

**Murray Public Safety Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, July 14, 2021**

**Held at Fire Department Station #81**

**Time: 6:00 – 7:38pm**

**In attendance:** Chairperson: Alli Garrison; Vice Chairperson: Andrea Washburn; Chief Mike Obrey; Chief Jon Harris; Brian Lohrke; Scott Goodman; John Prestwich; and Deborah Crane.

**Excused:** Police Chief Craig Burnett, Wayne Manu

**Agenda Items:**

1. **Minutes from June 9, 2021 PSA approved.**
2. **Citizen Comments – located for future opportunities**
3. **Murray Fire board ride-alongs and training report**
  - John went Friday, July 9<sup>th</sup>, and discussed his experience with his Fire Department ride-along with Team B. Received a great tour of station, equipment and vehicles. Impressed with the firefighters and their training. His experience included both fire engine and paramedic truck calls.
  - Chief Harris explained the procedure for calls and the process for the fire department to answer the calls. He is currently evaluating the procedures they use to send out firefighters and paramedics on calls and if there are better ways to improve the process of call responses, utilizing the resources the most effective way. Collecting data is costly and may be forthcoming in the future for the use of improvements.
  - On Andrea's ride-along, Friday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, she had a busy experience with five calls. The paramedics demonstrated their procedure for cardiac arrest with a dummy scenario. They received five calls in the 4 hours she was at the station. The calls involved a number of different issues and she was impressed with the team's professionalism and skills.
  - Alli's Fire Department ride-along experience on Thursday, June 17<sup>th</sup> was a busy night for the station. She was able to participate in a scenario with the practice dummy and worked with a paramedic intern assigned to the

- station. She had a number of calls that included health issues, saving small ducklings in a storm drain and a brush fire. Alli in speaking of the experience, was impressed with the multi-department team work and professionalism demonstrated in the different calls of the evening.
- Chief Harris asked the question, "Are you curious of the time spent on a call?" He then explained the medical work and extensive care provided at the scene of a call that is given to each patient which can take time before transportation is possible. The Chief also discussed the cost of the fire engines and trucks along with the equipment, the working order and useful longevity of them for the department. The retired engines are used as reserves giving their work-life of about 20 years.
  - Brian asked if there is an issue with getting new and replacement equipment this last year to the present because of shortages experienced through the pandemic, which both Chief Obrey and Chief Harris reporting they have not experienced any shortage.
  - Brian also indicated that continuous ride-alongs would be beneficial for members of the board throughout our service with the PSA.
  - Scott asked if the fire and police departments have a media spokesperson? Fire and Police both have assigned Public Information Officers (PIOs) on their departments and the city has a consultant that works with the mayor's office. He indicated that some positive media stories would be helpful in turning the tide of unfavorable media coverage of this past year.
  - Alli inquired if everyone on the PSA board would be willing to write up their experience on the ride-along. Review of the citizen's academy to encourage the community to participate in the academy which would create a greater understanding between police departments and the citizens.
  - Brian also shared what we do as a PSA Board can have a positive effect on the community. This can have a great impact on turning the tide on the negative media prevalent today.

- Chief Obrey indicated that the regular Citizen's Police Academy is a 12-week course and can really have an impact on those in attendance. Brian also expressed his professional admiration for the Murray Police for their training and skills. Brian was a Deputy Chief with the Unified and comes to the board with extensive experience.
- The board might consider ways to create more support for the Citizen's police academy. This would be a positive effort for the board.

4. Issues with hiring police officers and fire fighters

Chief Obrey indicated that during this difficulty with negative media representation the department has lost good officers and they have seen turn over as never before. The environment has also changed the candidates that have applied for position in the police department. Viable candidates are becoming harder to find with the standards having to be slightly adjusted to meet society needs today.

- Chief Harris discussed how things have changed in hiring practices to find solid candidates for the fire department. They are spending more training firefighters, whereas in the past the firefighters and paramedics they were hired with the training. They have changed their requirements to find solid candidates.
- Brian asked, "What is the time frame to train a firefighter and paramedic to be ready for duty?"  
*3 months to a year depending on the area of training.*  
Turnover is rare with the Murray fire department. Salaries are comparable to other local departments and that makes it competitive and the benefits are good.
- Brian questioned if the members of the city council and leaders go on ride-alongs with the police and fire?  
They haven't in the past but this might be a great opportunity to see the great work of the fire and police departments.
- Andrea asked, "What things could we as a board do to assist with the issues that the departments are facing?" *This question will be explored further in our board meetings.*

- Chief Harris discussed the possibility of a community breakfast, where the fire department could connect with community to improve the citizen support.
  - The fire and police departments co-sponsor a **Health and Safety Fair scheduled for Monday, August 16<sup>th</sup> – at the park.** This is well attended and response is generally very positive.
  - Deb asked about the different uniforms worn by the Murray police officers presenting in the Citizen's Academy. Chief Obrey explained the uniform standard with the great improvement recently when the department changed to patrol officers wearing equipment vests from the heavy equipment belts. Generally, patrol officers wear the standard navy police uniform and officers assigned to specialty assignments such as the detective unit wearing tan cargo pants and police polos
5. Recent issues and developments or concerns -  
Nothing to further discuss of these issues.

**Meeting adjourned.**