

Present: President Stearn; President Pro-Tem Pfeifer, Members: Berndt, Koss, Oen, Peddie and Woodrow  
Absent: None  
Also Present: Village Manager, Spallasso  
Finance Director, Wiszowaty  
Director of Public Safety, Woodard

President Stearn called the special Council meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in the Village of Beverly Hills municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

**ADDITIONS TO AGENDA/APPROVE AGENDA**

Motion by Pfeifer, second by Oen, to approve the agenda as published.

Motion passed (7 – 0).

**STUDY SESSION TO DISCUSS FUNDING 25<sup>th</sup> PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007/08 BUDGET**

Stearn stated that the purpose of this meeting is to discuss the budget and determine how to fund a 25<sup>th</sup> officer in the Public Safety Department budget. He asked for ideas from Council members on how to fund the detective position.

Koss stated that she has been focusing on how this expenditure could be funded within the Public Safety Department. The Department is operating on a 12-hour shift schedule with officers working 104 additional hours a year. Koss outlined a scenario whereby each officer would work two hours less per week, which would result in funding a 25<sup>th</sup> officer. If this option is not feasible, Koss proposed finding money within the Department to fund a part-time detective. Consideration could be given to hiring a retired officer as a part-time detective until the Village determines if the position is needed.

Director Woodard explained the concept proposed by Koss indicating how the unpaid hours of work accumulate over the year to equal 104 hours of compensation. The idea of scheduling officers for less than seven days in some fashion has merit on paper but runs counter to the original setup for the 12-hour shift that was implemented, which was 12-hour work days. Woodard added that he would have to consult with the labor attorney on whether it would be feasible for administration to change the 12-hour work day to a schedule where officers are assigned time off at management's discretion. He questioned whether this could happen without the agreement of the unions. The first step would be to determine if it can be done short of an unfair labor practice charge.

Stearn understood that the union may challenge any attempt to change an established working environment. Another potential issue is that four people are required on each shift including one command officer, which could result in large overtime costs. This concept calls for further analysis as to whether it is feasible.

Berndt suggested that there may be the potential for an unpaid voluntary time off program on the days when the department is fully staffed.

Stearn asked Woodard to address the idea of a part-time detective. Woodard responded that he does not know how that option would fare against the collective bargaining agreement because it might be perceived as a contracted employee.

Pfeifer commented on the operation and productivity of the department with 24 officers working 12-hour shifts. She proposed that administration look at using the current staffing to better value. Pfeifer suggested that Council re-evaluate whether to fund a 25<sup>th</sup> officer. Bringing on another person would be a long-term commitment. She commented that Council has allowed this to become an emotional issue. She has not seen statistics that have convinced her that the Village needs an additional detective at this time.

Stearn asserted that he did not want to revisit the discussion of 24 versus 25 officers held at the May 1 Council meeting. Council tabled action on the budget last night for the purpose of meeting to discuss how to budget for a 25<sup>th</sup> officer.

Stearn suggested a way to fund the 25<sup>th</sup> officer as follows: 1) Reduce Public Safety Department capital purchases by \$30,000-\$35,000. The amount in that account would still be approximately \$50,000-\$53,000; 2) Remove \$30,000 from the \$150,000 budgeted for asphalt resurfacing of major roads. Stearn noted that there was no money allocated for asphalt resurfacing of major roads last year; 3) Ask Director Woodard to find an additional \$20,000-\$30,000 in the Public Safety Department budget for this expense. Stearn affirmed that this is not a long term solution nor does it address future funding of salary, benefits and pension costs.

Koss remarked that everyone on Council would like to have a 25<sup>th</sup> officer, but we do not know how to pay for it long term. There are unanswered questions.

Peddie stated that five votes are needed to approve a budget. She suggested that the Director investigate some of the options suggested tonight and determine if they are feasible.

Berndt proposed adopting a budget with the suggestions from Stearn to fund a 25<sup>th</sup> officer. Council and administration can then look for opportunities to recoup funds and put them back into the budget.

Spallasso reminded everyone that before Council for consideration is a balanced budget with 24 officers. Council postponed a decision on the budget at the May 1 meeting. His understanding was that everyone on Council felt that the 25<sup>th</sup> officer was a good idea. He was expecting Council to discuss how to fund that position tonight. A budget for the Village must be approved in two weeks.

Koss stated that there is a balanced budget before Council for consideration. The cuts suggested by Stearn will still be there in the coming months if Council chooses to hire a 25<sup>th</sup> officer.

Oen thought that Council came to a consensus last night to table the budget and meet today to discuss how to fund an additional detective. Director Woodard was asked what he needed to

run the Public Safety Department and responded that he would like to have 25 officers to make the department effective.

Pfeifer stated that she is not satisfied with the justification to budget for an additional detective at this time, but she would be willing to amend the budget if she can be convinced of the need.

Stearn remarked that Council is rehashing the same discussion of 24 versus 25 officers. Five people are needed to approve a budget. Stearn called for a straw poll vote on the issue to determine whether Council can move forward to discuss how to fund a 25<sup>th</sup> officer. Four members of Council were in support of a budget that funds 25 officers. Stearn said that a compromise is needed.

Peddie stated that she would like to make a decision on how to rework the budget to fund an officer at this meeting. She thought that some of the options discussed earlier in the meeting may be valid. There is a detective in the department currently. Peddie questioned the rationale of reducing other budget items in order to fund an additional detective.

Pat Westerlund of 18540 Devonshire commented that he spoke emotionally at the May 1 Council meeting when he supported the need for a 25<sup>th</sup> officer. He thinks that Council should look at the issue from the perspective of where we are today with the budget and how we can pay for things. It is his view that, if the community wants additional services, citizens need to pay for them.

Sharon Tischler of 21415 Virmar Court stated that she has attended many budget sessions and has watched councils decide how to pay for specific services. She suggested that some of the expense should come out of the Public Safety Department budget if the Director wants to fund a part-time or full time person in the detective bureau. She mentioned that Council could adopt the budget and amend it at a later time to fund another detective. Tischler remarked that, once an officer is hired, Council will face the same funding issue next year.

Sandra Lajoie of 16045 Dunblaine stated that she was uncomfortable with Council making a decision to add a 25<sup>th</sup> officer for the reason that there are too many unknowns. She suggested adopting the proposed balanced budget and considering a budget amendment once Council receives the answers it is looking for.

Woodrow thought that there were areas in the budget where money could be found to fund the 25<sup>th</sup> officer. It would give Council 12 months to look into the suggestions made today and determine if the position can be funded next year. Council funded 25 officers last year at the expense of other line items. Suggestions have been made by Stearn for cuts that will work. Woodrow indicted that he was in support of doing an efficiency study of the Department with the hope of arriving at other means of saving money. He noted that the Village has town hall meetings scheduled to listen to what the residents want.

Stearn commented that he has been talking to Director Woodard, Manager Spallasso and Council about the need for a third detective and has been convinced that the Village needs that

position. He agrees that there are other options and efficiencies that warrant analysis. Oen concurred that there is a need for a third detective.

Koss expressed the view that it would be fiscally irresponsible of Council to make a decision on hiring a 25<sup>th</sup> officer at this time when there are unanswered questions. The Village is not in peril operating with 24 officers. She proposed adopting the proposed budget and authorizing the efficiency study. Koss suggested asking the Director to find additional funds in the Public Safety Department budget for this position.

Woodard stated that he could not make that happen within the public safety budget. He needs \$77,044 for the officer plus funding for the operational study.

Stearn asked for straw vote of those in favor of figuring out how to fund a third detective. There were four votes. Three members were in favor of adopting the budget presented at the May 1 Council meeting.

Pfeifer affirmed that she is opposed to providing funding for a 25<sup>th</sup> officer at this time. However, she would not vote against the adoption of a budget that would allow for the additional position if that is the decision of a majority of Council members.

Koss proposed adopting the budget as prepared and waiting for answers to the questions posed tonight before deciding on funding an additional detective.

Spallasso offered the suggestion that Council adopt the budget as prepared and set a time frame for administration to come back with answers to the questions asked and possibly results from an operational report of the Department if Council decides to proceed with that study. Administration can prepare a package of information that will make it possible for Council to make a decision on the 25<sup>th</sup> officer. A time frame of three to four months could be established to return with the requested information.

Pfeifer stated that it makes sense to her to adopt the proposed budget and amend it if needed at such time that Council has the information needed to make those judgments.

Stearn called for a straw vote of those members who support adopting the budget as proposed and amending it at a later date. Three members were in favor of this. There followed further discussion of the issues by Council and the public.

Carl Cutright of 19116 Hillcrest commented that employee benefits are excessive. Stearn responded that the Village is bound by a collective bargaining agreement with the Public Safety Department. Cutright was in favor of budgeting for 24 officers.

Stearn proposed that Council adopt a budget with funding for a 25<sup>th</sup> officer and agree among themselves and with the Director of Public Safety that he will not hire a 25<sup>th</sup> officer for a period of 3 or 4 months. Investigative work will be done during that time frame to determine how to proceed, and the decision on hiring of a 25<sup>th</sup> officer will be revisited. Administration will not hire an additional officer until Council approves that action by a super majority vote.

Spallasso made a firm commitment that he will not approve the hiring of anyone until the discussion is revisited and approved by Council.

Stearn reiterated that the draft budget will be amended as follows: 1) Reduce capital purchase account 101.900.980 by \$30,000; 2) Reduce the amount budgeted for Major Road Fund asphalt resurfacing by \$30,000; and 3) Reduce the Public Safety Department budget by the remainder of the funds. Wiszowaty explained how adjustments can be made to achieve a reduction in the account for asphalt resurfacing of major roads.

There was unanimous decision of Council to proceed on this basis.

Motion by Pfeifer, second by Oen, to adjourn the meeting at 6:49 p.m.

Motion passed (7 – 0).

**Todd Stearn**  
**Council President**

**Ellen E. Marshall**  
**Village Clerk**

**Susan Bernard**  
**Recording Secretary**