

Public Safety Committee
Council Chambers
December 19, 2018
7:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councilor David Walker
Councilor Robert Gates
Councilor Geoff Hamann

MEMBERS ABSENT

Councilor Jeremy Hutchinson
Councilor Peter Lachapelle

OTHERS PRESENT

Michael Bezanson, PE, City Engineer
Gary Boudreau, Deputy Police Chief
Mark Klose, Fire Chief
Carl Turner, 11 Windhaven Drive
Kerrie Noltz, Medical Coordinator Hands Up
Nick Navana, Chair Hands Up
Emily Runin, Volunteer Hands up

Minutes

Councilor Walker brought the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

1. Public Input

The members of the public were present for items already on the agenda.

2. Wakefield Street/ Union Street-Yield

Carl Turner of 11 Windhaven Drive was present to discuss the issue with the yield at the intersection of Wakefield/Union Streets. Before he addressed the Wakefield/Union yield issue, he stated that the street sign on one end of his road reads "Windhaven Drive" and the sign on the other end reads "Windhaven Road"; he wanted someone to take a look into it. Regarding the Wakefield/Union yield issue, last week he was traveling north on Wakefield and turning onto Union Street and he was cut off by a vehicle that should have yielded. He would like the yield sign to be more visible; anything would help. Councilor Walker said the striping on the pavement give the impression that traffic from southbound Wakefield Street does have the right of way into the right lane on Union Street.

Mr. Bezanson said there are two “yield” signs, one on either side of the travel lane from southbound Wakefield Street. As far as options for making the yield more visible, he referred to the pavement markings at the new roundabout on Marketplace Blvd. at the Ridge; the word “yield” is painted on the pavement with a “shark tooth” symbol, and dashed line to show right-to-way. Councilor Walker asked if a flashing yield sign was on hand. Mr. Bezanson said “no”. Councilor Gates asked if they had the regular yield signs on hand, and Mr. Bezanson said that they probably do, but that two yield signs are already installed at the Wakefield/Union intersection. Councilor Walker said he likes the painted yield pavement markings. ***Councilor Hamann made a motion to paint the markings on the pavement at the Wakefield/Union Street intersection, including the word “yield”, the “shark tooth” triangle symbols, and dashed line. Councilor Gates seconded the motion. Unanimous voice vote carried the motion.***

3. Hand Up Health Services

Councilor Walker summarized the issue. Kerrie Nolty, the Medical Coordinator of Hand Up Health Services, Nick Navona, the Chair Person and Emily Runin a Volunteer were present to discuss the services that they offer through Hands Up Health Services. Ms. Nolty said that the program is called Syringe Service program or Needle Exchange Program; these programs provide more than syringes. In July 2017 Hand Up Health Services registered as a Syringe Service Program through New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services. In August 2017 street outreach began in Rochester, Dover, and Portsmouth and in October and November of 2017 regularly scheduled outreach sessions were in Rochester and Dover. Both programs use the principle of harm reduction, which is a set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with drug use. These principles provide a framework for working with people who use drugs (PWUD). They can make choices, changes, client driven vs. coercive, supportive vs punitive. A framework for understanding drugs and drug use, viewed through lens of science not morality, acknowledges some drugs/ use are safer than others, acknowledges and addresses context of use (drug, set, setting). The goal is to improve the health and well-being of individual, their partners, families and associates and the community. By exchanging the syringes, this helps prevent HIV, Hepatitis C and soft tissue infections and endocarditis. This program provides an engagement pit for getting people help and medical housing. Many drug users do not have any support. This program helps to keep the drug users healthy while using, they are

not using more, trying to keep them healthy. They promote safer injection tips, use sterile injecting supplies, take care of your veins, take your time, carry Naloxone and do not use alone. Disease prevention and referral, which includes HIV/ Hepatitis C testing, healthcare referral, substance use, treatment referral. They also provide overdose prevention by supplying fentanyl test strips, a lot of the opioid supply in the area has fentanyl. Mr. Navana stated that the individuals are already using drugs this is a way to keep them healthy during use. Ms. Runin said they have people come to them who use the syringes over and over again, it's not that they are using more drugs. They encourage people to call in overdoses to 911, it saves lives in the end. Councilor Gates asked how do they know the program is a success. Ms. Noltz said more tracking by the police and connecting with others. Councilor Gates asked how they deal with people saying giving syringes is enabling them. Mr. Navana said they are already using drugs they are just keeping them healthy they are not encouraging them to use or to stop. Ms. Runin said right now they have all the supplies in the back of the car and they use an apartment building driveway that they have permission to use. Deputy Boudreau said that the police department tracks the statistics closely. The Comstat report from last week showed that in 2017 year to date there were 250 deaths, and year to date for 2018 there is 162. He stated he didn't know if it was because of the availability of Narcan or reduction in use and that it was probably a combination of both. He said it is trending in the right direction. Ms. Noltz said they also encourage and support readiness for rehabilitation.

4. E911 Update

Councilor Walker summarized the issue.

Deputy Chief Boudreau said there was no meeting last month, but the two public hearings were held for East Side area Main Street and the Gonic area Main Street. They will be holding another public hearing. The tenants in the Gonic area apartment buildings were not there. The next one will probably be held in late January. Fire Chief Klose said he attended both public hearings and he said that some of the letters were not delivered. He talked to the postal service and they said that 195 letters were accidentally destroyed, which is part of the reason they will hold another public hearing. He also said that at the public hearing in East Rochester there were no residents of Main Street just Autumn Street and there was also a representative from the E911 committee of the state present. He also said that some of the people wanted to know why we were concerned

about these two streets. He said that there is 35 pages of discrepancies and they are working on them one page at a time.

5. Emergency Management Update

Councilor Walker summarized the issue. Fire Chief Klose said that The Hazard Mitigation Plan has been approved by Homeland Security and it is being finalized and will be adopted by the City for the 5 years. He also said that there is inclement weather predicted for Friday in the form of heavy rain, so there may be localized flooding.

6. Other

Wakefield Street-Yield Sign

Councilor Gates wanted to go back to the Wakefield Street/Union Street yield issue and ask Mr. Turner if he lived near Wakefield Street. Mr. Turner said “no”; he lives near Skyhaven Airport, but travels in the downtown area and is concerned. Councilor Gates asked if there have been many accidents in the area; Deputy Chief Boudreau said he would have to check the data on this area.

School Street Speed Issue

Deputy Chief Boudreau said that he received a call from the principal of the School Street School and she was concerned about the speeding on Portland Street near the crosswalk. The principal would like two flashing signs that say caution. He said there is a crossing guard there and he has not had a chance to check this request out. There are school zone notification signs present on Portland Street; it was questioned whether these could be updated or moved. This was kept in committee until next month; Mr. Bezanson will get more information.

South Main Street-Parking

Fire Chief Klose raised the issue of the parking spot on South Main Street by the Chamber of Commerce. The pumper that the Fire Department uses has a hard time travelling in the right lane as South Main Street turns into Wakefield Street when large vehicles are parked in the first spot. It happened twice in this area that the pumper had a hard time getting by when a vehicle was parked there. Mr.

Bezanson said the area ahead of the crosswalk is hash marked for no parking as required. Deputy Chief Boudreau said it does cause a bit of a vision problem. Councilor Walker asked if they have compact car signs. Mr. Bezanson said he would have to look to see if DPW has one or can order one. This was held in committee and Mr. Bezanson will look into the compact car parking signs issue.

Councilor Gates made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 PM. Councilor Hamann seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Laura Miller, Secretary II.