



PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE REGULAR HYBRID MEETING MINUTES December 4, 2023

This meeting was conducted in person and remotely using teleconferencing technology provided by Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

Chair Cara Christensen called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

Committee Members: Councilmembers Cara Christensen, Rob Wotton, and Ethan Benson.

Mayor Katherine Ross was also present.

City Staff:

Mike Chambless, City Administrator; Brian Lynch, Police Chief; Mike Bailey, Interim Fire Chief; Michael Liebetrau, Police Evidence and Records Technician; and Jimmie Betts, IT Support.

AGENDA APPROVAL: The agenda was approved as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no public comments.

MINUTES

1. The Regular Meeting and Special Meeting minutes dated November 20, 2023, were approved as presented.

AGENDA BILLS: There were no agenda bills.

DISCUSSION:

2. 2024 Legislative Priorities Discussion: CM Christensen opened the discussion and turned it over to Police Chief Lynch who covered the following three issues:

(1) Retention and recruitment of police officers.

(2) The addition of some criminal acts for which police pursuits are allowed. Chief Lynch acknowledged that police pursuit reform such as that which was put in place by the State of Washington a couple of years ago was needed, however he is supporting the addition of Burglary and Assault in the Fourth Degree, Domestic Violence to the list of pursuable crimes.

(3) The ability for the police to interview and interrogate a juvenile. Chief Lynch acknowledged that change was warranted to the prior standard whereby juveniles between the ages of 12 and 18 could be interviewed after Miranda and juvenile-specific rights warnings were given. However, post-reform, the ability of the police to hear the juvenile's side of the story has been taken away, so charging decisions must be made on the basis of the officer's observations or on the basis of victim or witness statements, placing more juveniles into contact with the court system.

In summary, Chief Lynch reiterated his agreement with the spirit of change that led to the recent reforms out of the Washington State Legislature, but also that these reforms are in need of some adjustment to bring back deterrence and accountability in some cases.

3. Echo Glen Update: Police Chief Brian Lynch provided an update on Echo Glen noting that there had been another escape attempt in the last two weeks, the first since the City had instituted new response guidelines. The subjects were later found and re-apprehended within the area of the facility. The response by Snoqualmie Police worked as intended, though the debriefs have highlighted areas that could be sped up in the future to allow for an even quicker response.
4. Police Staffing Update: Police Chief Brian Lynch noted that the Department currently has no patrol vacancies. However, that situation will be changing in January with an upcoming retirement. A recruit just started today, and another begins on December 18. The vacant Captain position was opened on Friday, December 1 with the hope that the position will be filled in February or March. The Department will also be posting for its open Records Technician position in the near future. The Department is establishing a candidate list to get ahead in covering future patrol vacancies.

NEW BUSINESS

ITEMS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

ADJOURNMENT - The meeting was adjourned at 5:38 pm.

*Minutes taken by Michael Liebetrau, Police Evidence and Records Technician.
Recorded meeting audio is available on the City website after the meeting.
Minutes approved at the _____ Public Safety Committee Meeting*