

TOWN OF SCHERERVILLE

SCHERERVILLE, INDIANA

BOARD OF SAFETY MEETING

September 7, 2023

The Board of Safety Meeting was called to order by Chairman David Eenigenburg at 6:30 p.m., in the Schererville Police Department Meeting and Training Facility, 25 E. Joliet Street, Schererville, IN.

Attendance was taken with the following Board Members present: David Eenigenburg, Rich Pietrzak, Mike O'Rourke, George Kouros, and Eric Graf. Staff members present: Police Chief Peter Sormaz, Fire Chief Robert Patterson, Deputy Fire Chief David Meyer, and Recording Secretary Stephanie Bottiger. Also present: Attorney Lauren Ehardt in lieu of Attorney Alfredo Estrada, Town Manager Jim Gorman, Director of Operations Andy Hansen, and Schererville Town Council President Tom Schmitt. Absent: Deputy Chief of Police Steven McNamara.

Moment of Silence for Gerald Pannaralla

Chief Sormaz requested of Chairman Eenigenburg a moment of silence for recently retired Volunteer in Police Service (VIPS) Commander Gerald Pannaralla, who passed away on August 9, 2023. Gerry Pannaralla started with the VIPS on September 26, 2013 and dedicated the next ten years to serving the Police Department, never saying no to any request. A moment of silence was held.

THEREUPON, Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Pietrzak made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 3, 2023 Public Meeting, seconded by Mr. Graf. Motion carries (5 – 0).

THEREUPON, Correspondence

ITEM A. PD – NONE

ITEM B. FD – Thank-you letter from the Dyer/Schererville Library

Chief Patterson informed the Board he had received a thank-you letter from the Dyer/Schererville Library. Each year they hold a Summer Reading Program which culminates in a celebration. The Fire Department attended with a truck and sprayed water while the children ran through it.

ITEM C. FD – Thank-you letter from the Scully Family

Chief Patterson advised the Board he had received a thank-you letter from the Scully family. On June 12, 2023 the Fire Department responded to a medical aid call for the husband. The family thanked the Fire Department for the kindness showed to their family member.

ITEM D. FD – Two thank-you letters from Highland Fire Department

Chief Patterson notified the Board he had received two letters from the Highland Fire Department. The first letter thanked the Fire Department for their assistance with the memorial service held for Fire Chief Timmer who passed away on August 14, 2023. The second letter thanked the Fire Department for their assistance with the fire at Traditions Restaurant on August 27, 2023.

THEREUPON, Old Business

ITEM A. PD – NONE

ITEM C. FD – NONE

THEREUPON, New Business

ITEM A. FD – NONE

ITEM B. PD – New Hire Process – Conditional offer of Employment

Chief Sormaz recommended the Board extend the conditional offer of employment to the number one applicant on their current list, Brett Bandstra. Chief Sormaz also requested that, in the event Brett Bandstra does not accept the offer, that he, as Chief, be authorized to select the next available applicant to accept the position. Motion made by Mr. O'Rourke, seconded by Mr. Pietrzak. Chairman Eenigenburg asked if there was any discussion to which Mr. Graf stated yes. Mr. Graf asked Chief Sormaz for clarification. He confirmed with Chief Sormaz that not all of the backgrounds on the ten applicants had been completed. Chief Sormaz verified that this was correct and stated that they were working through all of the backgrounds. Mr. Graf then asked, if the number one candidate declines the job, the determination of how far down the list to go would be based solely on his (Chief Sormaz's) discretion, to which Chief Sormaz replied yes. Mr. Graf was concerned that the Board would not have any input on the selection of the next applicant. Mr. O'Rourke asked if could amend his motion, to which Chairman Eenigenburg replied, yes, he could. Discussion continued for several minutes in regards to the wording of the motion, holding a special session, and reviewing the other backgrounds, once they were completed. Attorney Ehardt advised the Board the amended motion should state: the Board allows Chief Sormaz to offer the conditional offer of employment to the number one applicant on the list and should he decline the offer, the Board would reconvene in a special session for further discussion. Amended motion made by Mr. O'Rourke, seconded by Mr. Pietrzak. Motion carries (5 – 0).

THEREUPON, Reports

ITEM A. Police Chief

Chief Sormaz stated all the reports were in the packet.

For the month of July, 2023 the Patrol Division responded to 1,827 incidents and took 106 accident reports. There were 225 total arrests. The Patrol Division filed 347 charges of which 135 were Class A Misdemeanors, 62 were Class B Misdemeanors, 69 were Class C Misdemeanors, 6 Level 5 Felony, and 75 Level 6 Felonies. The Patrol Division served 81 total warrants. They performed 974 traffic stops resulting in 590 citations issued of which 142 were local ordinances and 448 were state infractions. 584 warnings were also issued. The Patrol Division performed 168 vehicle searches, of which 34 were K9 vehicle searches. There were 234 Proactive Patrols.

For the month of August, 2023, the Patrol Division reports were unavailable.

For the month of August, 2023, the Criminal Investigations Division filed 53 criminal charges, of which 29 were felony, 22 were misdemeanor, and 2 were Federal. 6 were filed in Schererville Town Court, 45 were filed in Lake County Court, and 2 were filed in Federal court. The breakdown of the 47 cases being investigated by the Criminal Investigations Division for August: 21 Miscellaneous, 13 Theft/Shoplifting, 8 Fraud, 2 Drugs/K9/Overdose, 1 Sex Offense, 0 Auto Thefts, 0 Burglary/Home Invasion, and 2 Battery/Domestic/Fight.

For the month of August, 2023, Schererville Police Officers attended 223.5 hours of training.

The Animal Control Division reports were unavailable at the time of the meeting.

ITEM B. Fire Chief

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

For the month of August, 2023, the Schererville Fire Department performed 12 inspections, responded to 364 incidents of which 292 were EMS related, 38 Fire related, 32 were Alarms/Investigations, and 2 were Fire Prevention, Inspections and or trainings. They also attended 583.8 hours of training.

ITEM C. Attorney – NONE

THEREUPON, Board Members

Chairman Eenigenburg

Chairman Eenigenburg advised the Board that approximately three weeks ago there was an incident at his residence that required an ambulance. He went on to thank the Fire Department for their professionalism and courteousness.

THEREUPON, Business from the Floor NONE

THEREUPON, Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Pietrzak made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Graf. Motion carries (5 – 0). The meeting was adjourned at 6:39 p.m.

DAVID
SCHERERVILLE
SAFETY
A TRUE COPY

EENIGENBURG
BOARD OF
CHAIRMAN

RICHARD PIETRZAK
SCHERERVILLE BOARD OF
SAFETY VICE CHAIRMAN
A TRUE COPY