

**INVER GROVE HEIGHTS CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2018, 2018 6:00 PM – 8150 BARBARA AVENUE**

A. CALL TO ORDER: The City Council of Inver Grove Heights met in work session on Monday, February 5, 2018, in the Inver Grove Heights Council Chambers. Mayor George Tourville called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Roll call: Present were Mayor Tourville, Councilmembers Bartholomew, Hark, Perry, and Piekarski Krech. Staff; City Administrator Joe Lynch, Attorney Tim Kuntz, City Planner Allen Hunting, City Clerk Michelle Tesser, and Police Chief Paul Schnell.

1) Neighborhood Noise Analysis/Bituminous Roadways

City Planner, Allan Hunting, introduced the item. He reported that in October of 2017 when the City Council was reviewing Bituminous Roadways' five-year extension a number of residents came to the meeting to speak about the increasing noise from their operation. Council directed staff to look into doing a noise analysis and the costs. In the Council report, four examples were given where noise was reviewed as part of an application or after an operation began. One was for Bituminous Roadways expansion EAW in 2011. As part of EAW's the consultant does some analysis of noise but they did not go out on the site and do any measuring. They review the truck noise, distance to homes, topography and make some assumptions on these factors such as if the noise will increase and affect the surrounding homes. One on-site analysis was done for Simon Delivers in 2005. It was done for the neighbors to the west because of their concerns about noise by delivery trucks during the early morning. The study indicated the facility was below the MPCA noise standards.

Mayor Tourville said because of the noise study a solution was found for the steel ramps in between the trucks and the building. Rubber bumpers were installed (cost about \$80.00 each) and the solution resulted in diminishing the sound for the neighbors.

Mr. Hunting stated that five residents spoke at the October meeting were concerned about the noise they hear from the dump trucks and the tailgates slamming after the trucks have dumped their load. H stated that the noise analysis might not pick up these sounds because it is a quick noise and not continuous.

He stated he did call Barr Engineering and received general information. A typical noise monitoring method would be to do a continuous 24 hours monitoring for a couple of days. A couple of noise monitors would be put on the perimeter of the site to compare the actual noise and background noise. Some analysis can be done from that method. The cost would be about \$5,000.00. Monitors could also be installed in neighboring yards to monitor noise for a period of time. Staff is looking for direction on measurement of the baseline and the process that will be used.

Councilmember Piekarski Krech asked about the dump trucks banging noise. It is not thought to be a continuous noise? Mr. Hunting stated that his understanding is that a continuous noise is defined as continuous for over a 10-minute time period. A quick banging does not trigger a violation - it needs to be over a longer period of time. As Bituminous Roadways moves west and south they are going to be moving closer to the neighborhood.

Councilmember Hark asked if a study was done would there be a record of the quick banging noise. Mr. Hunting said there would be a record of the spike in the noise.

Mayor Tourville said the state statute was looked at and noise is defined as at a certain decibel level for a certain period of time. What would be helpful would be to do the study at their operational times as a base level. If a noise analysis is done, Bituminous Roadways can't say you have never tested or monitored for noise. Mr. Hunting said they could be creating noise trying to shake everything out of the truck bed.

Councilmember Hark asked if the testing would be done on the Bituminous site or the neighbor's yard? Mr. Hunting stated that is the direction he is looking for from Council on where to put the monitors. One should be put on the perimeter of the site to get a good baseline of their operation. One could be extended out onto a neighbor's property to find the decibel level on their property. He asked if staff should extend it to one or two of the neighbor's properties?

Councilmember Hark asked if a monitor where put on a neighbor's property if Bituminous would be notified? There may be an advantage to not letting the company know when and where monitoring will be held. Mr. Hunting responded that the company would not be notified. If a monitor was installed on their property they would know it was being monitored but not what days are set for monitoring. This is what happened at Simon Delivers - they knew they were being monitored but not when it was happening.

Mayor Tourville said it might be good to put a monitor on their property to get a baseline. He asked City Attorney Kuntz, if it could be put in as part of the process and charge the applicant? Mr. Kuntz said the permit has already been issued. The terms of the permit would need to be looked at but he believes there is no ability to charge the applicant.

Mayor Tourville asked if the Council would be interested in doing a noise analysis?

Councilmember Bartholomew said it would be a good idea. He stated we can get input from Barr Engineering on how they propose to do it, what is recommend and what are the costs.

Mr. Hunting said he would bring it back to the Council at another work session. Mayor Tourville said that Bituminous Roadways can know this is being done but not when it is being done.

Councilmember Piekarski Krech said it is good to get a baseline because as they get closer to the homes there may be more noise issues.

Mr. Hunting said he would get costs that would include add-ons so monitors could be placed in neighbor's yards also.

2) Police Survey Results

Police Chief, Paul Schnell, introduced the first annual community safety survey results. A PowerPoint presentation was shown. The survey was launched in mid-December and was opened for four weeks. There was a really good response. There were 459 responses. He stated that his Command staff put together a presentation regarding the results.

Police Officer, Trent Anderson, said one of the questions on the survey was where they lived or work in the community. A quadrant map was used for the response (1, 2, 3 or 4) and shown. A lot of people could not understand the map. We used the survey to get feedback on traffic, crime, and quality of life issues. To assess their levels of fear within the community. And to address concerns and better focus our patrol units.

The survey had 39 questions. Some of the questions were multi-layered or comparative. Two questions focused on actions homeowners may take for protection (such as purchasing an alarm system or purchase a gun). Nearly all the questions offered respondents access to a narrative text box.

Officer Anderson stated homeowners represented 88% of respondents and 10% were identified as an employee at a business in Inver Grove Heights. We did not get a lot of responses for the age group of 16 to 24 years old. The largest age group responding was 36 to 65 years old. Women accounted for 55% of the respondents. 96% of the respondents reported themselves as Caucasian. 19% identified themselves as being non-white or mixed ethnicity.

We asked their perceptions of seriousness of crime and quality of life concerns. These are the biggest concerns:

- 36% was theft from motor vehicles
- 26% was speeding or traffic related concerns
- 25% was break-ins (burglary) of garages, sheds or homes
- 20% was disorderly persons/youth

He stated over 50% of respondents are satisfied with the level of proactive police patrol. 32% would like to see increased police patrols – they don't have safety problems, they would like to maintain their neighborhood safety. Nearly 50% of respondents said they were unsure if officers were familiar with the issues important to them and their neighborhood.

Level of crime in the respondent's own neighborhood felt:

- 26% felt it has increased
- 68% felt it stayed the same
- 5% felt it decreased

In the city overall

- 45% felt it has increased
- 51% felt it stayed the same
- 2% felt it decreased

In general, 63% reported feeling very safe or extremely safe. At night, 51% reported feeling very safe or extremely safe.

Officer Anderson stated locations to focus on were received from the narrative – parks (Sleepy Hollow Park, Harmon Park Reserve, Oakwood Park, Rich Valley Park and Salem Park) and near schools (where youth would hang out) and streets and intersections citywide- for traffic violations.

He stated top areas off increased emphasis were: drug and alcohol issues, juvenile/youth problems, traffic safety and domestic/family violence. Others included: vandalism, theft, DWI, and child abuse/neglect.

He stated we asked what social platform they used:

Facebook 85%

Instagram 23%
Twitter 19%
Snapchat 15%
Nextdoor.com 15%

We asked if they had trust in the Police Department and the response was:

Strongly approve	46%
Somewhat approve	32%
Somewhat disapprove	5%
Strongly disapprove	2%
Unsure	12%

We want to do a better job of the respondents that somewhat disapprove, strongly disapprove or were unsure.

We did ask them how they felt about body cameras and the responses were:

27% believe it is important to document the evidence
21% believe it helps officers from false claims
11% believe it ensures the interest of the citizens
5% believe it is an unnecessary expense
5% don't know enough about them
5% need to learn more about the use

Current staffing levels:

41% believe it is about right
3% believe it is too high
23% believe it is too low
31% are unsure

They were also asked if they believed Inver Grove Heights Police would treat people fairly –

84% responded yes
6% responded no
8% responded other – we would like to identify the why for the no responses.

Sergeant Weiderhoeft said the role of the committee was to digest the data and formulate a response to improve our community.

Priorities that were identified for improvement in 2018.

- 1) theft from vehicles
- 2) traffic safety
- 3) burglary – shed, garage home, business
- 4) youth delinquency
- 5) Domestic & family violence

He continued saying that Chief Schnell brought forward a target hardening strategy that we will be using to tackle priorities. A chart was shown of the strategy.

The strategy would be to handle the offender appropriately, make sure they are charged appropriately, investigated appropriately, manage places appropriately, remove a place where a crime can occur, or be there so a crime does not occur. We need to be good guardians of a victim and make sure they receive the support and education they may need to not become a victim again.

He stated that the theft from vehicle strategy includes: identify vulnerabilities - education, prevention messaging – use social media, charging all available offences (including tampering and possession of stolen property), consider increasing plea threshold to hold suspects accountable, undercover/bait vehicle operations and curfew sweeps.

He stated that traffic safety strategies – distracted driving is a common problem and we would use education – launch a campaign for not using a cell phone while driving. DWI enforcement is identified strongly in Inver Grove Heights. Coordinate a traffic safety group county-wide. High visibility traffic safety efforts (Dakota County Traffic Safety) officer training needed and officers will need to be visible. There will be 11 high traffic safety events in Inver Grove Heights in 2018. Tamers program – empower the citizens when they have complaints in their own neighborhood. They can check out and rent (after they have some training) a radar and they can collect some data for us. He stated we have a speed trailer that is shared by two other agencies. We would like to utilize the trailer more. Social media/education is an easy way to send out a message to a mass group.

Sergeant Wiederhoeft stated that burglaries have not increased in the last couple of years, but the survey showed that people are concerned. Burglary strategies would be to offer “crime prevention through environmental design” consultations – meet with residents to educate them on how to guard their house and possessions from burglaries. He discussed publishing burglary prevention messages and resources on website and social media. Leave notices regarding open garage doors while on patrol. Continue utilization of crime scene processing in burglary cases, including DNA swabbing by training more officers to process a crime scene more efficiently. Increase cross-jurisdictional coordination and communication of burglary investigation efforts.

He stated that youth delinquency has affected certain parts of the city and strategies would include proactive youth outreach. Engage youth where they are. Do targeted curfew sweeps. Increase our collaboration with the City Parks Department – use trail cameras to catch vandals. Develop and launch a youth police academy. We would like to explore use of restorative justice intervention for youth related offenses. How can they give back as part of their prosecution of the crime they had done? Increase focus on city parks to encourage and ensure pro-social use of the parks. We got the impression some people did not want to use the parks because of youth problems in the parks.

Sergeant Wiederhoeft stated domestic & family violence strategies include domestic abuse no contact order and order for protection safety assessment details. In our experience, sometimes the order gets dropped after the event has occurred. We should reach out and engage the victim so they do not become a victim again. We would like to work with the city attorney to expand evidence-based prosecution. Sometimes victims become uncooperative later in the investigation. We can collect evidence on the scene for a successful prosecution. Fully analyze investigation, prosecution, and advocacy for service gaps. Develop closer relationship with Dakota County probation. Continue to partner with the on-site domestic abuse advocate.

He stated strategies to increase community engagement for crime prevention: Business outreach by engaging businesses, Coffee with a cop, launch of a positive social media presence, periodic foot beat assignment (walking the street and engaging citizens at events), schedule and promote a 2018 open house to give tours and answer questions, schedule and host two "Safe Summer Nights" events in neighborhoods or multi-family dwellings where police officers would be approachable, encourage "neighborhood watch" programs or "block clubs" – physical or virtual (Facebook page), start a "see something/say something" campaign for citizen comments.

Sergeant Wiederhoeft stated the committee is developing a series of measurements to assess the outputs (measure the quantifiable activities, programing, and efforts produced) and outcomes (accomplishments achieved as a result of the planned activity, program, or effort). The team will come back late in 2018 to provide a report to Council.

Councilmember Piekarski Krech asked if more break ins were occurring in businesses or is that the perception? Mr. Weiderhoff answered that there are not more break ins. People are hearing/talking about it more on social media. Maybe that is an area where we start by being proactive. Businesses on Cahill feel that the area is being targeted. Maybe we can reach out to them a little more. Chief Schnell said that a dashboard is being set up on the department website. It would provide statistical data on reported incidents week to week. We are also asking residents to use the mapping program which is currently available. It allows people to see where incidents are occurring and when they are occurring. It is updated daily.

Councilmember Piekarski Krech believes the city is a very safe place.

Councilmember Hark said it was a very good presentation. He liked the idea of education behind distracted driving. It is a serious issue and is seen every day. The idea of a bait vehicle could may be shared with another surrounding community. Chief Schnell said one could be borrowed from St. Paul that already has bait vehicles. Councilmember Hark asked when discussing the parameters of plea bargains is the prosecuting office telling us the parameters of plea bargaining? Is the city involved in the process at all? City Administrator Joe Lynch, responded that the city is not involved in that. Chief Snell said a meeting has been set up to with prosecutors and the courts to discuss plea bargaining and known problems. Councilmember Hark said it is a tricky issue and worth discussing.

Mayor Tourville said the three areas looked at were police, fire, and parks and recreation. The Facebook pages need to be coordinated. Social media is exploding for the good and bad. The different groups or car lots (large and small) that complain about vandalism and car theft, having a meeting with them shows we are trying to be proactive. We could also be proactive with apartment buildings. With the 12 hour shifts maybe more interaction could be done. The school liaison is a very important for the youth for education especially for distracted driving. Some communities in the spring/summer hold a meeting in the parks – they will be able to notify residents that there will police in the parks. It is a good start for the betterment of the community.

Chief Schnell said he wanted to give credit to the officers and is proud of the work they did, the level of engagement, and the results are incredibly positive. The 84% that responded about trust in the police department is a huge number. The group has put together the priorities that can become realities.

Councilmember Hark asked if the survey would be posted somewhere? Chief Schnell said it would be posted without the comments. We are going to talk about how it will be posted on the website. Councilmember Hark asked that for the next survey - to think about how to engage the 16 to 24 years old age group. Chief Schnell said maybe using Twitter, Snapchat or outreach to the schools are possibilities.

3) Customer Service Policy

Joe Lynch, City Administrator, introduced the customer service policy. It is the third draft of the policy and is in response to Council's request for a policy. It is to address people's complaints, questions, concerns, and requests for information. It was started in June of 2017, with department heads. We are still trying to determine performance measures that are standard across the board. There are different departments that deal with different folks in different ways to respond to their customer inquiries.

We redrafted the policy based on feedback in July and now other minor tweaks have been made. If Council agrees to the changes it would need to be put into its proper form and sent to all of our managers/supervisors for their feedback. Once that feedback is received their comments could be included in the policy. It then would be presented to all staff along with our standards of measurement and methods. We have identified the appropriate staff and initially that group would figure out the standards of measurement. He stated we can use a benchmark that would be used across the board.

Councilmember Hark asked if the next step would be to disseminate the policy amongst the department heads for their feedback? Mr. Lynch responded that they have seen the policy but it needs to be discussed at our next staff meeting. The policy will then need to be "cleaned up". He stated it will then go in front of the department heads.

Councilmember Piekarski Krech asked if all staff would see the policy? Mr. Lynch responded affirmatively. It would be presented as the city's customer service policy. Once presented to staff they would sign the acknowledgement page stating they understand the policy. He stated that newly hired employees would have to complete the customer service training within the first 30 days. All existing employees will be required to complete a customer service training course within 12 months of their anniversary date.

Councilmember Piekarski Krech asked if staff would be able to give feedback on the policy. Mr. Lynch responded that they would be able to comment.

Councilmember Hark said he would like to keep this moving forward. He asked when it would come back to the Council. Mr. Lynch responded at the April work session.

Councilmember Bartholomew asked if each department would be able to present their methodology on how they are going to record their complaints and how they are going to reach a resolution. Mr. Lynch responded that he thinks it's going to be by subgroups of those identified as department contacts. Along with what are common ways we get complaints – email, phone call, voicemail, through the website and mobile app? How do we collect the data from those inputs and then how do we start monitoring the resolution rate based on the department division (output)? Staff will work together on the details. Mr. Lynch stated he would like the group to come up with those standards because they will be the one's being held accountable to those standards.

Councilmember Bartholomew said he would encourage not only a resolution to the problem but an analysis to find the root or cause of the problem that would prevent the problem from occurring again. He asked for that to be apart of the process.

Mayor Tourville said some problems may not have a root cause. Councilmember Bartholomew agreed. Mayor Tourville said the item will be brought back in April and will continue to go forward.

The council discussed scheduling the City Administrator's review. Lynch asked for clarification if the meeting will be about strategic actions and his performance review. Mayor Tourville responded that the meeting will be for both and will be a recap of 2017. Saturday, March 10th at 8:00 AM was decided for the meeting date and time.

Councilmember Piekarski Krech made a motion to meet on March 10, 2018, at 8:00 AM for the City Administrator's review and goal setting, seconded by Perry.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

B. Adjourn

Councilmember Bartholomew made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilmember Hark, and unanimously carried. The work session adjourned at approximately 7:16 p.m.