

Minutes of a Meeting of
ENVIRONMENT, SAFETY & COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

held August 3, 2015

6:00 p.m.

Present: Councilman Steve Lee, Chair
Councilman Dwight Clark
Councilwoman Karen Lieske

Also Present: President of Council Koomar, Councilman Tadych Law Director Ebert,
Police Chief Spaetzel

Audience: Richard Fink, Marty Mace, Conda Boyd, Lydia DeGeorge, Suzanne Graham, Tara Wendell. and residents of Westwood Road, including Thomas Stevens, 29125 Westwood Road, Joe Tepas and Elaine Meyer.

Mr. Lee called this meeting of the Environment, Safety and Community Services Committee to order at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Lee thanked everyone for their attendance this evening.

Parking on Westwood Road

Mrs. Lieske stated that this situation was brought to her attention by Mr. Thomas Stevens two years ago. Mr. Stevens noted that he has only lived at his residence about seven years, but neighbors have informed him that in years past the parking situation was so bad the Police Department would even supply them with barriers to keep vehicles from entering the street. Mrs. Lieske stated that two years ago she met with the residents and the City responded very quickly to put up new signage that is a little broader, but still not enforceable.

There is an older neighbor at the end of the street, where it backs up to the high school who has had to back in to her driveway because of the parking situation. The concerns about the parking and the narrow street caused Mr. Stevens to call again. Police Chief Spaetzel was very responsive. He went out, talked to the neighbors, and the meeting was scheduled 10 days ago to meet with the neighbors. The Police Chief even came to the meeting on his bicycle on his way home from work. The Chief has suggested signage that prohibits vehicles from parking, stopping, or standing on the street.

Mr. Lee stated that parking is prohibited currently on the north side of the street. It is the south side of the street that is the issue. Mr. Lee asked if the high school parking lot being inaccessible this summer has been part of the reason for this problem. Mr. Stevens said that the issue is constant; the high school parking lot inaccessibility is not a factor. The concern about the timing of new signage is with the fields being used over Labor Day weekend for the Bay Soccer Club Tournament. The travel soccer team season is one of the times when the parking situation is the

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worst. Mr. Stevens said the problem occurs with any activity other than the high school events. No one parks on the street for high school events; it is all the other people who use the fields. The soccer fields at the high school are used on the Sunday of Labor Day weekend when participants are not allowed to use Cahoon Memorial Park. Baseball leagues are currently causing the problem as well.

Mr. Clark asked what signage is in place now. The signage prohibits parking during athletic events. There is an additional sign at the end of the street that says "No Soccer Parking." On the north side of the street there is a sign that says "No Parking on this side of the Street." Police Chief Spaetzel noted that these are just advisory signs; they cannot be enforced.

Mr. Lee noted that with new signage in place the Police Department would be able to ticket violators. Police Chief Spaetzel stated that this is correct, and the sign would be in front of Mr. Stevens' residence. The area would extend 90 feet from the dead end of Westwood Road (the west end), to just past Mr. Stevens' driveway apron. That area would be a no parking zone. Mr. Stevens said that this is where his neighbor has difficulty backing out of the driveway because the street is so narrow. She is being forced to back in her driveway which is very long. The resident is in her 70's.

Mr. Lee asked if the remainder of the south side of the street has been an issue. Chief Spaetzel stated that he is sure there is a lot of parking, but they want to be sensitive to the residents that park on the street. This is a situation where the Police Department mediated and decided they would take care of this section and alleviate the majority of that problem, still allowing residents who need to park on the street to be able to do so. One of the major difficulties is that it is a very narrow road.

Mr. Lee asked if the ordinance is passed this evening at the Special Meeting of Council, would it be possible to get signage up before the Challenge Cup tournament, or the beginning of the school year.

Mr. Tadych asked if most of these offenders are associated with events where out-of-towners come in. Would it not be a difficulty for the police to ticket and collect in some cases on a minor offense? Chief Spaetzel stated that the police get very few that don't pay, and those offenders they try to contact. If they still don't pay they are sent to court. Mrs. Lieske commented that she wonders how many out-of-town people would know that street was there to use.

Mr. Koomar will ask Law Director Ebert if there is anything the Mayor can do on a temporary basis for a sign, for 30 days, that would allow Council the time to pass the ordinance at the next meeting. Mrs. Lieske thanked Mr. Lee for scheduling a meeting and addressing this issue. Mr. Lee expressed appreciation to the Westwood Road residents for their attentiveness to a solution to this problem. He assured them that the ordinance will be placed on the agenda of Council for an early September meeting.

School Crossing Guards

Mr. Lee stated that Councilman Vincent is not able to be present this evening, but he brought the issue regarding the lack of a school crossing guard on Dover Center Road and Wolf Road to his attention as a result of questions from residents. Mr. Lee stated that he thought the committee could discuss the current locations of crossing guards and whether there is a student count to determine where the guards are going to be placed. If the counts warrant a crossing guard at Dover and Wolf, what would be the incremental cost of adding a guard, or the alternative of relocating a guard from another location where there are fewer students?

Chief Spaetzel stated that Sergeant Kathy Leasure has the most expertise and knowledge in this area. There are currently 8 crossing guard locations in the City of Bay Village. They have looked at all of those 8 locations and they are all necessary. There has never been a crossing guard at Dover Center and Wolf Road. There are crossing guards at:

- Douglas Road and Dover Center Road
- Cahoon Road and Wolf Road
- Douglas Road and Wolf Road
- Normandy Road and Douglas Road
- Cahoon Road and Oviatt Drive

Chief Spaetzel stated that the guard at Cahoon Road and Wolf Road is placed due to the volume at any one time, combined with the vehicle traffic coming directly out of the Middle School. There is less traffic at Dover Center and Wolf Road. Those crossing at that location are Middle School students. The crossing guard at Cahoon and Oviatt takes care of children from St. Raphael's School, Normandy School, and the Middle School. The amount of \$68,000 is budgeted every year for school crossing guards. There would be a fairly significant cost to add another guard, approximately \$8,500.

Chief Spaetzel stated that there have not been any major issues at Dover Center and Wolf Road. There are crossing buttons that go four-way red when activated. It gives the students plenty of time to cross. The department is looking to standardize the "No Turn on Red" signs throughout the community. That will be brought to the attention of Council this fall.

Mr. Koomar commented on his knowledge of residents who avoid the intersection of Dover Center and Wolf Road due to the lack of a crossing guard, either by driving them to school or crossing in other areas.

Mr. Lee asked Police Chief Spaetzel to explore the issue further and come back with recommendations.

Conda Boyd asked if the Police Department, at the beginning of the school year, could devote a little bit of extra patrolling at the Middle School since so many drivers drop off and pick up their children on Oakland Road behind the Middle School, even with signs posted.

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Lydia DeGeorge stated that she had suggested changing the signs to a “No Idle Zone” which Superintendent Keener was going to look into. She noted that no one pays attention to the existing signs which sets a bad example for the children when their families drop them off in front of a “Do Not Drop Off” sign. Either take them down, or take them down and replace them with a “No Idle Zone” and try to find a way to enforce that. It is particularly dangerous at the beginning of the school year because people are lining up on both sides of the street and kids are darting between the cars. Get them to park on the north side of the street and kick them out on the south side. It is an accident waiting to happen.

Mr. Fink noted that people go across the double yellow line in the road trying to get through the school areas when cars are lined up to drop off their children, creating a very unsafe traffic situation.

Chief Spaetzel stated that Normandy and the Middle School have always had issues with the mixture of traffic and children. It is very difficult to come up with an answer that is going to satisfy everyone, because of the amount of traffic and the number of kids driven to school. These are small residential areas and it is very difficult.

When school is back in session, Chief Spaetzel stated that they will monitor the Dover/Wolf intersection to see the number of children crossing and the traffic flow. A special study will not be needed, and watching it for a while will give a good indication of whether a guard is needed there or not. Chief Spaetzel stated that he would like to get more public input. If Council hears from the public on this issue, he would like to hear those comments.

Conda Boyd offered to count cars at the intersection, as she has done similar counting before.

Suzanne Graham asked the status of the barriers that were going to be placed along the border of the park at the end of Dover. The concrete abutments are still there. Mr. Lee stated that the concrete barriers were placed as a temporary measure. A more permanent solution is being designed. Mr. Lee will ask for an update.

Mr. Lee stated that some of our neighboring communities have participated in the Safe Routes to School Program, a program administered by the State of Ohio with funding available. He suggested that may be something to be looked at in connection with the same questions and issues about crosswalks and solutions for safe traffic to and from school. Mr. Clark stated that Superintendent Keener and Principal McAndrews will need to weigh in on the topic as well.

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Steve Lee, Chair

Joan Kemper, Secretary