

**City of West St. Paul
Public Safety Committee Meeting Minutes
February 3, 2021**

1. Call to Order

Chair Eng-Sarne called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Members Present: Chair Lisa Eng-Sarne
 Member Julie Eastman
 Member John Justen

Others Present: City Manager Ryan Schroeder
 City Attorney Kori Land
 Police Chief Brian Sturgeon
 Lieutenant Matt Swenke
 Crime Prevention Specialist Laura Vaughan
 Community Engagement Officer Jesse Mettner
 City Clerk Shirley Buecksler

2. Adopt the Agenda

Motion was made by Committee Member Justen and seconded by Committee Member Eastman to adopt the agenda, as presented.

All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

3. Previous Minutes

Motion was made by Committee Member Justen and seconded by Committee Member Eastman to approve the minutes of August 12, 2020.

All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

4. New Business

A. Snow Emergency Protocols and Walkways

City Manager Schroeder provided information for the Committee. On December 12, 2011, the City Council adopted a Bike/Ped Plan. Within that plan was stated:

- The City has 50 miles of sidewalks and 5 miles of trails (note: since 2011, the City has constructed or reconstructed several miles of trail and sidewalk including on Robert, Livingston, Marie, Oakdale, Wentworth and others)
- 2.5% of residents commute to work by walking
- 1% of residents commute to work by other means (biking)
- 6% use transit
- 11% of households do not own a car
- 10% of students walk to Moreland Elementary and less than 1% walk to Garlough

On April 23, 2018, the City Council adopted the ADA Transition Plan. The goal stated within that plan is that the City would accomplish 90% completion of the plan within 20 years. Within the ADA plan, appendix F provides the process for winter sidewalk safety and snow/ice removal. The City Code Enforcement office is responsible to assure policy/code compliance for sidewalk snow and ice conditions.

The City maintains and plows 71.2 miles of streets and 5 miles of alleys. Of note is that Engineering is currently evaluating if every one of the alleys is meeting a public purpose. It may be proposed in the future that, for alleys essentially serving as a private drive for only one or two properties, Council consider vacating the alley to adjacent property owners.

Each winter, the City receives citizen input regarding sidewalk conditions and snow removal practices. For sidewalks, these are typically:

- Property owner does not remove snow or ice in a timely fashion (or at all)
- Snow plow pushed snow onto the sidewalk (either public or private plow)

For roadways, citizen input typically is:

- City does not cause enough cars to be removed from the roadway prior to plowing (a consequence of towing is a fairly significant cost to the vehicle owner)
- Cars are parked in front of my home that do not belong there (winter and summer complaint usually related to multi-family properties or commercial vehicles but not always)
- Didn't plow well enough/close enough
- Plowed too much snow onto my property

City Manager Schroeder said the City will be in substantial compliance for the Bike/Ped Plan by 2040, and by 2050 for ADA compliance so Council and the community should be aware that these things take a long time.

Schroeder provided an update from Code Enforcement that there have been 48 snow and ice nuisance cases generated in 2021, so far, of which six had to be abated.

Chief Sturgeon said the Police Department coordinates with Public Works for tagging and towing vehicles. Public Works provides a map of problem areas, but the Police Department doesn't have enough resources to tag and tow every area.

Chair Eng-Sarne commented that the Annapolis and Smith area is maintained by MnDOT. However, there is a resident who lives on the St. Paul side of Annapolis but parks on the West St. Paul side.

Sturgeon said the Police Department will focus on Public Works' map, as well as complaint areas like this. Generally, their Department tags and tows on average 120 vehicles. Due to staffing, they were only able to tag and tow 63 vehicles during last week's snow event. They utilize Community Service Officers and Reserve Officers for snow events, but we also need to work around their schooling. All CSO's, Reserve Officers, as well as some regular Officers, are called in to assist. Plows come through

soon as cars are removed. The cost for the owner is about \$180.00 to get their car out of impound the same day. Beyond that, there are storage fees. The ticket is \$33.00, of which the City receives roughly \$12.00 in fines. The \$20.00 administrative fee covers our cost. A CAD (Computer-Aided Dispatch) event is generated every time. The Dakota Communications Center charges \$30.00 for every CAD event.

Committee Member Eastman asked if Marketing & Communications Manager Dan Nowicki can send out a notice on social media regarding how citizens can sign up for emergency notifications. It should also be mentioned at the Town Hall meetings.

Chief Sturgeon said Crime Prevention Specialist Laura Vaughan is working with ROMA (Responsible Owners & Managers Association) and also rental licensing so new residents receive snow emergency notifications and information on how to sign up for those notifications. She is also working with City Planner Melissa Sonnek to make it a requirement that notices be posted at rental properties.

Committee Member Eastman asked if snow emergency notifications can be posted on the electronic billboard on 494 or if we can use colored lights on the water tower. Sturgeon said it is not as effective on the highway.

Committee Member Justen asked about a business on Butler that is not clearing their sidewalk. Schroeder said they have a private company that plows their lot. Sturgeon said he will get an update from Code Enforcement and provide it to the Public Safety Committee.

Motion was made by Chair Eng-Sarne and seconded by Committee Member Justen to close the meeting pursuant to Minnesota Statute, Section 13D.05, subdivision 2(a)(2) to discuss an active criminal investigation using active investigative data as defined by Minnesota Statute, Section 13.82, subdivision 7, at 9:14 a.m.

All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

B. Bias Crimes

This portion of the meeting was closed pursuant to Minnesota Statute, Section 13D.05, subdivision 2(a)(2) to discuss an active criminal investigation using investigative data as defined in Minnesota Statute, Section 13.82, subdivision 7.

No members of the public were allowed during this agenda item.

Motion was made by Chair Eng-Sarne and seconded by Committee Member Justen to reopen the meeting at 11:10 a.m.

All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

5. Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

6. Adjourn

Motion was made by Committee Member Justen and seconded by Chair Eng-Sarne to adjourn the meeting at 11:10 a.m.

All members present voted aye. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole Tillander
City Clerk
City of West St. Paul