

MINUTES
City of Elkhorn Police & Fire Commission
Wednesday June 22, 2011 @ 6:30 P.M.
City Hall Lower Conference Room

- I. **Call to Order:** Tom Lee called meeting to order at 6:31 P.M.
- II. **Roll Call:** Commissioners Present: Dana Kelnhofer, Tom Lee, Kathy Murray, Robert Sharp.
Commissioner Bray arrived at 6:33 P.M.
- III. **Withdrawals from Agenda:** There was one withdrawal from agenda. Fire Chief will not be present; therefore, there will be no monthly reports as indicated on agenda.
- IV. **Approval of Agenda:** Motion Kelnhofer/Sharp to approve the agenda. Motion carried by majority present.
- V. **Approval of Minutes:** Motion Kelnhofer/Sharp to approve the 03-30-11 minutes. Motion carried by majority present.
- VI. **Public Comment:** Chief Christensen wished to introduce Alderman Jerry Anderson to the Commission as the new Council Liaison. Kathy Murray was also introduced as the new Commissioner replacing Brad Wales.

VII. **Items of Business:**

1. Election of Officers

President: Bray nominated Tom Lee as President.

Kelnhofer made a second motion for Lee as President.

Kelnhofer made a motion to close the nominations.

Sharp made a second motion to close nomination.

Motion carried: **Tom Lee elected President.**

Vice President: Bray nominated Dana Kelnhofer as Vice President.

Sharp made a second motion for Kelnhofer as Vice President.

Sharp made motion to close the nominations.

Bray made a second motion to close the nomination.

Motion carried: **Kelnhofer elected Vice President.**

Secretary: Kelnhofer nominated Bob Sharp as Secretary.

Bray made a second motion for Sharp as Secretary.

Kelnhofer made a motion to close the nomination.

Bray made a second motion to close the nomination.

Motion carried. **Sharp elected as Secretary.**

2. Police Department

1. Monthly Reports:

Chief Christensen advised the Commission that the actual call volume going down, which is a positive sign.

Commissioner Sharp inquired if Elkhorn Police Department was live yet with the new software program, Pro Phoenix. Chief Christensen advised the department has not gone live yet on the program.

Commissioner Bray commented that he found it interesting looking at the different type of calls the department handles.

2. Chief Christensen at this time introduced Officer Robert Rayfield to the Commission. Officer Rayfield informed the Commission of his schooling and previous experience with the department as a Community Service Officer, prior to be hired full time as a patrolman in 2009. Officer Rayfield then introduced the neighborhood portfolio exercise that he completed while in the PTO program.

The Neighborhood Portfolio Exercise (NPE) gives the officer who is participating in the PTO program the skills and methods to solve problems, promotes problem oriented policing. The PTO program was started with Officer Brandl. Officer Rayfield has identified the Property Maintenance Code as his exercise. Officer Rayfield chose this exercise because when he was a Community Service Officer with the department, identified the problem and suggested solutions.

Officer Rayfield went on to identify what type of property maintenance problems there are in the City. He identified abandoned vehicles, storage of junk, unkempt property (grass mowing) and actual building maintenance as the sources of the problems that our Department has experienced over the years. Officer Rayfield also explained why these violations are a problem. He indicated that these violations will invite crime to the area, animal infestation and it will also decrease property value and that everyone is affected by the problem.

Officer Rayfield then explained the process that the department takes with identifying the problem, how the property owner is notified and educated about the problem and the training that is required from the officers, stressing that all officers need to be consistent with the expectations of correcting the problem. Documentation is also a key part to the process and then communicating the findings to the appropriate authority and making sure to follow up with the property owner.

Officer Rayfield shared some statistics that showed a 49% decrease in these types of violations since 2008. Commissioner Kelnhofner asked if there was any documentation that showed repeat offenders. Officer Rayfield did not have that information.

Officer Rayfield then showed the Commission before and after shots of certain type of properties and the violations. The property at 428 E. Geneva has improved and

Commissioner Lee asked what the plans were for that property now that the City owns it. Suggestions were offered and Alderman Anderson offered the idea of possibly creating a petition to change the zoning if necessary.

Commission Murray inquired about the long grass ordinance. Officer Rayfield advised that the height can be no higher than a foot. Chief Christensen then advised the Commission that our Department identified those residences and then sent them over to the Dept. of Public Works and they in turn send out notices to the property owners to become compliant, if they do not become compliant, the DPW employees will mow the grass and it is then assessed on their property taxes.

Commissioner Murray also inquired about snow removal, what is the ordinance for that. Officer Rayfield informed the Commission that each sidewalk should have an 18" path and that the snow should be removed within 24 hours of the snowfall. Chief Christensen said the Council was revisiting this ordinance however as there needs to be some possibly policy changes. Commission Murray expressed that she feels the City does a great job with snow removal.

Commission Lee asked about mobile homes, how long can they stay on the property. Chief Christensen said it may also depend on where you live, if there are covenant laws in that certain subdivision. The Chief advised the ordinance identifies the length the mobile home must be and that there should be a storage unit on the property to house that mobile home.

Chief Christensen advised the Commission that recently the Property Maintenance Code has been an odd item at Council meetings. The Council thought there was cause for concern but didn't really have an understanding of what was being done by the Department. Chief Christensen advised the ordinance is delicate when you have to start demanding property owners to paint their property or make improvements. It has become difficult with the economy the way it is to enforce these violations. The amount of foreclosures has also made it difficult because many times the Department does not know who actually owns the property. Commission Kelnhofer asked if there was low interest programs for the homeowners like there was a couple years ago for local businesses. Chief Christensen advised there was not and Alderman Anderson also advised that the business program for local businesses has stopped. The City must first look at the safety part of the violation and the wording of the ordinance is tricky and must be understood.

Commissioner Bray thought the idea of going door to door was effective and Officer Rayfield agreed with him.

Commissioner Lee asked if there were multi families living in single family homes in the City. Officer Rayfield and Chief Christensen were unaware of any.

Chief Christensen then had Officer Rayfield share with the Commission his expectations of the program and what he has learned through the PTO program. Officer Rayfield expressed that daily journaling was so important to the program, along with the problem base learning exercises.

Alderman Anderson also agreed how important it is to journal and that each person learns differently, hands on is a great process of learning. Chief Christensen agreed with Alderman Anderson, saying that each officer is tested prior to the onset of the program and this identifies what type of learning will best work for the officer.

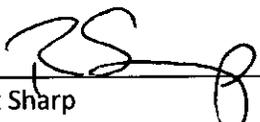
Commissioner Kelnhofer expressed her appreciation for the level of involvement the Department is taking with the community.

Commissioner Sharp asked where citizen complaints about these type of violations originate, do they call the department or where? Chief Christensen advised that there are times that the Department receives complaints, but majority of the time, they are called in directly to DPW.

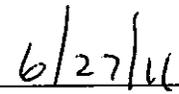
Motion: Sharp/Kelnhofer to have Alderman Anderson recognize Brad Wales at the next City Council meeting, for his 10 years of service to the Commission. Motion carried by majority present.

VIII. Set and Confirm Next Meeting: Commission decided that if a meeting was necessary in July there would be one on 07-27-11 at 6:30 P.M.

IX. Adjournment: Motion Murray/Kelnhofer to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried by majority present. Meeting was adjourned at 7:35 P.M.



Robert Sharp
Secretary Elkhorn Police and Fire Commission



Date