

Orting Public Safety Committee Meeting
Multi-Purpose Room
August 16, 2019

ATTENDANCE John Kelly, Co-Chair/Councilmember
 Joe Pestinger, Co-Chair/Councilmember
 Mark Bethune, City Administrator
 Kristin Swanson, Police Clerk
 Chief Chris Gard, Orting Police

Call to Order at 9:30 AM

AGENDA ITEMS

Approval of August 16, 2019 Minutes

Police Department Update

Staffing

The department currently consists of nine police officers, a code enforcement officer and a police records clerk. Chief Gard reported that a lateral candidate is halfway through the hiring process. Similar populated cities have 10/11 officers on staff. The police department currently requires about 60% of the City's general fund. Chief Gard stated that new hire candidates primarily come to the OPD via Public Safety Testing (PST). Applicants select law enforcement agencies of interest and then test through PST. OPD receives a listing of the highest scoring candidates. We have the ability to only select from the provided lists.

Polaris

The Committee discussed the possibility of acquiring a Polaris for the department. Chief Gard reported that a Polaris would be a benefit to the department, however, he stated that three patrol cars need replacing. He indicated that replacing these vehicles is a department priority and would take precedence over the benefits of a Polaris.

Community Policing

Chief Gard reported that by definition community policing means "working with the community to solve community problems." This covers a broad spectrum of activities. He believes every interaction an officer has with the community is an opportunity to provide community policing. Chief Gard reported that the department just purchased a bike rack for the Tahoe and that SRO Boone has been providing ongoing bike patrols on the trail and throughout the community.

Drug Houses

The department has made some recent arrests specifically related to a “drug location.” Chief Gard stated that the department is working with the City’s legal team to also take action, with this location, with nuisance violations. The department expressed reservations with regard to mapping out drug houses in a small city like Orting. Main concern is that it has the potential of hurting investigation efforts. Other concerns highlighted were citizens deciding to patrol areas themselves.

Meeting Adjourned

10:40 AM