and discuss your ideas.

Lt. McMann: One of the downriver communities, they gave raises and better benefits which makes it hard for us to compete. I think in the next two years we will get more tax payers and see Woodward coming back which will help as well.

Dir. Lackey: Since Chief Thomas is the current chief. We are in a program called Wrapsback. We are trying to get everyone else in the program. If anyone is fingerprinted in the world we will receive a priority email for any criminal backgrounds and a standard email for all those fingerprinted.

Councilmen McDonald: I wanted to let Lt. McMann know I am glad to hear we will have patrolling going on. Thank you.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:39 pm

Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 15, 2021, 6:00pm, Zoom

cc: City Clerk