MINUTES
City Council Public Safety Committee

Monday, June 24, 2024 – 3:30 PM
City Hall Council Chambers

Members Present:	Aaron Baker, Chair, Council Member Mac Morrow, Vice-Chair, Council Member Kevin Gallo, Citizen Member Mayor Mauren Copelof, Ex-Officio Member (arrived 3:43pm)
Staff Present	Dean Luebbe, Finance Director Tom Jordan, Police Chief Bobby Cooper, Fire Chief Bradley Elmore, Deputy Fire Chief Wesley Shook, Public Works Director Alex Shepherd, Assistant to the City Manager
Guests:	Linda Gallo, Monica Driscoll, Phil Davis, Peggy Bogardus, Victor Zona, Susan Azar, Janice Castevens, Don and Marcia O'Dell, Billy Parrish, Kay and Barry Argroves, Pat Webb, Katie Blazan, Morris Jenkins, Heather Richardson

A. Welcome & Call to Order

Committee Chair Aaron Baker welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM.

B. Certification of Quorum

Assistant to the City Manager Alex Shepherd certified that a quorum was present.

C. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Mr. Morrow, seconded by Mr. Gallo to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

D. Approval of Minutes

1. May 28, 2024

Motion by Mr. Gallo, seconded by Mr. Morrow to approve the minutes from May 28, 2024 as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

E. Update on Transportation Working Group

Mr. Baker said we will look for an update at the next committee meeting.

F. Railroad Ave – Lighting, Parking, Crosswalk, and Traffic Schedule

Mr. Shook informed the committee that we have bids for the lighting, and they should be able to do a lot of it off the building. However, we are still waiting for quotes on the bridge and parking lot lights.

Mr. Baker asked about the Railroad Ave parking.

Mr. Jordan mentioned that this is closely tied with the Transportation Working Group. He said the lining has been done, but they need to take measurements to determine how many parking spaces will fit. There is also an issue with the curbing.

Mr. Shook said the curbing should be installed within the next two months.

Mr. Morrow asked about the dog park lighting, noting that it's a Duke Energy issue.

Mr. Shook said it has been two or three years.

Mr. Morrow mentioned that we should address it as well because it's a security issue.

Mr. Luebbe said he will contact Mr. DeBrew at Duke Energy.

G. City/County Fire Contract Discussion

Mr. Cooper informed the committee that we met with Mr. Hooper and Mr. McKeller. He said Mr. Hooper was going to meet with the Transylvania County Manager to discuss the contract. Mr. Cooper mentioned that he doesn't believe the County will provide additional funding. We ran 2,500 EMS calls, while the County ran 5,000 EMS calls. We only have four full-time staff, whereas the County has twenty-six.

H. Animal Control Policy

Mr. Jordan produced a drafted policy, which he said will need to go back to the drawing board. He hoped to use the County's Dangerous Dog Review Committee and had expanded some of our definitions to align more closely with the County's. However, the County has informed him that they do not wish to allow the City to use their committee. He said we will need to appoint our own Dangerous Dog Committee, which can be difficult due to the need for volunteers and specialists.

Mr. Morrow said that moving forward, we would need to recruit people to serve on this board.

Mr. Jordan noted that our ordinances already designate an appellate board, appointed by the Council, which includes a veterinarian and two citizens to review these matters.

Mr. Morrow asked if we need the City Clerk to advertise for the board.

Mr. Jordan said yes, unless we choose to rewrite the ordinance and have the Council approve the changes.

Mr. Gallo asked if Mr. Jordan has had a chance to look at the suggestions or comments related to the draft.

Mr. Jordan said they came to him late, so he has not had a chance to review them yet but will do so.

Mr. Baker asked what the next steps are.

Mr. Jordan said they will review the suggestions and comments, determine what is feasible, and prepare another draft by the next meeting.

Mr. Baker asked if the City Attorney has reviewed the draft.

Mr. Jordan said a lot of it has been reviewed, noting that these matters are very delicate, and they will have the City Attorney review the draft further.

Mr. Baker mentioned that the ordinance already establishes a board.

Mr. Jordan confirmed that if a dog is designated as dangerous and the owner appeals, it would go to this board for appeal.

Mr. Baker asked about the composition of the board.

Mr. Jordan said it is to be comprised of a practicing veterinarian and two public citizens appointed by the City Council. He added that having an appellate board is important because, similar to the County, any further appeals would go to the Superior Court in Transylvania County.

Mr. Baker suggested that while drafting the policy, they should go ahead and advertise for the board so it can be in place when the policy is finished.

Mr. Jordan said he will mention this to Mr. Hooper and the City Clerk to discuss options.

I. Handicap Parking Spaces

Mayor Copelof said this refers to the two handicap spaces on Main Street, one in front of O.P. Taylor's and the other in front of Red Wolf Gallery. Over the last eight months, several people have fallen and sustained serious injuries, such as broken bones and lacerations. She mentioned that she has asked staff to look into ways to prevent this from happening.

Mr. Luebbe said he directed Mr. Shook to order rails today to help prevent people from falling. He added that they plan to install signs to warn people as well. This has been a collaborative effort involving the Mayor, Planning, NCDOT, and Public Works.

Mayor Copelof noted that when they painted the spaces blue and yellow, they thought it would provide enough contrast to warn people, but it didn't.

Mr. Baker asked if they have spoken to the Downtown Master Plan Committee or Heart of Brevard.

Mr. Luebbe said they have not yet because it was a recent development, but if the committee overrules it, they can remove the rails. However, it is a safety issue.

Mr. Gallo asked if this was an experiment by NCDOT, as he could not find any recommendations for this design.

Mr. Shook said he has not seen that design before.

J. Public Comment

Mr. Jenkins said that on the southwest corner of Caldwell St. and Main St., where the crosswalks come together, there is a bump on the curb that is not painted. There is a similar situation on Broad St. and Main St., but that one is painted. He recommended painting the bump on Caldwell St. and Main St.

Mr. Davis informed the committee that he is representing the Deer Lake Homeowners Association. He said there is no sidewalk on Deer Lake Rd near the car wash, and there are many walkers in the community. He mentioned that he would like the committee to consider installing a sidewalk in future plans. He has been working with Mr. Shook, who has been trimming trees and bushes to keep people from having to walk in the street. They have also been discussing putting down gravel and wood chips to act as a temporary walking path.

Mr. Baker mentioned that there is a comprehensive sidewalk plan, and they can double-check to ensure that this area is included.

Ms. Azar thanked the committee for the proposed changes to the ordinance. She mentioned that no charges have been filed regarding the incident when her dog was attacked, not even a leash law violation. She asked why no charges have been filed.

Mr. Jordan informed her that the animal services officer is still investigating, and he will talk to the officer to find out the status of the investigation.

Ms. Azar noted that the current ordinance has language to label the dog as a dangerous dog and asked why it hasn't been labeled as such.

Mr. Jordan said he is waiting for the animal control officer to complete his investigation, which should be soon.

Ms. Webb asked why it seems that dangerous dogs, which are a public safety issue, don't receive much attention.

Mr. Jordan assured her that the matter is given attention.

Ms. Webb mentioned that they have a new bed and breakfast on their street, and visitors are unaware of this situation. She asked if the City would have any liability if another incident occurred and the City had done nothing despite being aware of the dangerous dog.

Mr. Jordan said that it is a hypothetical legal question, and the City Attorney is not here to provide information.

Ms. Richardson mentioned that her dogs were also attacked. She asked what other information would be useful for the police to make a determination.

Mr. Jordan said it is very important to report all instances to law enforcement because they can only take action on what they know about.

Ms. Driscoll said if the leash law is in the ordinance and this dog has repeatedly gotten out, they shouldn't have to wait until a new policy is created to take action.

Mr. Jordan said most times they need to see the dog in the act to take action.
Linda Gallo asked if the speed cushions have been ordered.

Mr. Shook said they have not, but they should know something by the end of the week.

Mayor Copelof mentioned that sidewalks where utility work has been done are not repaired properly and are just filled with gravel. She said this poses a risk to handicapped people.

Mr. Shook said a lot of these repairs are done by the gas or power company, but the City often ends up repairing them. However, a contractor is supposed to handle the repairs.

Mr. Luebbe said he will call Mr. DeBrew with Duke Energy about the issue.

Mr. Gallo mentioned that they walked down the temporary sidewalk in front of where the hotel is supposed to be built and asked if there are any updates on installing a permanent sidewalk.

Mayor Copelof mentioned that the developers should have financing in place by the end of June. They have held off on forcing them to install the sidewalk because they believe that construction is imminent.

K. Set Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Public Safety Committee will be on Monday, July 22, 2024 at 3:30 pm at City Hall.

L. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:26 PM.

Minutes Approved: July 22, 2024

X Aaron J Baker

Aaron Baker
Chair, Council Member

X Denise Hodsdon

Denise Hodsdon
City Clerk