

City of Winsted
City Council Work Session
Lewis Room
Tuesday, June 3, 2014
5:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Steve Stotko
Council Member Tom Ollig
Council Member Bonnie Quast
Council Member George Schulenberg

Absent: Council Member Max Fasching

Staff Present: Mr. Clay Wilfahrt, City Administrator
Ms. Deborah R. Boelter, City Clerk-Treasurer
Mr. Justin Heldt, Winsted Police Department Acting Chief
Mr. Dave Meyer, Public Works Department Maintenance Supervisor

I. Call to Order

Mayor Stotko called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

II. Summer Hours – City Hall Hours of Operation

Mr. Wilfahrt stated that while reviewing hours of operation for other communities, staff has noticed that many communities offer summer hours. Typically, hours run nine (9) hours Monday through Thursday and then four (4) hours on Friday. At City Hall, there are only four (4) to five (5) people who would be affected by the new hours. If Winsted were to move toward summer hours, staff would recommend being open 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and then 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Friday.

Mr. Wilfahrt presented the following reasons for having summer hours of operation at Winsted City Hall:

1. Extending hours of operation beyond 4:30 p.m. gives residents the opportunity to come to City Hall after they have finished working. If residents go in to work at 8:00 a.m. and do not get off of work until between 4:00 - 5:00 p.m., it makes it difficult to come in to City Hall unless they take time off of work. By being open slightly before 8:00 a.m. and until 5:00 p.m., the hours are more convenient for residents.
2. Friday afternoons at City Hall are one of the slowest times for business. Residents are more likely spending Friday afternoons preparing for the weekend than doing business at City Hall. Anecdotally, this is one of the least effective times for City Hall to be open.
3. There is the morale aspect of this choice. City staff would find the move beneficial to their personal lives.

The City Council discussed and directed Mr. Wilfahrt to include approval for summer hours of operation at City Hall on the June 17, 2014 Regular City Council meeting Consent Agenda.

III. Civil Defense Siren – Winstock Country Music Festival Site

Mr. Wilfahrt stated that over the past few years, staff has identified a need for a civil defense siren in the vicinity of the Winstock Country Music Festival (Winstock) campgrounds. The nearest siren to the site is at the Winsted Volunteer Fire Department's Station, and the audible reach of the siren does not cover the entire campground. If severe weather were to come into the area during Winstock weekend, it would be critical to have adequate warning to avoid loss of life. Additionally, with the number of businesses and employees in that area of town, and plans for business expansion, it is a good idea to ensure sufficient warning coverage.

Mr. Wilfahrt stated that he and acting Chief of Police, Mr. Justin Heldt, have been working with the Winstock Committee to purchase and install a civil defense siren.

Mr. Wilfahrt stated that staff received a quote for the total cost of purchasing and installing a civil siren on property currently owned by K-Way Express, Incorporated. He continued by stating that Mr. Jim Koch, K-Way Express, Incorporated, was receptive to having a civil defense siren installed on their property. There was a siren there at one point, but it was moved in to the City to better service residents of Winsted. The quote indicated the total cost of the siren would be approximately \$19,213. This would include the siren, a pole to place it on, and all installation expenses.

Mr. Wilfahrt stated that acting Winsted Police Department Chief, Mr. Justin Heldt has been working with other entities and applying for grants for this project to help offset the cost of the siren. Currently, the City has received a \$2,500 grant from Center Point Energy, a \$2,500 grant from Pioneer Seeds, and a \$5,000 commitment from Winstock. McLeod County staff indicated that they will seek McLeod County Board approval to split the remaining cost with the City. With a split from McLeod County, the City would pay approximately \$4,606.50. Without a split, the City would pay approximately \$9,213.

Mr. Wilfahrt stated that the City Council will need to accept the aforementioned grants at a future Regular City Council meeting. Staff would like the City Council to discuss allocating money for the proposed Civil Defense Siren project. The funding could come from the City's Capital Equipment Fund which has a balance of \$157,412 and will have a contribution of \$150,000 in the year 2014.

Council Member Ollig stated that at the recent Winstock Committee meeting, the Committee received a check in the amount of \$1,500 from Centra Sota to be used to help pay for the proposed civil defense siren; so, the actual amount coming from Winstock will be \$6,500.

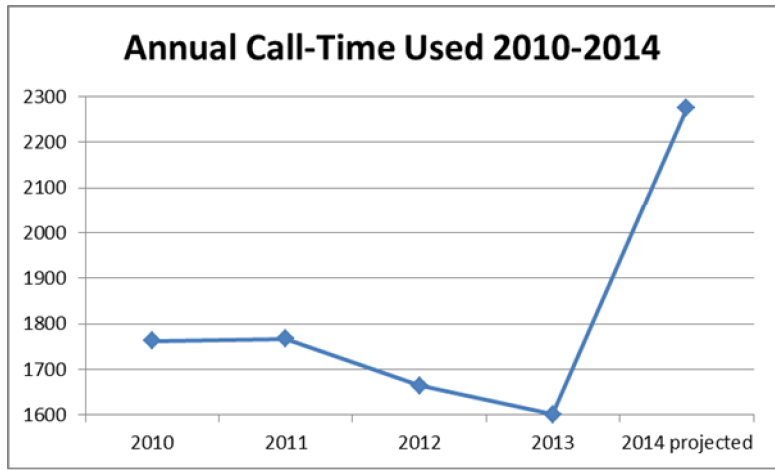
Mayor Stotko asked Mr. Heldt if the proposed siren would also service the City's Industrial Park. Mr. Heldt stated yes.

The City Council discussed and directed Mr. Wilfahrt to proceed with obtaining a civil defense siren for the Winstock Country Music Festival site.

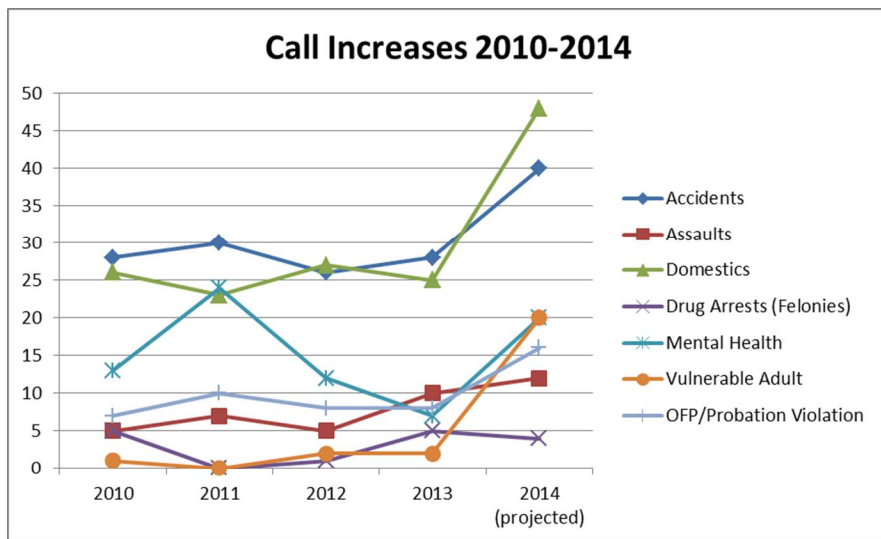
IV. Winsted Police Department – Police Officer Hire

Mr. Wilfahrt stated that the City of Winsted Police Department has typically operated with 3-¾ to four (4) Police Officers. Following the retirement of former Winsted Police Department Chief, Mr. Michael Henrich, the Department is operating with three (3) full-time Police Officers which is causing safety, morale, and logistical challenges. Staff has been reviewing the crime rates over the past five (5) years to determine need as well as the cost of adding additional staff.

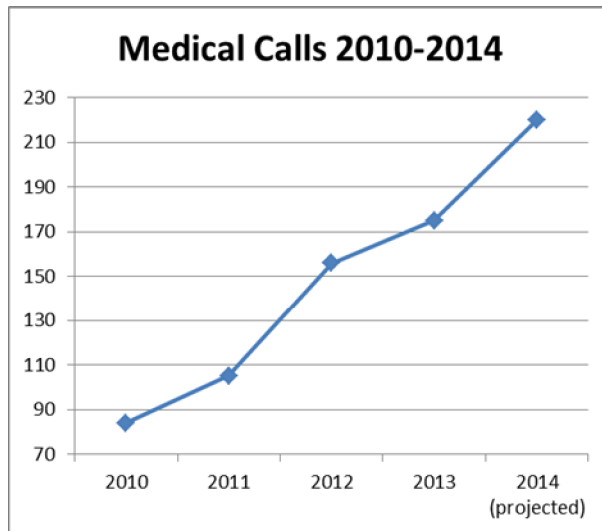
Mr. Wilfahrt stated that when talking with the three (3) current Police Officers, the absence of a fourth (4th) Officer has presented a number of challenges. Officers have to take considerably more call time than normal and are occasionally called in the middle of sleeping. In a number of instances, this has led to an Officer having to work a shift after sleeping for only one (1) to two (2) hours; an occurrence that is not ideal from a safety or morale perspective. Mr. Wilfahrt presented a chart illustrating the increase to call time in the absence of a fourth (4th) Police Officer.



Mr. Wilfahrt stated that additionally, the call rates for a number of calls have increased considerably over the past five (5) years. Mr. Wilfahrt presented charts showing the increase to emergency calls by using projected numbers from the first four (4) months of the year 2014. Mr. Wilfahrt stated that the City has seen increased activity for accidents, assaults, domestics, drug arrests, mental health calls, vulnerable adult cases, and Order for Protection (OFP) and/or probation violations. Assaults increased from five (5) in the year 2010 to ten (10) in the year 2013 and are projected at twelve (12) in the year 2015. There have been five (5) vulnerable adult cases in the year 2014 which is more than in the previous four (4) years combined.



Mr. Wilfahrt stated probably the most dramatic statistic is the increase in medical calls over the past five (5) years. The figure has grown from eighty-four (84) calls in the year 2010 to 175 in the year 2013 and a projected 220 in the year 2014. This number is driven by an aging population, which will continue to age. There was a decline in population cohorts between seventy-five and eighty-five plus (75 and 85+) years of age from the years 2000 through 2010 in Winsted by .8%. The age cohorts between fifty-five and seventy-four (55 and 74) years of age increased by 3.8% during the same period. An aging population will likely increase the number of medical calls, vulnerable adult cases and mental health calls.



Mr. Wilfahrt stated that given the aforementioned statistics, it is apparent that the Winsted Police Department is facing increased demands, and will likely continue to face increased demands into the future. It is also not ideal to only have three (3) full-time Police Officers due to a tremendous amount of additional call time which leads to unsafe practices and diminished Department morale.

Mr. Wilfahrt stated that there are several options for the City Council to consider to remedy this issue:

1. The City could turn all calls during the added call time over to the McLeod County Sheriff's Office. This would not cost the City any additional dollars. The McLeod County Sheriff's Office is only obligated to cover emergency calls defined as being a threat to life or property including accidents, domestics, burglaries, and they are not obligated to respond to thefts, noise violations, and other non-emergency calls. According to acting Chief, Mr. Justin Heldt, when the City of Winsted Police Officers call the McLeod County Sheriff's Office for backup, a large majority of the time, the Sheriff's Deputies respond from Glencoe, Minnesota or further away. That would mean there would be a minimum of a ten (10) minute response time assuming that the Sheriff's Deputy was not on another call at that time. Winsted Police Officers are required to respond within five (5) minutes, even while on call.
2. The City could hire a Police Officer to work thirty (30) hours per week. This would be similar to what was originally done with Police Officer, Mr. Jim Lammers. The total cost of this would be approximately \$40,000 annually over the next ten (10) years, assuming annual wage increases. This Officer can work up to thirty (30) hours per week without triggering insurance benefit requirements. Having a Police Officer work thirty (30) hours per week would alleviate the issue with increased call time. It would also provide additional man hours to police the increasing demand for the City of Winsted's Police Department.

However, Mr. Wilfahrt stated that there are two (2) concerns about hiring a Police Officer for only thirty (30) hours per week. First, hours are limited beyond what they previously were since the trigger for insurance benefits has dropped from thirty-two (32) hours to thirty (30) hours of working per week. This means that a thirty (30) hour per week Police Officer would work, on average, eleven (11) hours less than a full-time Officer per week, meaning that the other three (3) full-time Officers would each average four (4) extra hours of call time per week.

Mr. Wilfahrt continued by stating that probably the more concerning of the two (2) is the fact that the quality of the talent pool will be limited and turnover will be high for a thirty (30) hours per week police job at \$15.50 per hour. Mr. Wilfahrt presented an article from the Minneapolis *Star Tribune* newspaper discussing the changes to the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) of Minnesota for Police Officers and how it will increase the number of Police Officers retiring; creating a shortage in available Police

Officers. It is unlikely that the City would attract a high quality Officer to work thirty (30) hours per week, and if that is the case, as has happened with other part-time Police Officers, they will likely leave once they find a full-time opportunity. Replacing Officers requires field training which can take several months, a background and psychological exam, and medical and drug testing. This process amounts to thousands of dollars spent which means that each time someone leaves, the Winsted Police Department is left short staffed and with a large expense. As the City saw with part-time Winsted Police Officer, Mr. Jarvi, turnover can happen quickly.

3. The final option is for the City to hire a full-time fourth (4th) Police Officer. This would cost the City approximately \$60,000 per year over the next ten (10) years, assuming annual salary step increases. This individual would be available more hours which would reduce Officer safety issues and increase Department morale. The City would have a more talented pool of applicants to choose from, and the Police Officer hired would be more likely to stay because of the full-time status and insurance benefits offered. Logistically for the staffing and candidate quality perspective, this is the best choice. The one (1) negative about this option is its cost.

Mr. Wilfahrt recommended moving forward with the hiring a fourth (4th) full-time Police Officer. The demand from additional calls has led to a busier Department, and with aging of the population and expected industrial and business growth in the coming few years, there is a need for the additional help.

The City Council discussed and directed Mr. Wilfahrt and Mr. Heldt to begin the process for the hiring of a fourth (4th) full-time Police Officer.

V. Other

a) Amendment – Regular City Council Consent Agenda – Tree Removal Quote

Mr. Wilfahrt stated that a tree removal quote has been added to the Consent Agenda at tonight's Regular City Council meeting.

Public Works Department Maintenance Supervisor, Mr. Dave Meyer, was in attendance at the Work Session and stated that he obtained two (2) quotes to remove several dead ash trees in Hainlin Park, Mill Reserve Park and Barrett Park.

Council Member Ollig asked if the dead trees were infected by the Emerald Ash Bore. Mr. Meyer stated that he has not seen any signs of Emerald Ash Bore. He said he will test the trees to determine if they have been infected by the Emerald Ash Bore.

Mr. Meyer stated that the quotes are to down the trees only. The Public Works Department would remove the branches and run them through their wood chipping equipment. The remaining trees will be given to any interested party. The party would have to cut and remove the downed trees.

Mayor Stotko asked with the dead trees will be replaced with new trees. Mr. Meyer stated that the City currently does not have any funding budgeted to replace the trees in the year 2014. Ms. Boelter stated that there is funding available in the Park's Capital Improvement Plan Fund to purchase replacement trees. The City Council discussed and agreed that the trees being removed should be replaced in the aforementioned Parks.

The City Council discussed and were in agreement that the tree removal quote should be approved.

b) Floodplain Map

Mr. Wilfahrt distributed a copy of the newly approved Floodplain Maps. He continued by stating that City Council wanted to know if the Maps could be changed; however, the final comment period to make amendments to the proposed Floodplain Maps has expired.

Mr. Wilfahrt stated that he is working with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to obtain information to assist residents located in the Floodplain areas in Winsted to have their property removed from the Floodplain Map to avoid having to pay for flood insurance.

Mr. Wilfahrt also stated that letters will be sent to all Winsted residents that will be impacted by the changes to the Floodplain Map and direct them to contact the City if they have any questions and/or need assistance with the process to remove their property from the Floodplain Map to avoid paying for flood insurance.

Mr. Wilfahrt stated that it is not mandatory that the City should contact the property owners located in the Floodplain; but, staff thought it would be a courtesy to these residents and important to provide them with the information for the process to remove their property from the Floodplain Map.

c) Mowing – Winsted on the Lake – Grass Clipping on the Street

Council Member Quast shared her concerns with the grass clippings that the contractor mowing in the Winsted on the Lake Housing Development is leaving on the streets.

Mr. Meyer stated that the mowing contractor is a private contractor that is not mowing on behalf of the City. He continued by stating that he has spoken with the contractor and informed him that he cannot direct his lawnmower to distribute the grass clippings on the City's streets.

d) First Mosquito Spraying – June 11, 2014

Council Member Ollig asked when the first (1st) City-wide mosquito spraying will be taking place. Mr. Meyer stated that it will be taking place on June 11, 2014.

e) Winsted Volunteer Fire Department – June 2, 2014 Monthly Meeting

Council Member Schulenberg gave a brief overview of the items discussed at the Winsted Volunteer Fire Department's June 2, 2014 monthly meeting.

VI. Purchase or Sale of Real or Personal Property

Mayor Stotko stated that the City Council was now closing the Work Session to discuss developing an offer to purchase land with the property identification (PID) of 14.014.0700.

Mayor Stotko asked the members of the public to please excuse themselves. He continued by thanking the public for their cooperation.

Council Member Schulenberg motioned to close the Work Session. Council Member Quast seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

The Work Session was closed.

VII. Adjourn

Council Member Ollig motioned to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Quast seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:53 p.m.

Steve Stotko

Steve Stotko
Mayor
City of Winsted

ATTEST:

Deborah R. Boelter

Deborah R. Boelter, CMC
City Clerk-Treasurer
City of Winsted