

**CITY OF PARK RAPIDS
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
MAY 9, 2017, 5:30 PM
Park Rapids Public Library-Lower Level
Park Rapids, Minnesota**

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Pat Mikesh called the City Council Workshop for May 9th, 2017, to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL: Present: Mayor Pat Mikesh, Councilmembers Ryan Leckner, Erika Randall, Dick Rutherford, and Liz Stone. Absent: None. Staff Present: City Administrator John McKinney, Police Chief Jeff Appel, Treasurer Angela Brumbaugh, Planner Ryan Mathisrud, and Clerk Margie Vik. Others Present: David Collins, Sue Tomte, Marty Giese, Lance Bagstad, Mick Ryan, Warren Warmbold, and Kevin Cederstrom from the Enterprise.

3. PRESENTATION:

A. K-9 Proposal for the Park Rapids Police Department: McKinney stated the city has been invited to talk with some proponents of things that would be good for the city overall, and one of the concepts they are exploring is getting a K-9 here. They have asked for an opportunity to seek the Council's permission to move forward with that. The chief will give a presentation of the type of program they are talking about.

Chief Appel stated he was invited to a Leadership Council meeting shortly after he started working here in October. The group asked me what they could do to assist the police department and identified several goals within the community that they would like to focus on. After discussion, I advised them that a K-9 unit would be the best tool. I will summarize the program. I was a K-9 officer from 2001 to 2004 with the Worthington Police Department. I've worked with dogs my whole career on each department that I've been at. We did identify that the K-9 unit was the one program that would provide the greatest improvement, efficiency, and effectiveness for our department. The Leadership Council identified it as a program that they would like to get behind for the city and help with funding for the program start up.

Appel stated a K-9 can track for missing persons, track fleeing suspects, search large areas for evidence from a suspect that's fleeing a scene. These dogs are trained to locate any item that they may have thrown. I feel building searches and scouting large areas for criminal apprehension are important to this community. For any alarm call where normally you would be sending a police officer into harm's way, the dog is able to do the search instead of a police officer immediately being in danger. It's also a less lethal force option. Any option that we can have for less lethal force is one that we will strive for in this day and age. One of the major factors is narcotics detection. The dog promotes officers safety, not only for the handler, but for all officers that are working with the dog. They can be used in conjunction with crowd control, and various crime prevention projects.

Appel stated there was a study in a community of 25,000 residents. Once they added a K-9 program there was an 80% reduction in their break ins, and in the

surrounding community. Most bad guys know which departments have a dog and which don't, and they factor that in when deciding which communities to commit various criminal acts in. Dogs can be used for management of special community events, support delivery of warrants and high risk arrests, which can be utilized with SWAT Teams and the Drug Task Force. Public relations are one of the major factors for a K-9 unit. I've already mentioned the higher level of officer safety. There is a fear of dogs and it reduces the resistance during apprehension.

Appel stated there are two types of dogs you would typically see with a police department, a single purpose dog, or a dual purpose dog. A single purpose dog is basically a sniff dog. They are trained to recognize orders of narcotics or explosives. A dual purpose dog would have that function for narcotics, primarily. They'd also have the criminal apprehension aspect. There are studies on how much more a dog can smell versus a human. It could be 100 to 1,000 times greater. No one really knows, but basically everything starts with the nose. It's an excellent tool for law enforcement. They can recognize and respond to a wide variety of scents to locate people, drugs, and do it much more efficiently than humans can. A case study completed in 1999 to 2000 in Lansing, Michigan, they did building searches. While searching for suspects, out of 29, the K-9 team found 27, for 93%. The officers alone found 17, for 59%. The time it takes for any search climbs as you get into bigger buildings. It's an invaluable tool for building searches. Not only does it promote safety to the officers that have to go into the building, but it reduces a lot of personnel time.

Appel stated case law allows indication of drugs after a sniff from a well-trained drug detection police dog is sufficient to establish probable cause. The dog does indicate to the odor of a controlled substance. The typical detector dog will detect the odor of five controlled substances, marijuana, ecstasy, cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine. There are some dogs now being trained to sniff for prescription medications in suitcases. For Park Rapids having a police K-9 for interdiction immediately would help us with motor vehicle sniffs. The key factor I see here is school sniffs. You can bring the dog into the school to sniff a block of lockers during the day. The kids get to see the dog interact, and it promotes a safer environment in the school, and hopefully prevents a lot of drugs from entering into our schools.

Appel stated the Paul Bunyan Drug Task Force is excited about the idea of the possibility of another dog. They would put the dog to work on search warrants that they use in conjunction with the county's dog. You can also do vehicle sniffs in public areas for narcotics. Along with the narcotics you're taking cash off the street that's normally used in the drug trade, and forfeitures come with it. The Park Rapids Police Department mission statement includes commitment to excellent, and servicing the community, and I honestly feel that this is one of the best tools law enforcement can have for the community. It enhances public relations and promotes a sense of ownership from the public into the police department. We need the public backing in order for the K-9 unit to be successful. In most cases as we're here with this Leadership Council there are groups that will step up and help support K-9, and that's the case for us tonight.

Appel stated when I had my dog I was constantly putting on demonstrations for kids and various civic groups throughout the community. They would call me and bring me in for presentations. It's very popular with any community. Often, it's the number one requested public function that's requested through a police department. The Burnsville Police Department did forty public K-9 demonstrations to school children and various

organizations in one year. They often compliment other police department functions where the dog is there to interact with the public.

Appel stated we touched on the less lethal force option for the dog. The use of a properly trained police dog to apprehend a felony suspect does not carry with it a substantial risk of causing death or serious bodily harm. Court cases have deemed the dog a less lethal force option, and there is case law to support that. The courts have stated that the K-9's generally have a propensity for officers to use less force when the K-9 is present. Instead of going right to that deadly force level, when you have another tool available the dog is one more thing you can use before you get to deadly force. Use of dogs can make it more likely that officers can apprehend suspects without the risks attendant to the use of firearms in the darkness thus frequently enhancing the safety of the officers, bystanders and suspects. It promotes safety for all sides involved. Bean bag rounds have caused a death a year since their introduction to law enforcement. There have been several deaths resulting from the use of Tasers. But with K-9's it's minimal.

Appel stated the cost of starting a program is the biggest hurdle. This is where the Leadership Council is stepping forward to try and help us offset these costs. The state bid price for a Ford Explorer Police Interceptor, fully equipped is approximately \$50,000.00. Using St. Paul's K-9 Academy an officer would typically be off the road for thirteen weeks to go to the training. It costs \$4,000.00 for the academy handler certification. The purchase of the dog is approximately \$8,500.00. For the narcotics training there is an additional fee of \$500.00.

Appel stated we would use existing staff from within the department. We are not adding an additional position. It enhances an officer's tools. A general patrol officer that is already on our staff will team up with a K-9. We will not be adding an officer to fill the position. They maintain the same job duties. They'll answer calls, and the dog will just be with them. Through the fair labor standards act, it's a half hour each week for home dog care. That can be accomplished by either compensating them for the hours per pay period or you can shorten their shift by that time on their work days. There's a couple of different ways you can handle that compensation. I worked a shorter shift to offset that.

Appel stated the annual operating costs are hard to predict. Estimated veterinarian services could be \$300.00 to \$500.00 per year for general upkeep. Dog food annually is approximately \$600.00. If you can team up with the community you can often get these items donated. Other annual costs include USPCA PD1 & narcotics certification/trials at \$200.00. A fully trained officer and dog is \$13,000.00, meals while they are at training are \$3,000.00, a fully equipped squad car at \$50,000.00, and miscellaneous K-9 equipment at \$1,000.00, for a total of \$67,000.00. Our public funding goal amount would be \$70,000.00.

Appel stated I'm a strong believer that this program would improve the Park Rapids Police Department's efficiency and overall effectiveness in the community. The capabilities of a K-9 would increase the safety to our officers, residents, and suspects. It would also be the most efficient tool for public relations, criminal apprehension and crime prevention.

Randall questioned so it's a brand new car because this would be a take home car? Appel stated yes. It would be assigned to that one K-9 officer, thus the life expectancy of the car would be much longer. It would only be used on his rotation and not every day of the week. Randall stated it would be another vehicle to add to our fleet of replacement vehicles, eventually. There would be overtime costs involved for covering the shift of the officer that is gone for thirteen weeks. Appel stated there could be. I'm hoping that we would be at staff so one of our other officers could slide into that position. Currently we

have two sergeants that are additional through our shift coverage. So, probably a sergeant would slide into their shift while they are gone to prevent that overtime cost.

Rutherford questioned can this dog be used in apartment buildings? Appel stated it can if the public is allowed to be in there. Rutherford questioned like at River Heights, we could have a dog walk through there? Appel answered yes.

Mick Ryan, the Plant Manager at Lamb Weston-RDO, stated I represent the Leadership Council, which is a group of leaders in the community coming together trying to find common things to work on to help move our community and help our state as employers. Drugs are something that we come up against in the workplace at times, or we have to deal with the symptoms. When we started learning about this from Appel the one thing that became clear to us is this is an opportunity to improve officer safety and act as a deterrent to keep drugs out of our community and our schools. We are looking for your permission to work on this.

David Collins stated working with this group, I have told them if they could raise half of it, then we'll do a direct mail and public campaign to raise the other half of that \$70,000.00. Between us here we are committing to that.

Lance Bagstad stated we have approximately 1,600 students come into our buildings every day. The outreach the police department already has right now would be enhanced tremendously. Kids love dogs. Young ones especially. I also think that it is very important to have that communication and relationship with a K-9 unit as a deterrent. We have young impressionable minds. I really like the research that you did on the communities that have a dog compared to what happens when they don't have a dog. In schools it's the same, they are young and impressionable and if they know there's a K-9 unit out there in the building, and I expect the dog to be there as much as possible, I think it would be a great relationship aspect as well as a deterrent for our young folks. We have lots of parents that come into our building every day. It is a hub. If we can get as much awareness out there supporting the K-9 it would be better for all of us. A win-win.

Marty Giese, the Pastor of Faithbridge Church, stated the area parish hasn't experienced as much direct connection with drugs and drug traffic but there's a substantial indirect load as we minister to families. When drugs are a factor in family life the infrastructure of the family erodes. Speaking for myself, and also indirectly for the area ministerial, I would be strongly in favor of this asset in the school building to reduce the complications that we face in the ministry of family systems.

Warren Warmbold stated I was born and raised in the Park Rapids Area. I truly believe that the drug issues in this community have gotten worse by the year, possibly from new people coming in. I'm hoping this dog will help to get a few of these people to leave. They are not bringing a lot to the community.

Liz Stone questioned would you intend to utilize this for random searches? Lance Bagstad stated right now we do use the county dog when it's available. We do a soft lockdown and we give the dog some practice. Hopefully we don't find anything. Sometimes kids are smart and they don't keep it in their lockers. They have it someplace in the building. But if it's in the building the point would be that we would find it and take care of it. Also, parking lots are very important. If it's in vehicles, we've been able to do that as well. But the visibility of the K-9 within the community would be a huge asset to us to trying to deter any type of negative behavior. If it's on duty, I would like it in the building.

Rutherford stated I think it's good. Leckner stated I think it's a good idea. McKinney stated they would like a sense of whether or not you'd be offended if they gave you

\$70,000.00 for a dog. Collins stated if the Council is ready we'll go and get started. The Council agreed to authorize the Leadership Council to start fundraising for a K-9.

4. ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Randall, seconded by Rutherford, and unanimously carried to adjourn the workshop at 5:53 p.m.

[seal]

Mayor Pat Mikesch

ATTEST:

Margie M. Vik
City Clerk