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PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
May 19, 2022

The Public Safety Committee of Wheeling City Council met on the above date at 12:30 p.m. in City Council Chambers. Committee members present: Chair Seidler and Vice Chair Palmer. Others present: City Manager Herron, Building and Planning Director Tom Connelly, Building Inspector Larry Helms, Community Director Nancy Prager, Police Chief Schwertfeger, City Solicitor Rose Humway-Warmuth, and City Clerk Brenda J. Delbert.

The following matters were discussed:

Abandoned and Dilapidated Structures

Mr. Connelly states there has been a joint effort with Building and Planning, Police and, Fire to maintain collaborative list of structured needing demolished. It is estimated there are 117 houses that are in need of demolition and cost is approximately one million dollars based of prior contracts. Mr. Seidler would like fines to be accrued for property owns as aggressively as legally allowed to aid in assigning liens on properties.

Creation of Land Reuse Agency

Nancy Prager gives history on her knowledge of past "Red X Program." Her opinion was it was not effective. However, believes it could be if utilized in conjunction with land bank program as a development tool. A City Ordinance would need drafted to create a program detailing the process.

Police Service Levels and Staffing

Police Chief indicated staffing is not at a critical level. There are nine vacancies in the department. A leading issue is the amount of time to train new officers through the West Virginia Police Academy is significantly higher than officers who retire and or resign. Chief indicated there is compensation pressure from surrounding geographical areas as well as agencies.

Municipal Court Live Streaming

Mr. Seidler asks for Municipal Court to be live streamed. City Solicitor states pursuant to media guidelines there needs to be a court order from the Chief Circuit Judge to allow cameras in court rooms.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Mr. Seidler, seconded by Mr. Palmer, moved to adjourn. Time: 1:30 p.m.