

City of North Saint Paul
August 27, 2018
Adopted Special City Council Workshop Meeting Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kuehn called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Council Member Terry Furlong
Council Member Tom Sonnek (arrived at 6:07 p.m.)
Council Member Jan Walczak
Mayor Mike Kuehn

Absent: Council Member Candy Petersen

Staff: City Manager Dr. Craig Waldron, Deputy Clerk Mary Mills, Fire Chief Scott Duddeck, Police Chief Thomas Lauth.

Guests: Bruce Moeller, Senior Consultant, Fitch and Associates, LLC; Guillermo Fuentes, Senior Partner, Fitch and Associates, LLC.; Jon Muller, Manager of EMS Services, Lakeview Hospital; Dr. Ralph J. Frascone, Regions Hospital Medical Director.

III. ADOPT AGENDA

On motion by Council Member Furlong, seconded by Council Member Walczak, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve the agenda as presented.

IV. TOPIC(S)

A. Fitch and Associates LLC review of Fire and Police Study.

City Manager Waldron stated that the purpose of this workshop is to give Council a report of the extensive analysis of data performed by Fitch and Associates. Council will hear the findings and recommendations from the study, and will then give direction to staff as to what action to consider.

Fitch and Associates was engaged by the City of North St. Paul to undertake evaluations of both the Police Department and Fire Department – though the focus on each was purposefully different.

The Police Department assessment was to evaluate staffing levels, especially as related to road patrol and the ability to enhance the Department’s capability for proactive policing. This staffing study considered existing levels of demand, current budgeted and actual staffing levels and consideration of resource allocation among administration and the patrol function.

The Fire Department's evaluation was to evaluate overall management and effectiveness of the department – largely focusing on its performance in meeting community needs for both fire and EMS services.

Findings and recommendations as a result of the study were as follows:

Police

Finding: Current personnel are insufficient to staff required patrol needs.

Recommendation: The assignment of two additional FTEs to the Patrol function.

Finding: Patrol supervision is Insufficient.

Recommendation: A minimum of four Sergeants be assigned to Patrol to enhance the level of direct supervision available for this basic law enforcement role.

Finding: Proactive Patrol requires more resources – more hours must be liberated.

Recommendation: To ensure the capability of an effective proactive patrol function, supervisors must adjust field patrol activities to free up more time for community engagement. The addition of 2 FTEs to patrol, as well as ensuring a supervisor is available – both of which are recommended – provide the resources and supervisory oversight to meet this recommendation.

Finding: Administrative staffing is greater than required.

Recommendation: it is recommended that the existing administrative sergeant be reassigned from administrative duties to road patrol in order to minimize the fiscal impact of overall staffing changes recommended.

Fire

Finding: Increasing call demand and lower participation rates among paid on-call personnel impede the department's capability to provide current levels of service on medical first responder incidents.

Recommendation: The City should increase current pay rates to increase participation rates by paid on-call personnel. A pay rate adjustment, for on-call and station-based shifts, should be at least 20% or greater to address the initial problem.

Council questions and discussion covered:

- reactive versus community pro-active patrol
- benefits to the day power shift
- scene safety
- types of calls
- 24 hour supervisor in the field
- there is no national standard for descriptive response time for police department.
- there is a direct correlation to reduction in crime when pro-active policing is in place
- public perception versus reality and best practice for responding to calls
- risk mitigation
- recruitment and retention
- incentives to more participation on nights and weekends
- challenges with the 9-1-1 system
- how 1st responders de-escalate many potential problem situations

John Muller of Lakeview stated that with today's technology things are so different. The best patient care and level of care is crucial and is currently provided with the level of service the city provides. Dr. Scarponi stated he agrees with this study and that having the fire department as a first response agency is crucial.

Mayor Kuehn recommended that the study be turned over to the City Manager who will work with the Fire Chief and Police Chief, with input from members of the departments, to work on ways to implement some of the recommendations, as well as look at fiscal impacts. Public safety is a number one priority as a local government, and we need to make sure it is efficient and effective. We have to make sure we can meet these challenges, and they may require more dollars and may require substantial restructuring.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion by Council Member Walczak, seconded by Council Member Furlong, with all present voting aye (5-0), Mayor Kuehn adjourned the workshop meeting at 7:45 p.m.

/s/ Michael R. Kuehn, Mayor

Attest:

/s/ Dr. Craig Waldron, City Manager