

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

Date and Time: Monday, April 17, 2023, at 5:15 pm, (Council Chambers)

Members Present: Lisa Rasmussen, Chad Henke, Doug Diny, Lou Larson, Becky McElhaney

Others Present: Anne Jacobson, Matt Barnes, Jeremy Kopp, Tracy Rieger, Kaitlyn Bernarde, Mary Goede, Katie Rosenberg, Liz Brodek, Andrew Lynch

Minutes of previous meetings. (03/20/23)

Motion by Diny, second by Larson to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Motion carried 5-0.

Consider approval or denial of various license applications

Lisa Rasmussen stated there were denial recommendations for Operator's Licenses for Kristopherlee Firkus and Phillip Komosa. Neither individual was present to appeal. There was also a denial recommendation for a Public Transport Driver License for Donald Alsteen.

Donald Alsteen, 209732 County Rd Y, Hatley addressed the committee stating his record was accurate, but the offenses all happened in his drinking days. He indicated he quit drinking approximately six years ago. He explained the reason for all the drinking was because his family owned a lot of bars which he cleaned as was given free drinks. He admitted to doing many stupid things when he was younger between 17 and 19 years old. He stated the charge of 4th Degree Sexual Assault was from a 4-year teenage relationship with a girl whose parents had consented to and then changed their mind. He stated he wanted to get his record expunged but chose jail time rather than probation which did not him allow to get record expunged. He stated he was trying to get his life together for his wife and kids. Driving cab would be a good job for him because he could take his autistic son along. He pointed out he has no repeat offenses.

Lou Larson questioned why he was being denied in the first place because the charges on the record were at least 11 years old and were misdemeanors. Deputy Chief Barnes explained they look at the established criteria and battery is an exempt offense.

Chad Henke suggested he bring any written evidence of rehabilitation or letters of recommendation to the committee's next meeting.

Motion by Diny second by Larson to approve or deny licenses as recommended by staff, with the exception of Donald Alsteen to be held for the next meeting. Motion carried 5-0.

NOTE: Subsequent to this meeting Phillip Komosa's employer called to say he had not received the letter regarding the denial recommendation in time to attend the meeting. He was removed from the license list and put on the next PH&S meeting to allow for an appeal.

Discussion and possible action on Amending the title and provisions of Chapter 5.63 Obstructions within the Central Business District Public Rights-of-Way, Section 12.44.040 Exceptions, Section 5.64.035 Alcohol licensing and serving of alcohol beverages, and Section 1.01.025 Issuance of citations; creating Chapter 5.65 Sidewalk Cafés.

Lisa Rasmussen explained a number of years ago a conduit was created specifically for full-service restaurants in the Central Business District to allow for sidewalk cafes for outdoor seating with or without alcohol service, depending on their liquor licensing. During the pandemic expansion of those seating areas were permitted. She indicated Liz Brodek brought a request from some businesses outside of the Central Business District that would also like to have sidewalk cafes. One of those businesses making a request is Kreger Bakery.

This ordinance would allow for either a Sidewalk Café License for full-service restaurants or an Obstruction Permit for other business types to be available city-wide.

Motion by Henke, second by Larson to approve. Motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and possible action on Designating the Month of May 2023 as "No Mow May" and suspending enforcement of W.M.C. §6.48.010 Mowing Required and §6.48.040 Penalty from May 1, 2023 through May 31, 2023

Rasmussen noted this is the third season that "No Mow May" has been allowed.

Motion by Larson, second by Henke to approve “No Mow May” for 2023. Motion carried 5-0.

Operations Report from Fire Department March 2023

Deputy Chief Jeremy Kopp commented on a recent water rescue and training of newly hired firefighters. *Report placed on file.*

Tavern Activities Report – March 1, 2023 through March 31, 2023

No discussion. Report placed on file.

Community Outreach Update

Tracy Rieger reviewed the data in her report provided in the meeting packet, which can be accessed online: https://www.ci.wausau.wi.us/Portals/0/Departments/Council/Archives/Standing%20Committees/Public%20Health%20and%20Safety%20Committee/2023/PHSC_20230417_Packet.pdf

Lisa Rasmussen noted due to high water warnings and flooding a flood mitigation gate was deployed and the individuals had to be relocated out from under the bridge and shelter capacity expanded to accommodate them.

Deputy Chief Barnes explained the Police Department, DPW, and the Parks Department were notified by Wisconsin Public Service that the forecasting was going to require the gate. The encampments located under the Scott Street Bridge as well as on The Mandarin side, and all the encampments on Barker-Stewart Island were removed. All the property that was on city-owned property is being stored for 30 days and notices were posted everywhere on how to retrieve the personal property. He stated it is the intention of the Police Department not to allow those encampments to return to those areas which they don't feel are appropriate for them to be living.

Craig Vincent, Bridge Street Mission, addressed the committee explaining their ministry operates a daytime place to be for the unhoused community from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM every day at 115 W Bridge Street. It is highlighted be a very nice sit-down meal. At 1140 W Bridge Street is the Sober Living Center which is a programmed homeless shelter with a goal of taking people from the point of need to where they can function again in society. The three phases are 1) Stabilization, which is getting them off the street; 2) Transformation, where the hard work it done to help them function again in society; and 3) Re-entry, where although they are still living with us, they are working again and making connections in the community. It is a 24/7 programmed shelter and they are not out in the community but are supervised in productive activities. He indicated they would eventually like to offer this to women.

Communications

None

Adjourn

Motion by Henke, second by Diny to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 5:52 pm.