

**Public Safety Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
September 20, 2023  
6:00 PM  
Council Chambers**

**Members Present**

Councilor Peter Lachapelle, Chair  
Councilor Skip Gilman  
Councilor Dana Berlin  
Councilor Alexander de Geofroy

**Members Absent**

Councilor Amy Malone

**Others Present**

Jarrold Norris, P.E. Assistant City Engineer  
Gina Golden-Silvestro, GIS/AM Technician  
Deputy Chief Andrew Swanberry, PD  
Chief Dennis Dube, FD  
David Smith, 588 Salmon Falls Road

Councilor Lachapelle brought the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**1. Approve Minutes from August 16, 2023 Public Safety Meeting**

***Councilor Lachapelle requested to amend item #12 change Councilor Larochelle to Councilor Lachapelle. Councilor de Geofroy MOVED to approve the amended minutes from August 16, 2023. Councilor Gilman seconded the motion. MOTION CARRIED by unanimous voice vote.***

**2. Public Input**

David Smith of 588 Salmon Falls Road was present to discuss having the flashing sign removed from in front of his home. He is concerned that the item was taken out of committee, the sign will not be moved and the sign effects his and his neighbors property in a negative way. Councilor Lachapelle asked for the item be put back on the agenda and add the list of areas that were suggested for the sign.

**3. Flashing Lights and Raised Table Policy Discussion**

Councilor Lachapelle thanked Councilor Berlin for drafting the guidelines and sending to the committee. Chief Dube has a few recommendations on the guideline draft. First to include more traffic calming measures into the future ordinance, such as speed bumps, traffic cushions, and roundabouts. These all have the same effect on delaying emergency service vehicles. Second recommendation is to get the policy in front of a technical group he recommends the Technical Review Group. They could take the document and balance it with codes and regulations and everything that is required in general. Third recommendation is to have every request that has gone through the Technical Review Group to come back to the Public Safety Committee

for approval or denial. Councilor Berlin stated that having a public hearing he thinks would be necessary to hear what the public have to say before making a decision. Councilor de Geofroy suggested that the committee votes to send it to the Technical Review Group, then they would send it back with their recommendations. Councilor Lachapelle said this should go to codes and they could draft something based on the guidelines. Councilor Berlin said he would like to rework the guideline document with the new information and send it out to be discussed at a future committee meeting. **(kept in committee)**

#### **4. Chestnut Street Speed Control**

Councilor Lachapelle stated this is a speed table concern that is being discussed with item #3. **(kept in committee)**

#### **5. Highland Street / Eastern Avenue**

Councilor Lachapelle summarized the issue. Mr. Norris contacted the NHDOT they looked at the traffic counts and currently do not have a planned action for that location. Councilor Lachapelle asked when the last traffic study was completed for the location. Mr. Norris was unsure when the last traffic study was completed. Mr. Norris will follow up to ask the NHDOT if they could do an updated traffic study for that area. **(kept in committee)**

#### **6. Rangeway Drive**

Councilor Lachapelle stated this is a speed table concern that is being discussed with item #3. **(kept in committee)**

#### **7. Benard Road**

Councilor Lachapelle summarized the issue and asked Mr. Norris if there are any 30 mph speed limit signs in stock. Mr. Norris said this is a common sign and we should have them in stock. ***Councilor Berlin MOVED to add the 30-mph speed limit sign to Bernard Road. Councilor Gilman seconded the motion. MOTION CARRIED by unanimous voice vote.***

#### **8. Pickering Road/ Railroad Ave**

Councilor Lachapelle summarized the issue requesting a push button flasher. Mr. Norris stated he thinks there maybe future funding for this location. Mr. Norris said Public Works is in the process of replacing the sidewalk along Railroad Avenue this will extend up to the bridge and around the curve at Pickering Road. Ramps will be added at the crosswalks. Mr. Norris did speak with the Deputy Chief Swanberry and there is future funding available for adding a flasher at that location. Councilor Berlin stated that this is where children are walking and asked if this could be expedited. Councilor Lachapelle asked if Mr. Norris can look into getting this moved up as a priority. Mr. Norris said he would look into getting this raised as a priority. **(kept in committee)**

## **9. Pickering Road/ Brickyard**

Councilor Lachapelle summarized the issue for a crosswalk by Brickyard. Mr. Norris is still looking at what the best practices are. **(kept in committee)**

## **10. Franklin St/ Wentworth St**

Councilor Lachapelle summarized the issue and asked Deputy Chief Swanberry if the speed trailer was placed at that location. Chief Swanberry stated that the trailer was put out for two weeks. One week in each direction. The average speed was 30 mph and 32 mph in each direction. The 85 percentile was 37 mph in each direction. Of the 26,000 cars there were 36 cars that exceeded greater than 20 mph over the speed limit. Councilor de Geofrey stated the data doesn't warrant any action and suggests taking it out of committee.

## **11. Other**

Councilor Lachapelle asked if anyone had any others. Mr. Norris stated he had two items. Mr. Norris stated that there is an opportunity to volunteer for the Downtown Rochester Accessibility Audit. The volunteers will survey the sidewalks for accessibility concerns in the downtown area. This opportunity to volunteer will be on September 25, 2023 at 3pm and 5pm. Angie Cleveland from Strafford Regional Planning is the contact person. There will be recommendations generated from the survey that will hopefully translate into community development grant funding and most likely show up in the master planning.

Mr. Norris stated he had the results from a discussion from Oct 2022 for Public Works to provide cost estimates for emergency call boxes for the Union Street parking lot. Three vendors provided cost estimates which vary from \$11,000 to \$26,000 per box. Councilor Berlin stated he would like to see what others think about this idea. Maybe wait until next month to see if anyone comes in for public input. He asked Deputy Chief Swanberry what his thoughts are on these. Deputy Chief Swanberry said his concern is if they are necessary since everyone has cell phones. He cannot think of a situation where people have had an issue getting in contact with the department. These would be treated as emergency lines so if someone was to falsely activate it, they would be sending at least one officer, probably two officers. Councilor de Geofroy stated he doesn't see the cost being reasonable for what it provides. He would need to see compelling evidence that this is doing a lot he would not be in favor of spending the money on this. Councilor Gilman agreed with Councilor de Geofroy and said with everyone having cell phones. Councilor Berlin asked to wait until next month to see if anyone comes in to discuss. **(kept in committee)**

**Councilor Lachapelle ADJOURNED the meeting at 6:38 PM.**

The minutes were respectfully submitted by Ronda Boisvert, Administrative Assistant II