

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
OCTOBER 28, 2020
5:30 PM

PRESENT: Mayor: Michael R. Smith
Council Members: John Hill, Michael Lonto,
Sandra Magiera, Janet Koch
Police Commission: Lane Hoag, Heather Jackson
Acting Police Chief: Jamie Deck
Police Captain: Adam Carlson
Police Lieutenant: Tina Owens
City Clerk: Tracy Chamberlain
City Comptroller: Kathleen Sarver

ABSENT: Council Member Timothy Flanigan

At 5:30 PM, Mayor Smith called the meeting to order.

Mayor Smith explained that the Governors Executive Order for NYS Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative requires the Chief Executive to prepare a Plan Certification Form. The form notes that the Local Government has performed a comprehensive review of the current police force deployments, strategies, policies, procedures and practices.

Mayor Smith stated it is great to see the recent hiring of new officers and honoring of the Officers that were promoted. He thanked the Police Department for hiring new officers to help cover shifts. Acting Police Chief Deck stated that there was a need to hire more officers as they were only able to answer calls on the road. Now that they are hiring additional officers they are able to redirect staff to different schedules. They have started the bike patrol which takes from the road patrol. With more staff this could become a shift in addition to patrols. They added to the Hillview Homes walk through to help keep criminal activity down. Council Member Koch noted the increased foot patrol was requested by the Salamanca Housing Authority. Mayor Smith noted this is in response to the publics request.

Mayor Smith stated that at the Police Reform Public Hearing, Seneca Nation of Indians President Rickey Armstrong asked if there could be more SNI representation on the City Police Commission. Mayor Smith suggested the City Charter be amended to appoint the SNI Elected Chief Marshall as an additional Police Commission Member. There was some discussion of other options. It was noted that this is not a paid commission appointment. There is concern that there would be requests in a Native Americans favor and the need for confidentiality.

Police Commission Member Hoag asked what does the City need to do for the Police Reform. Chief Deck noted that Captain Carlson has been updating policies to conform with the Police Reinvention. There will also be some restructuring for the department to function better.

Police Commission Member Hoag noted that at the previous meeting there was mention to possibly have Case Workers assist on calls. There was discussion regarding concerns with this.

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Police Commission Member Jackson noted that she understands that Governor Cuomo is asking the Commission to check on how the Police are being viewed by the public and that there is change needed. She feels the change needs to be transparency and to have the officers more involved in the community. Chief Deck noted they have many of the programs already happening within the City Police Department.

Mayor Smith noted that a lot of the NYS Police Reform and Reinvention booklet does not apply to our City Police Department and is intended for large cities. Also, our City Police Department has implemented many suggestions, such as body worn cameras and tasers. He asked that Chief Deck and Clerk Chamberlain prepare the Plan Certification Form.

Chief Deck stated he feels the Department is between 80% and 90% compliant with the reform and reinvention. He noted that trainings will need to be increased, which they plan to do more inhouse. The bike patrol will be increased with a former officer returning to participate. He is working with the Salamanca City Central School (SCCSD) to possibly start a mountain bike program where officers will be involved. He noted there could be a recruiting program to help get students interested in the police force. Through the SCCSD and BOCES Criminal Justice programs, they could find local people that would want to work for the City.

Mayor Smith stated that once the plan is completed, a public hearing will be held and the Council will adopt the plan. He would like this to be done in December. He feels we have succeeded at reaching out to the Native community for input. He stated that the City Police Department has done wonderful and some of the needed changes have been made.

Mayor Smith noted there is added security with changes to door codes and cameras. There was some discussion regarding additional security cameras to be installed throughout the City Hall. He reviewed the Plan Certification Form which states, The Local Government will consult with stakeholders (including but not limited to: membership and leadership of the local police force; members of the community, with emphasis in areas with high numbers of police and community interactions; interested non-profit and faith-based community groups; the local office of the district attorney; the local public defender; and local elected officials) regarding the Plan. And the City will offer the Plan in draft form for the public.

Council Member Magiera noted that she feels that appointments to commissions should be open to any Native American. And that once appointed, the commission members should attend the meetings to help make decisions for the City. She feels there are some good commissions. Council Member Lonto noted that appointments should not be made to a third person and an interested person should ask the Mayor to be appointed. They need to take the initiative and explain they have something to offer. Mayor Smith noted that there are not many people asking to be appointed. Police Commission Member Jackson suggested putting notifications in the Seneca newsletter stating dates and times for them to attend and show interest.

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Council Member Hill thanked the three Officers in attendance. He noted he has been hearing a lot of good things and compliments about the Police Department.

The Mayor and Council thanked the Police Commission members for attending the meeting.

Moved by Lonto and seconded by Magiera:

RESOLVED: That we hereby adjourn – 6:25 PM.

Carried.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Tracy Chamberlain", is written over a horizontal line.

Tracy Chamberlain, City Clerk

Dated: November 6, 2020