



**Town of Port Deposit
Public Safety Committee Meeting Minutes
March 1, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER – Chairman Brown called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT – In person: Chairman Brown, Mayor Kuhs, Councilman Knight, and Town Administrator Rinkerman.
Via Zoom: Counsel McCarron.

ABSENT – Chief of Police Smith

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – The minutes from the February 1, 2022 Public Safety Meeting were presented.

Motion made by Councilman Knight to approve the February 1, 2022 minutes. Seconded by Chairman Brown. All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.

GENERAL ORDER 02-2022 – Counsel McCarron presented General Order 02-2022 Amendment to Police Department Manual Chapter 2.6 Use of Force. The Resolution is necessary in order to be in compliance with the new Maryland Use of Force Statute effective July 1, 2021. He explained that the amendment reflects the North East Police Department Manual with minor language changes applicable to the town. Amendments include if the Police Chief and/or her actions are the subject of any investigation, that it shall be conducted by an outside agency, to which Counsel McCarron suggested the Maryland State Police. Councilman Knight asked what the threshold of an allegation to warrant an investigation is, to which McCarron responded that any allegation could possibly warrant an investigation.

Councilman Knight voiced his concern regarding the complexity of the regulations and liabilities that comes with the town having their own police department and stated that if the policing was outsourced to an outside agency, the town would not be held liable.

Councilman Knight referred to Section 2.6.14 Administrative Firearms, Firearms Training, and General Requirements and stated that Chief Smith is using her personal firearm as her primary duty weapon. He inquired if there are any concerns or liability issues with her using a personal firearm instead of a firearm issued from the town. Counsel McCarron will investigate further regarding statutes/regulations on use of personal firearms but stated it could potentially open the town up to be scrutinized and held liable in a court case or investigation. The Committee discussed the matter further, specifically upkeep and modification, liabilities in different circumstances, and additional firearms to Chief Smith's primary duty weapon, i.e. Patrol shotguns and rifles.

Mayor Kuhs inquired if a situation occurs in which no one alleges excessive/improper use of force, if an investigation could still be warranted. Counsel McCarron stated that there are numerous circumstances that may warrant an investigation, especially if serious injuries or death is caused by an Officer.

The Committee agreed that purchasing a firearm to be issued to Chief Smith as her primary duty weapon rather than her using her personal firearm would be in the best interest of the town.

CCSO CONTRACT RENEWAL – The Public Safety Committee reviewed the renewal of the Agreement with the Town of Port Deposit and the Cecil County Sheriff's Office which showed a 10% increase to the Deputy wage per hour and payroll overhead. Mayor Kuhs suggested that since the contract increased by 10%, to cut the CCSO shifts by 10% and have Chief Smith cover those shifts. Councilman Knight stated that he does not wish to cut back on CCSO shifts, especially since they have not been able to fill all of the shifts offered due to staffing

shortages. Mayor Kuhs stated that the 10% increase in the contract could be absorbed by the shifts not being filled and patrols conducted by MDTA in town.

CAMERA PROJECT – PHASE 4 – Councilman Knight suggested the town have a camera added to the southern side of Marina Park and a license plate camera facing the entrance of Marina Park in order to capture vehicles who may not travel into the center of town. The Committee reviewed a rough estimate for the cost of two (2) cameras to be placed by Vannort Drive. Staff will contact the security camera company to meet on-site and discuss options and pricing for Phase 4.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m. The meeting was recorded and audio is available upon request.

Approved:



Kevin Brown, Chairman