

**SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES**

September 13th, 2011
5:00 P.M.

Council Committee Members: Chair Mark Masser, Matt Lampke, Jed Morison

Roll Call: Chair, Mark Masser and Jed Morison. Matt Lampke's absence was excused due to military leave.

Others Present: Mayor Brennan, Lou Chodosh, Bill Harvey, Ben Kessler, President McClelland, Chief Rinehart and Richard Sharp.

Review of Minutes: July 12th, 2011 - Approved

Report of Chief of Police: Chief Rinehart stated there has been an increase in calls. He said the number of calls received this year has exceeded last year's calls and we are only in September. He said the police car number 56 is now equipped with new technology that actually reads license plates of cars and check to see who they are registered to and whether or not they have been stolen. He said the technology cost was over \$20,000 but was all paid for through grants. There were no city funds involved. He said this is a great tool for the agency.

Mr. Masser said he had received emails and read some articles about the activities by the Capital University students. Chief Rinehart said most of the issues were caused by freshman students and the parties always crank up fast at the beginning of the school year. He said they arrested four young men. He has met with Capital's police staff and the City Attorney regarding these issues. Chief Rinehart said he also spoke with the Capital University football team. Mr. Chodosh said the press referred to the crime as a "violent" offense. Since it was worded in this manner, Capital University had to send an alert to all of the students. Chief Rinehart said it had been defined as a "sexual assault". After further investigation, it reflected an extreme amount of alcohol was involved. He said there was another incidence where a student was pinned against the wall and touched inappropriately. He said this young lady is one we would all be very proud of for using great defensive skills.

Mr. Masser asked what type of authority the Capital police force has in handling students? Chief Rinehart said they do have the authority to make arrests and has the same authority as the Bexley police officers within the boundaries of Capital University property and bordering streets. If a felony occurs, they can handle that in any location. He said they have a very good working relationship with the Capital University police force.

Report of Mayor/Safety Director: Mayor Brennan said he has been out a couple of mornings to Montrose to observe the traffic. He said he observed two afternoons when school was adjourned as well. He said there were no problems in the morning because Piada does not open until 11:00 a.m. He spoke with Katie Anderson who works in the principal's office and she was concerned about the litter being left on their property in the evening hours. Mayor Brennan said he contacted the manager of Piada and they will start doing a clean-up check at closing. Several people had contacted him regarding the alley traffic going west. He thinks it has worked out well by not changing the direction and does not foresee any future changes. He said Dale Avenue project is in the process of being wrapped up.

Special Guest: Dr. Mike Johnson, Bexley School Board

Mr. Masser thanked Dr. Johnson for his attendance and wished more residents were present to hear his comments. Dr. Johnson said he visited schools for three days along with Chief Rinehart. He said he had originally suggested the alley be changed in relation to the traffic flow, but since speaking with individuals and observing the traffic flow, he said Mayor Brennan's recommendation was a good one. He said Piada deliveries occur early and the bus stop is on the other side of the school. Parents can cue up behind the other cars so he did rescind that request.

Dr. Johnson said people have expressed concerns about the landscape. It is difficult to turn right onto Main because of the landscape on the corner from Piada's lot. He is concerned if action is not taken to correct that problem, a child may be injured because it affects the visibility.

Dr. Johnson said he understands Council and residents have had a lot of discussion regarding the flashing traffic light. He said the schools and the city split the costs for the speed signs and all is well. He thanked Council again for all their help with these matters and said he would defer to the wisdom of this group and their decisions.

Mr. Masser said he spoke with Anna Wernicke who is a crossing guard at Montrose. He said she is a good person for the school. Mr. Masser said he thinks things are working well which is reflected in the lack of attendance by residence at this evening's meeting.

Mr. Kessler inquired about the possibility of closing the alley to traffic. Dr. Johnson said everyone is satisfied and he would not recommend any changes at this time. Mr. Kessler asked about the traffic signage. Mr. Kessler expressed concern about an approaching sign. Mr. Harvey said it has to be placed 300 feet before the school according to regulations. Chief Rinehart said the signs meet the codes listed in the Ohio Revised Code and wouldn't agree to remove any signs. Chief Rinehart said he would agree it is not posted clearly enough "School Zone". Mr. Kessler said Maryland has great signs and even extend to Cassidy. Mr. Masser said they could look at signage. Mayor Brennan said he did request some homeowners to trim their bushes and make some improvements in the vision around Montrose school.

Mr. Kevin Brashear, 767 Euclaire Avenue – Mr. Brashear said he did a lot of research over the summer concerning his concerns with Montrose and traffic. He said the Ohio Revised Code sets regulations for the speed limits in 45.11, Section 2. He said he greatly appreciates the sign that was added and hopes the police force will continue to enforcement the speed limit. He said 45.11; Section 2 of the Ohio Revised Code clearly states the regulated speed requirements. He said he still has three main concerns:

1. He would hope that the funds with the Main Street TIF funds for capital improvements would include more school signs.
2. He said he realizes everyone is concerned about the city's finances. He hopes for the sake of safety, there will be no cuts to the police force and hopes the funds will be for added signage and patrolling of the schools.
3. He would like to see all the rules and regulations be made uniform for everyone in the city concerning school signs, speeds, etc. so it will not be as hard to enforce. Maryland has flashing light signs and so does CSG and he thinks it should be uniform throughout all of the schools.

Mr. Kessler said the Main Street guidelines do refer to uniform issues and expenditures regarding sidewalks, etc. He would be interested in having Mr. Brashear participate in this process.

Mr. Masser said each school is unique. Montrose is certainly not a “stepchild” and will be treated fairly. Mr. Masser said they will be taking a look at the sign issue.

Mr. Brashear said he has concern after reading the past Finance Minutes and Safety Minutes that the police department has been reduced by one officer. He said that is unacceptable when the money has been budgeted and the funds are there to have a replacement. He thinks they are waiting for the tax levy before replacing the needed officer.

Mr. Masser said they had all voiced their opinions on that issue. Mr. Brashear said everyone in the community is pro-police.

Anna Werhicke, 733 Vernon Road – Ms. Wernicke said the focus had been on Piada and things went a lot smoother than anticipated. She still thinks there is improvement for a few things. The teachers park on Remington and they have almost been hit there twice. She said the problem area is on the north and south side. She said she had concerns with individuals pulling out of Piada and turning right. Kids use that alley all the time but mainly in the afternoon. A stop sign there might possibly help. She said the weather has been good and Piada graciously allows the parents to park on their lot.

Robin Jones, Vernon Road said she has noted parents who will stop and pick up their student on Main Street. She said while walking past the school, she noticed they have a large front yard area. She asked why not use it as a circle drive? She realizes there is a tree there but isn't it more important to save a child than a tree?

John Offenberg, 33 N. Remington – Mr. Offenberg said he drives by Montrose on a regular basis and he does not think it is clear where the school zone starts or stops. He suggested marking the street in yellow to help clarify the school zone.

Steve Keyes - Mr. Keyes asked why the alley shouldn't just be closed down. He does not think closing the alley should be dismissed as an option.

Mr. Masser said he believes the signage is the main key.

Mr. Harvey said the alley is used for traffic. Children should not be walking down the alley. Adding yellow lines does not help keep the children safe from cars. The alley is a traffic zone, not a pedestrian zone. He said the yellow lines would give a false sense of security and it is not a walkway.

Ms. Wernicke said the parent drop off the children in the alley. She would not recommend closing the alley; you can't have parents dropping off children in the middle of the street.

Mr. Harvey said his point is simply, children should not be walking in the alley. Mr. Masser said when he was visiting the school; he actually saw a mother, father and child walking down the alley. He said the work Ms. Wernicke does at the school is incredible. Mr. Masser thanked Dr. Johnson again for his attendance.

Adjourned 5:55 p.m.