



Rochester Hills

Minutes

City Council Regular Meeting

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Home Page:
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*Kevin S. Brown, Greg Hooper, Adam Kochenderfer, Stephanie Morita, Mark A. Tisdell,
Michael Webber and Thomas W. Wiggins*

Vision Statement: The Community of Choice for Families and Business

Mission Statement: "Our mission is to sustain the City of Rochester Hills as the premier community of choice to live, work and raise a family by enhancing our vibrant residential character complemented by an attractive business community."

Monday, July 28, 2014

7:00 PM

1000 Rochester Hills Drive

In accordance with the provisions of Act 267 of the Public Acts of 1976, as amended, the Open Meetings Act, notice was given that a Regular Rochester Hills City Council Meeting would commence at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, July 28, 2014.

CALL TO ORDER

President Hooper called the Regular Rochester Hills City Council Meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Michigan Time.

Others Present:

*Bryan Barnett, Mayor
Tina Barton, City Clerk
Sean Canto, Chief of Fire and Emergency Services
Ron Crowell, Deputy Fire Chief
Kurt Dawson, Director of Assessing/Treasury
Vince Foisy, Supervisor of Communication Services
Mike Hartner, Director of Parks and Forestry
Deborah Happy, Administrative Coordinator - Fire
Nikhil Rao, Spencer Beach Lifeguard Captain
Charnele Sanders, Rochester Hills Government Youth Council
Keith Sawdon, Finance Director
Leanne Scott, Deputy Clerk
John Staran, City Attorney*

ROLL CALL

Present 7 - Kevin S. Brown, Greg Hooper, Adam Kochenderfer, Stephanie Morita, Mark A. Tisdell, Michael Webber and Thomas W. Wiggins

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Barnett introduced Nikhil Rao. He noted that Nikhil is a four year employee of the City of Rochester Hills as a Lifeguard Captain at Spencer Beach. He stated that Nikhil will be recognized in a few moments for some life-saving work he did last month.

Approved as presented at the September 22, 2014 Regular City Council Meeting.

Nikhil Rao led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Webber, seconded by Brown, that the Agenda be Approved as Presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 7 - Brown, Hooper, Kochenderfer, Morita, Tisdell, Webber and Wiggins

PUBLIC COMMENT

Joe Doyle, 1446 Burhaven, stated that City Attorney Staran made comments at the last meeting noting that residents' questions regarding oil and gas exploration would have been answered if they had only attended Council meetings in 2012. He commented that the workshop held did not allow any opposing viewpoints. He mentioned that at an October 2012 Council Meeting, former Council Member Ravi Yalamanchi stated that he had received emails from residents expressing disapproval, cited the Charter Amendment, and recommended Council not proceed. He stated that in December of 2012, former Council Member James Rosen stated that state law does not appear to separate surface from subsurface rights. He commented that Council did not have the authority to enter into a gas and oil lease without a vote of the electorate.

Denise Doyle, 1446 Burhaven, expressed her thanks to past speakers for expressing their concerns and outrage for not being given a vote on the lease of City property. She commented that while more residents should have been aware at the time of the lease discussions, since that time there has been a growing swell of concerned residents. She commented that two former City Council members felt a vote was necessary.

LEGISLATIVE & ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS

President Hooper stated that no Council member would comment on oil and gas exploration until the lawsuit filed against the City was resolved.

Mr. Brown announced a Blood Drive scheduled for August 7th at City Hall.

Mayor Barnett commented that there are many events going on at the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm, including:

- Terrific Tuesdays for toddlers and young children.*
- This week is the last Wet and Wild Wednesday.*
- The Museum hosted a Terrific Turtles event over the weekend.*

He encouraged everyone to get out and vote at Tuesday's Primary Election. He noted that there is still much road construction in the City. He stated that the

City is trying to coordinate road construction projects the best it can and noted that cut-through traffic in the neighborhoods is a problem. He requested drivers be patient and stated that there is a crackdown on speeders in the neighborhoods. He pointed out that a number one complaint of residents is road conditions and the City has responded with a very aggressive schedule for this year.

ATTORNEY MATTERS

City Attorney John Staran had nothing to report.

RECOGNITIONS

2014-0318 Proclamation recognizing Lifeguard Captain Nikhil Rao

Attachments: [Agenda Summary.pdf](#)
[Nikhil Rao Proclamation.pdf](#)
[Resolution.pdf](#)

Mayor Barnett introduced Nikhil Rao, Spencer Beach Lifeguard Captain. He stated that the young men and women who are lifeguards have the unique job of keeping the City's beach safe. He noted that Mike Hartner, Director of Parks and Forestry, reported that the City has had 31 years with a perfect safety record. He introduced Jacob Carl, Kyrsten Sheridan, and Natalie Rembitz, and noted that along with Nikhil, these lifeguards are responsible for 28 rescues and 32 preventative actions.

He stated that on June 30th, Nikhil Rao was vigilantly monitoring the Carter Lake swimming area at Spencer Park and noticed a young girl struggling in water that was over her head and quickly activated the Lifeguards' Emergency Action Plan and rescued the girl from drowning, performing the necessary first aid, and safely returned her to her parents. He read a proclamation honoring Mr. Rao.

Mr. Rao expressed his thanks for the recognition, and stated that he is proud of all of the other lifeguards and staff at Spencer Park over the 30 last years. He mentioned that Fred Carter passed away five years ago; and he stated that Mr. Carter's procedures and protocols have resulted in this perfect record. He commented that lifeguard staff work 40 to 50 hours per week in the sun and love it.

Council congratulated Mr. Rao and the lifeguard team.

Presented.

Whereas, on Monday, June 30, 2014, Lifeguard Captain Nikhil Rao, was vigilantly monitoring the Carter Lake swimming area at Spencer Park in Rochester Hills; and

Whereas, Nikhil noticed a young girl struggling in water that was over her head and quickly activated the lifeguards' emergency action plan; and

Whereas, Nikhil, a lifeguard in Rochester Hills for four years, rescued the girl from

drowning, performed the necessary first aid, and safely returned her to her parents; and

Whereas, Nikhil Rao deserves our sincere thanks, recognition, and praise for his quick and brave response, excellent judgment and professionalism in the line of duty.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Mayor and City Council of Rochester Hills do hereby acknowledge and sincerely thank Nikhil Rao for his lifesaving efforts and his service to our community.

CONSENT AGENDA

All matters under Consent Agenda are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion, without discussion. If any Council Member or Citizen requests discussion of an item, it will be removed from Consent Agenda for separate discussion.

2014-0277 Approval of Minutes - City Council Regular Meeting - June 16, 2014

Attachments: [CC Min 061614.pdf](#)
[Resolution.pdf](#)

This Matter was Adopted by Resolution on the Consent Agenda.

Enactment No: RES0179-2014

Resolved, that the Minutes of a Rochester Hills City Council Regular Meeting held on June 16, 2014 be approved as presented.

2014-0296 Approval of Minutes - City Council Regular Meeting - July 7, 2014

Attachments: [CC Min 070714.pdf](#)
[Resolution.pdf](#)

This Matter was Adopted by Resolution on the Consent Agenda.

Enactment No: RES0180-2014

Resolved, that the Minutes of a Rochester Hills City Council Regular Meeting held on July 7, 2014 be approved as presented.

Passed the Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Webber, seconded by Morita, including all the preceding items marked as having been adopted on the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 7 - Brown, Hooper, Kochenderfer, Morita, Tisdell, Webber and Wiggins

PUBLIC HEARINGS

2014-0314 Discussion relative to Fire Department Staffing needs

Attachments: [072814 Agenda Summary.pdf](#)
[PSITRC Fire Staffing Presentation 072814.pdf](#)
[Suppl Fire Operational Staffing \(Revised\) 072814.pdf](#)
[Fire Operational Staffing 072814.pdf](#)
[ISO PPC Information.pdf](#)
[Survey Monkey-Dept Information.pdf](#)
[New Hire-Operating & Cap Fund Charts.pdf](#)
[Comparison of Local Municipal Fire Depts.pdf](#)
[Fire Dept Staffing Questions-061114.pdf](#)
[Additional Questions.pdf](#)
[Avg Start Up Cost of a POC Member.pdf](#)
[RH Population Projections-SEMCOG 061014.pdf](#)
[Facil Improvement & Personnel Staffing Rept 051614.pdf](#)
[Dept of Assg Work Load-Perf Indicators 1st Qtr Update 2014.pdf](#)
[ISO Report Letter 101111.pdf](#)
[Michigan's Fire Service 2011.pdf](#)
[Supp Draft Minutes 070914.pdf](#)
[Supp PSITRC Draft MInutes 070214.pdf](#)
[Supp PSITRC Draft Minutes 061814.pdf](#)
[Suppl PSITRC Draft Minutes 061114.pdf](#)
[PSITRC Draft Minutes 052814.pdf](#)
[2013 Public Opinion Survey on Fire Department Issues.pdf](#)
[2011 Public Opinion Survey on Fire Department Issues.pdf](#)
[2009 Public Opinion Survey on Fire Department Issues.pdf](#)
[Troy Contract 090909.pdf](#)
[Troy Contract 090908.pdf](#)
[Public Hearing Notice.pdf](#)
[072814 Resolution.pdf](#)

President Hooper noted that three topics were up for discussion this evening: The Public Safety and Infrastructure Technical Review Committee's (PRITRC) recommendations for Fire Department Staffing; a discussion of Ballot Proposal Language recommended by the PSITRC for Fire Department Staffing Needs; and approval of funding in the amount of \$35,000 for an educational campaign relative to the Fire Department Ballot Proposal.

Dale Hetrick, Chairperson of the PSITRC, expressed his appreciation for Council's attention this evening, noting that this is part two of the PSITRC's recommendations to cut response times. He mentioned that PSITRC members Tom Blackstone, Orville Hokscho and Tom Stephens were also in attendance. He gave a PowerPoint presentation, reviewing the history of the Committee's charge and its major accomplishments over the years, and noted the following:

- The Fire Operational Staffing Model Objective is to maintain an acceptable level of Fire/EMS service by implementing a revised staffing model.

- Several challenges impact the Fire Department's expected level of service to the Rochester Hills community, including:
 - * An increasing call volume and shift to higher EMS service calls; increasing response times. Incident calls were 5,988 in 2011 and 6,152 in 2013.
 - * Changing city demographics; stations unable to respond; apparatus do not fit into the current configuration of station bays which limits the ability to reassign as needed.
 - * Higher senior population; growth in nursing and assisted living; shift to medical emergencies.
 - * Paid-on-Call (POC) Model inconsistent with service trends; national trend toward full-time. Most cardiac arrests occur during peak hours when POCs are unavailable due to other employment.
 - * Union agreements in place with the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) and Michigan Association of Fire Fighters (MAFF).
 - * National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards.
- Operating changes proposed include:
 - * Add nine full-time Fire/Paramedic staff, allowing 24/7 coverage at all fire stations and improving response times and coverage for shifts in service.
 - * Shift the current POC model to Part-Time, increasing coverage for peak times, improving retention, attracting higher quality candidates by providing a career path, and helping to maintain the cost structure.
- Potential options to implement the new operational model include:
 - * Hire nine full-time Fire/Paramedic staff in one year. Potential benefits include achieving an immediate objective of supporting NFPA standards for response time. Potential issues with this option include disruption and constraints on Human Resources and Fire Department leadership due to the rapid hiring process.
 - * Hire 15 full-time Fire/Paramedic staff, seen as a longer-term solution and a best response to benchmark findings and support of NFPA standards for response time. This option incurs costs beyond the current Charter-defined millage.
 - * Contract EMS Services, which avoids the cost of full-time hires and defines the level of service by the contract; however, past experience with private EMS service has been unfavorable and would result in increased fees should a faster response time be mandated.

Mr. Hetrick noted that the PSITRC's operational approach recommendation is to directly hire up to nine Fire/Paramedic professionals and shift POC staff to part-time. He explained that this would result in a higher level of control over key performance indicators, 24/7 coverage at all stations, best use of Fire Department assets, align with changing Rochester Hills demographics and minimize POC turnover. He noted the following funding method options:

- Restore 2.5 mills via a Headlee Override, the recommended option by the PSITRC. This would allow immediate operational changes, funding up to nine additional response staff. This option would limit the Fire Capital Contribution in 2027 and beyond. The tax bill for a \$100,000 valuation would increase by \$54.36.
- Adjust funding to 3.0 mills via a Charter Amendment. This option would fund long-term operational changes, maintain contribution levels to the Fire Capital Fund, and add up to 15 additional response staff. The tax bill for a \$100,000 valuation would increase by \$104.36.

He explained that maintaining the current funding level will not fund operational changes. He stated that the PSITRC recommends the Headlee Override. He commented that either option would require voter education. He reviewed a potential educational campaign, noting that the PSITRC requests funding be approved up to \$35,000 for the campaign. He summarized the recommendations, noting that the PSITRC requests a proposal be approved for the November 2014 ballot. He pointed out that potential ballot language for the two proposals is included in the meeting packet.

President Hooper expressed his appreciation to the PSITRC for their efforts.

Sean Canto, Chief of Fire and Emergency Services, gave a presentation on Fire Operational Staffing, highlighting the Department's history and the increase over time in the number and types of incidents. He noted the following:

- In 1975, the Avon Township Fire Department responded to 174 incidents; 14 were medical emergencies.
- In 2013, the Department responded to 6,152 incidents; 4,504 were medical emergencies.
- Staffing was last added in 2006, when six firefighters were hired, allowing for eight full-time personnel per shift. Since that time the run volume has increased approximately 27 percent, or 1,600 additional incidents.
- Station 5 is unstaffed from 11:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. due to low POC manpower.

He explained ISO ratings, noting that insurance companies assess a community's ability to suppress fires, assigning a Public Protection Classification from 1 (superior) to 10 (not meeting minimum criteria). Ratings are done every ten years, with follow-up surveys every two years. In 2011, Rochester Hills received a Classification of 4. The insurance agencies utilize these ratings to determine insurance costs for properties. He mentioned that other ratings influencing the overall class rating include an 8.4 out of 10 rating for the Dispatch Center, and a 38.48 out of 40 rating for Water Supply. He pointed out that Staffing received a 2.92 out of 15; Training received a 3.66 out of 9. Overall points earned, balancing all factors reviewed, was a score of 28.63 out of 50.

Chief Canto reviewed current staffing, overall and station by station:

- Overall staffing includes 9 Administrative Staff; 24 Full-time suppression members (eight per shift); and 49 POC members (assigned to one of five stations).
- Stations 1, 2, 3 and 4 are staffed 24 hours a day. Station 5 is staffed 16 hours a day with EMS-only staff.

He noted response times were tracked and measured against established response time criteria, including Alarm to Dispatch, Dispatch to Enroute, Dispatch to Arrival, and Alarm to Arrival. He pointed out that out of 4,006 priority incidents in 2013, 61 percent of the time total response (dispatch to arrival) exceeded five minutes. He stated that response times are important as statistics show that patients who received timely defibrillation, advanced life support care, and immediate transport to a definitive care facility have a more likely chance of a

positive outcome. He reviewed cardiac arrest calls by time of day. He explained that the most important elements in limiting fire spread are the quick arrival of a sufficient number of firefighters and equipment to attack and extinguish the fire as close as possible to the point of origin. He mentioned that out of 43 structure fires in 2013, firefighters arrived to 40 of those incidents outside of the acceptable response criteria. Nine incidents took eight minutes or longer. He reviewed NFPA standards for acceptable response times, noting their standard for 240 seconds or less travel time for arrival of first arriving engine company at a fire suppression incident, and 480 seconds or less of travel time for the deployment of an initial full alarm assignment for 90 percent of incidents.

He mentioned a fire that recently occurred on Cumberland Court at 6:47 a.m. As it occurred near shift change at 7:00 a.m., each unit left with more people than it normally would have. Sixteen members arrived very quickly and the fire was contained.

He reviewed firefighter requirements for a structure fire:

- The initial alarm assignment for a typical 2,000 square foot single family dwelling without basement shall provide for 15 firefighters on scene within eight minutes.
 - * One member for incident command outside the hazard area for overall coordination and direction of units.
 - * Four members total for establishment of effective water flow for two hand lines.
 - * Two members total to provide hydrant hook-up, assist laying attack lines, utility control and forcible entry.
 - * Two members for each victim search and rescue team.
 - * Two members to provide at least one team to raise ground ladders and perform ventilation.
 - * One member to function as an aerial operator, if used.
 - * Two properly-trained members minimum to establish a firefighter rescue team.

He stated that the Rochester Hills Fire Department provides Advanced Life Support (ALS) and Basic Life Support (BLS).

- EMT - Basic Life Support; initial training is 194 hours.
- Paramedic - Advanced Life Support; initial training is 1,249 hours.
- The personnel responding to a medical call depend on the severity of the incident. There are five categories of medical incidents ranging from a cut finger to cardiac arrest. At the scene of a cardiac arrest, Firefighter Paramedics perform the following:
 - * Early cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
 - * Rapid defibrillation.
 - * Effective advanced life support.
 - * Rapid transport and integrated post-cardiac arrest care.

He explained that the run volume continues to grow. In 2013, the twelve nursing and assisted living facilities accounted for almost 25 percent of the total incidents for the year. The department estimated that for each of the current 1,456 total

beds, the Department responded to 1.025 incidents per bed, for a total of 1,498 incidents in 2013.

He mentioned that the Department has tracked POC members since 2010. Historically POCs stay with the department approximately 14 months before accepting full-time jobs elsewhere in fire and emergency services delivery. This is a national trend of declining volunteer and POC recruitment and retention. The number of POC members within the Rochester Hills Fire Department continues to decline. He reviewed staffing of neighboring communities with similar populations and demographics. He pointed out that in 2013, approximately 75 percent of the incidents the Rochester Hills Fire Department responded to were between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.; and 73 percent were during weekdays. He explained that this is the time when the majority of POC members are at their full-time employment.

He noted that with an average of 16 runs per day, run times are not spaced out, and often happen concurrently, forcing the Department to rely on its neighbors and increasing response times to a priority incident.

He reviewed options to address the current staffing model.

- Option 1: Hire nine additional Firefighter/Paramedics, allowing for an additional cross-staffed Fire Company/ALS unit (six new positions) and an additional Firefighter/Paramedic to staff an Engine Company (three new positions).
- Option 2: Hire fifteen additional Firefighter/Paramedics, allowing for two additional cross-staffed Fire Company/ALS units (12 new positions) and an additional Firefighter/Paramedic to staff an Engine Company (three new positions).
- Option 1 would provide a total on-duty strength of 16 cross-trained Firefighter/EMS personnel to include 11 full-time Firefighter/Paramedics and five part-time Firefighter/EMTs.
- Option 2 would provide a total on-duty strength of 19 cross-trained Firefighter/EMS personnel to include 13 full-time Firefighter/Paramedics and six part-time Firefighter/EMTs.
- Converting POC Firefighters to true part-time employees with set hours and shifts would yield consistent reliable staffing, ease of Affordable Care Act compliance, and allow for outside-city applicants. Initial training cost can be avoided by accepting only trained Firefighter/EMTs.

He explained that benefits would include:

- Providing a consistent, reliable level of service.
- Potential quicker response times.
- Possibility of lower insurance premiums.
- Having needed resources for an ever-growing diverse department providing all-hazards emergency response.
- Firefighter safety.

President Hooper Opened the Public Hearing at 8:22 p.m.

Dr. Megan Cahill, 2281 Norton, stated that as an emergency room physician in residency training, she spent a one month rotation with the members of the Rochester Hills Fire Department and noticed that their call volume was much higher than she had anticipated. She commented that as an emergency room physician, she sees the fatigue in both careers, resulting in a higher burnout rate by the end of a career. She expressed support for increasing manpower.

Dave Papandrea, 549 Arlington Drive, stated that there are serious deficiencies within the Fire Department that he is glad are being addressed. He expressed his support for the potential of increasing the millage to staff all stations and expressed support for 3.0 mills. He offered his assistance in educational campaign efforts.

Cliff McLeod, 725 Kirkton, noted that he retired from the Rochester Hills Fire Department after 24 years. He pointed out that the original Fire Millage supported a volunteer department with originally only eight full-time personnel. He stated that the call volume over the past 24 years has changed dramatically, and stated that the back-to-back calls along with required transport and paperwork can deplete the entire number of ambulances and personnel available. He supported a Charter Amendment for three mills, along with an educational campaign for the community. He offered his assistance with the educational information.

John Halsey, 284 Shagbark, stated that he is a Lieutenant with the Southfield Fire Department, and commented that the Rochester Hills Fire Department is understaffed and overworked. He commented that neighboring communities cannot always be relied on for mutual aid. He supported adjusting funding to three mills to add 15 firefighters.

Jerry Yurgo, 49213 Clinton Terrace, Macomb, stated that he is a member of the Rochester Hills Fire Department and a career Captain for the past 18 years. He commented that there is no worse feeling than being on the scene of a motor vehicle accident and no units are responding as POCs are not available. He stated that the department needs help.

Paul Wright, 10077 Scenic Ridge, Holly, stated that he is the President of the IAFF, and noted that in 2012, the Department had 332 times in which the City had no units available, and 167 times where another department responded. He pointed out that staffing levels are of concern to the members of IAFF and Local 3472 has advised the City that POC response is insufficient and full-time staffing levels have become unsafe. He mentioned that due to the Affordable Health Care Act, POCs are limited as to the number of hours that they can work without receiving benefits and health care. He stated that the Headlee override would only be a bandaid and the 3.0 mill increase is what is needed.

Phil Hall, 2829 Steamboat Springs, stated that he is a Lieutenant Paramedic with the City of Dearborn Heights Fire Department. He commented that there is no better insurance policy than proper staffing by firefighters that are equipped and trained. He stated that he would gladly pay the increase in taxes to benefit this Fire Department.

Scot Beaton, 655 Bolinger, stated that he wholeheartedly supports the recommendations being made this evening. He commented that poor zoning decisions and rezoning to strip malls and senior centers take Sheriff's Department resources away from the neighborhoods.

Lee Zendel, 1575 Dutton, noted the staffing comparisons that were made to neighboring communities in the presentation, and commented that the City's failing grade is due to lack of staffing. He stated that the charts show that on average, less than four of the City's 49 POCs respond when needed. He questioned the first year levy to fund each proposal. He mentioned that he was also speaking for Linda Raschke, in attendance but unable to comment due to recent oral surgery, noting that they both agree that a true long-term solution is required to properly protect life and property. He expressed support for the millage option to hire 15 firefighters, noting that it is the best response to attain NFPA standards for response time and potentially reduce insurance costs. He commented that the Headlee override is not enough as the Fire Capital fund will run out of money in 2027.

Seeing No Further Public Comment, President Hooper Closed the Public Hearing at 8:45 p.m.

In response to Public Comment regarding the amount levied for each proposal, **President Hooper** noted that if the 2.5 mill Headlee Override was approved, it would provide an additional \$1.67 million in the first year; if the three mill Charter Amendment was approved, that amount would be approximately \$3.3 million per year.

Council Discussion:

Mr. Wiggins expressed his thanks for both presentations and questioned what the hiring numbers would mean in terms of response times, and whether the Department would be able to attain a response time of 4 to 4-1/2 minutes with nine or 15 additional staff.

Chief Canto explained that currently, the number of units sent depend on the type of medical incident. He stated that two units from two different stations are sent for more serious runs. He noted that his plan for nine new hires is to staff the stations with three members, allowing for one unit to go to more serious incidents. He pointed out how quickly the City runs out of units to send during concurrent runs and how response time to various parts of the city are affected when the various stations send units to other runs. He commented that he could not say that it would take response times down to 4-1/2 minutes but it would certainly help. Considering 15 members, he added that the more staffing that is provided, the more the Department would be able to provide timely response.

Mr. Wiggins questioned whether the staffing model takes into account a stagnant population growth.

Chief Canto responded that it is not necessarily an issue of stagnant growth; it is an issue of an aging population. He pointed out that with an aging population, there is typically an increase in incidents relating to that group which could be motor vehicle accidents, or increased fire risk within a structure.

President Hooper questioned how many ambulances are currently staffed and what change the Headlee Override would make to the number of ambulances.

Chief Canto responded that currently three ALS units and two BLS units are staffed. One BLS unit goes off track at 11:00 p.m. and comes back on track at 6:00 a.m. the following morning. This means that four units are staffed 24/7 and one is staffed 16 hours each day. The Headlee Override would allow the Department to begin to staff the station that is closed after 11:00 p.m. Staff and resources would be allocated to allow the staffing of all five stations 24 hours a day.

President Hooper questioned what impact 15 additional staff would have to the physical number of ambulances available.

Chief Canto responded that with the addition of 15 staff, the last BLS unit would be changed to an ALS unit, yielding five dedicated ALS units in the City along with a fire company.

Mr. Tisdell expressed his appreciation to Chief Canto and to all of the committee members for their work. He pointed out that a Class Rating of 4 still places the City in the top ten percent of the country.

Chief Canto concurred, noting that there are very few fire departments that have a Class 1 or Class 2 rating. He noted that the City's surrounding neighbors, with the exception of the City of Troy which is a Class 3, are all Class 5.

Mr. Tisdell stated that in spite of those challenges, this department has been doing an excellent job. He questioned whether the goal is to send out an Advanced Life Support unit with two Paramedics and one EMT, and to have 15 firefighters at a structure fire within eight minutes with all full-time staff being Paramedics or ALS trained also in a two-to-one ratio.

Chief Canto stated that this is the goal. He explained the difference between mutual aid and automatic aid assistance between other departments. He noted that mutual aid is when a department needs additional help and calls. Automatic aid is assistance coming right from dispatch. He commented that most smaller communities cannot handle structure fires alone; and he stated that his plan is to be able to send adequate numbers of the City's own resources with assistance from neighboring communities, leaving ambulance units still available to respond to other calls. He noted that on one of the first days he was here in Rochester Hills,

the Department was dispatched to two structure fires and still had calls for medical responses.

Mr. Tisdel commented that ideally, at least the City personnel responding to a structure fire could be in that distribution of two-to-one, Paramedic to EMT, among the fire suppression personnel.

Chief Canto confirmed that is correct.

Mr. Tisdel questioned what kind of ALS or BLS equipment is currently on a fire unit.

Chief Canto responded that recently, with the help of EMS Coordinator Captain Tim Matz, the City has outfitted its first-out engine company and first-out ladder company with medical equipment to be able to respond at what he would consider a first responder level. He added that the inspector vehicles as well as the Public Safety Education member's vehicle have AEDs, as these vehicles are out in the community during the day doing public education events; and he noted that this helps cut down on response times.

Mr. Tisdel commented that originally, the 2.5 mill incorporated at the time that the City Charter was created to support a volunteer fire department. He questioned whether the Headlee Override, while it might be easier to accomplish, would have to be revisited in the future.

Mr. Hetrick responded that the PSITRC thought of the Headlee Override as a way to fund the nine firefighter paramedics rather than a short-term solution. He noted that the staffing model would be covered in perpetuity; however, the challenge is covering the contribution to the Fire Capital Fund beyond 2027.

Mr. Tisdel pointed out that moving from the POC model to a part-time employee could expand the pool of candidates.

Chief Canto stressed that it is not a replacement, but a reclassification. He mentioned that almost 70 percent of the City's POC members commit to staffing coverage. He explained that it is more of a conversion from what their responsibilities currently are.

Mr. Kochenderfer expressed his thanks to Chief Canto and the firefighters, and noted that tonight's conversation goes hand-in-hand with last meeting's consideration of facilities, equipment and infrastructure. He stated that while he knows that it is not an exact science as to how many firefighters are needed to attain certain response times, he would question how many firefighters it would take to attain the national response time standards for both EMS and firefighting.

Chief Canto responded that similar to police officers per capita, the national average for a city of this size can range anywhere from one firefighter per thousand all the way up to three firefighters per thousand. He commented that it is his belief that a good number is somewhere in the middle. He noted that while much of the discussion centers around EMS services, it is not only about providing

adequate EMS coverage, it is also about providing adequate fire coverage. He pointed out that with the exception of Troy to the south, most of the departments that border Rochester Hills in Oakland County are much smaller; and when relying on these adjacent departments for a major response, their resources are strained as well. He mentioned that as the fire station renovations were designed, every fire station had six sleeping facilities within it; and he stated that looking down the road, he can foresee a three-person engine company and a two-person medic unit in every station with the exception of Station 1, which is strategically placed to be able to provide assistance to the other four satellite stations.

Mr. Kochenderfer questioned if the goal next year is to be within national response times for both EMS and fire fighters, would Chief Canto be confident that nine additional firefighters is enough to provide those necessary tools.

Chief Canto responded that while it would help, he could not say with any certainty that 4-1/2 minutes could be attained.

Mr. Kochenderfer questioned whether Chief Canto could put a percentage on his confidence level.

Chief Canto responded that in his opinion it would be a fifty-fifty chance. He commented that it is a tenuous position to be in and he did not wish to commit that it either definitely would, or definitely would not. He stated that obviously, throwing more resources at a problem could improve it.

Ms. Morita stated that she has heard from Ms. Raschke and takes her comments into consideration; and she expressed her thanks to Ms. Raschke for her service to the community. She questioned whether stopping transfer services would improve the problems the Department is experiencing with concurrent calls.

Chief Canto responded that a BLS unit handles a lot of the transfers that go from Crittenton Hospital to the Cancer Center. He noted that as part of his review process, he is evaluating all areas of the department. He commented that some things that may be viewed as transfers to some are not necessarily such. He gave the example of a young child that is a Rochester Hills resident who might fall and hit his head. He might initially seem fine; however, an hour later he is dizzy and vomiting and his parents take him to Crittenton Hospital. Once there, they discover a brain bleed and determine he must be transferred for care to an appropriate facility. He stated that this occurrence is not considered a transfer. If that individual would have been responded to by calling 911, a unit would have responded and taken that patient to the most appropriate facility. He commented that what is being reviewed is the time it takes a unit out of service to transfer to a distant facility, such as the University of Michigan. He noted that the goal is to ensure that the City has adequate coverage while those services are being performed.

Ms. Morita questioned whether it is possible that at least some of those transfer calls will be stopped.

Chief Canto responded that in 2013, the Department had ALS transfers, equating to approximately one ALS transfer every four days. He pointed out that it is unfortunate that emergencies do not wait, and timing of each run is unpredictable. He commented that he is not comfortable making a decision viewing only the last five months; and he stated that he would have a better understanding of operations after a year.

Ms. Morita questioned what is stopping the Department from taking POC members and making them part-time employees.

Chief Canto responded that POCs are currently under a contract similar to the full-time members negotiated through collective bargaining. He commented that he has been working with the leadership of the IAFF and MAFF groups, and in these discussions he believes there is an understanding that the system needs to change. He noted, however, that he cannot make the change without negotiating.

Ms. Morita commented that even if voters approve either a Headlee Override or a three mill Charter Amendment, it does not mean that the City's POC staff would become part-time.

Chief Canto stated that he would be speaking out of turn for that group; however, he feels fairly confident that the majority would like to see the part-time system. He pointed out that negotiations for that group will begin in short order, as their contract expires in 2015.

Ms. Morita stated that this change may happen no matter what.

Chief Canto responded that it may.

Ms. Morita questioned whether the City has looked at contracting out for backup EMS service.

Chief Canto responded that currently the City is utilizing its neighboring departments for mutual aid response. He stated that it would be difficult to say that a private service would send a unit into Rochester Hills and contract for occasional use. He pointed out that he is aware that the City of Troy has private EMS service; however, Auburn Hills just recently moved away from the private service and began their own EMS Department.

Ms. Morita commented that the answer to the question of whether the City has looked at contracting out for backup EMS service is no.

Chief Canto responded that the Department had not considered it.

Ms. Morita pointed out that there is a 1.25 call per bed in the city's continuing care retirement communities. She commented that the City has a definite customer base in those facilities. She questioned whether there could be a possibility of a special assessment to those facilities to cover the additional cost that the community is incurring because of their existence in the city.

Chief Canto responded that the Fire Department has not done anything like that thus far. He commented that the fee schedules are set by Medicare and Medicaid, or paid through private insurance.

Ms. Morita questioned whether an assessment was considered by the PSITRC.

Mr. Hetrick responded that the PSITRC did not consider a special assessment for nursing homes or assisted living facilities.

Ms. Morita questioned whether a special assessment would be possible on some of the facilities that are known to have 1.25 calls per bed.

Kurt Dawson, Director of Assessing/Treasury, responded that he is not familiar with any communities that special assess in that manner. He mentioned that when alternate funding statewide has been discussed, there was talk about a special assessment for the replacement of the personal property tax, assessing those that are benefitting. He commented that as long as a cost-benefit could be shown for a service that they would receive, it could be possible.

President Hooper questioned whether this could be legally permissible.

John Staran, City Attorney, stated that he would have to review the potential for an assessment, and noted that there are a number of statutes that pertain to fire department funding. He commented that ordinarily, special assessments are for public improvement, and he stated that this is not what is involved. He pointed out that the City has some facilities that are rendering a payment in lieu of taxes, or a service fee in lieu of taxes that the City has a contractual commitment with. He commented that he is not sure whether the City would be able to impose an additional service fee or special assessment on top of what it already has a contractual commitment for.

Ms. Morita noted that the PSITRC's presentation stated that 2.5 mills would provide funding in perpetuity. She commented that in reviewing the presentation, it appears that the Department would run out of money in approximately 12 years. She questioned whether at that time the City would be in a position where it would need to lay off staff.

Mr. Hetrick responded that staffing would be covered for an extended period. He added that the challenge with the Headlee Override comes with regard to contribution to the Fire Capital Fund.

Ms. Morita questioned what the Fire Capital Fund would look like in 12 years under 2.5 mills.

President Hooper noted it would be over \$2 million in the negative.

Mr. Hetrick added that this would happen in 2027 and beyond.

Ms. Morita questioned what would happen if the Department needs a new fire truck or a new ambulance at that point.

Mr. Hetrick responded that this is where the challenge comes in; at some point the City would have to deal with the fact that the Fire Capital Fund will need a way to replenish itself.

Ms. Morita commented that with the Headlee Override of 2.5 mills, the City would run into trouble with its Fire Capital Fund and may not have money to purchase the assets it needs to run the Department.

Mr. Hetrick responded that this is correct from 2027 and beyond.

Ms. Morita pointed out that under the three mill proposal, the City does not run into that issue for approximately 30 years.

Mr. Hetrick responded that was correct. He noted that three mills covers the contribution to the Fire Capital Fund for an extended period of time. He stated that he would go so far as to say that it would cover it in perpetuity along with covering staffing for 15 people.

Mr. Webber expressed his thanks to everyone presenting. He noted that he has been a part of this committee for a number of years and has seen the dedication that the committee has had. He commented that this is not much different than the discussion the Committee had a few years back regarding Police Services; and he noted that eventually the community passed a dedicated millage for Police for the next ten years. He commented that it could be considered that 57 officers is insufficient for police staffing; however, it is the level of service that the residents are willing to pay for at this point in time. He stated that the discussion could center on what the ideal staffing level is; however, there are questions whether it would pass in the community. He pointed out that there would have to be an educational campaign on behalf of the City in terms of what the impact would be.

Mr. Brown expressed his thanks for the presentations, noting that he was also impressed last week that a facilities plan could come together within Chief Canto's first six months on the job. He thanked those department personnel in attendance. He requested Chief Canto review how units are allocated to calls, and how staffing with three people each would affect the number of units sent out.

Chief Canto responded that the ALS unit would be staffed at three, allowing some runs to be cut down from sending two units to sending one. He pointed out that a serious patient in cardiac arrest could require up to four people; however, events such as someone having trouble breathing could be handled with three members. He commented that most incidents will require a two unit response.

Mr. Brown questioned how going from four units to five would affect a relatively serious call.

Chief Canto responded that if you support four units, you could run out of fire protection.

Mr. Brown commented that it is a balance. He questioned whether the City pays neighboring communities for assistance.

Chief Canto responded that when a neighboring community responds on an incident, it receives the billing for the EMS service. He reviewed a mutual aid coverage log that he stated was begun on May 1st to track the city that provided the coverage, the date, whether they provided coverage only, or actually had a medical or fire response. He pointed out that during the month of May, the City requested some type of assistance 36 times. Units responded eight times and provided actual transport, while 28 other times they were the primary unit if something would have happened. He noted that the cities do not receive any type of fee for cost reimbursement unless they transport.

Mr. Brown questioned what the target balance of the Fire Capital Fund should be.

Keith Sawdon, Director of Finance, stated that this is difficult to determine, as it is more of a function of the equipment. He noted that the projections are based on the equipment replacement schedule that may not materialize depending on how that equipment is doing over a life cycle. He noted that the budget being presented in August shows a large capital fund expenditure; however, beyond those three years, planned or projected expenditures slow down quite a bit. He explained that when it comes to replacing capital and equipment in particular, it is more about the function of the vehicle and the length of time it has been used. He commented that he would most likely say in the \$3 to \$4 million range as over a period of time, this is what is being predicted to spend.

Mr. Brown stated that while he is not intending to pin down a specific amount, he would question whether it is fair to say that more than \$1 million is a good target.

Mr. Sawdon responded that one piece of equipment alone can cost over that amount.

Mr. Brown commented that he would have liked to see an option for funding with no tax impact. He questioned what the option would be for the City's budget to fund nine or 15 additional personnel without a tax increase. He commented that it would be good to have a contingency plan in the event that a millage does not pass in November.

Mr. Sawdon stated that nine fire personnel would be in the range of \$1.5 to \$1.7 million per year; 15 would be closer to \$3 million. He commented that he does not have that available anywhere except within General Fund's Fund Balance, which he noted is pretty much committed to Local Road improvements. He stated that there is not enough cash flow to make up between \$1.5 million to \$3 million annually that would be required every year going forward.

Mr. Brown stated that this is what he was expecting to hear; however, he noted that the citizens deserve an answer as to whether this could be accomplished without raising taxes.

Mr. Sawdon responded that the answer would be no.

President Hooper stated that the Fire Department has its own millage. He commented that the City should not pay for Fire staff additions out of City millage.

Mr. Brown stated that he would like to understand how calls per firefighter in Rochester Hills relate to those numbers in other communities. He noted that without adding staff, Rochester Hills is at approximately 125 calls per firefighter. Adding nine would reduce this to number to 106 and adding 15 would reduce it to 96. He stated that this shows him that the target number for additional staff is somewhere between nine and 15 and could result in better rankings including reduced call response times.

President Hooper questioned what the timeframe would be to add nine staff members.

Chief Canto responded that it would be the same timeframe for either nine or 15. He stated that updated job descriptions would be developed and advertising would be accomplished through the Human Resources Department. The testing and screening would include the physical agility process and background investigations. He stated that if the process began in January, it would be four to six months before an offer would be made. He noted that the process would also depend on the number of applicants. Should 100 individuals apply for 100 positions, the screening process would be less than if 10,000 individuals apply for 100 positions.

President Hooper commented that it appears that it does not matter whether it is nine or 15 individuals; the process would still take approximately six months.

Chief Canto stated that this is correct.

President Hooper questioned when the deadline is for approving the proposed ballot language for the November ballot. He stated that it is his belief that a decision must be made by August 12th; and he questioned whether that deadline applies to either a Headlee Override or a Charter Amendment.

John Staran, City Attorney, stated that the same deadline applies to both types of ballot proposals. He noted that there is an added step with a Charter Amendment, as a Charter proposal must be submitted to both the Governor's Office and the Attorney General's Office for their review and approval. He stated that 30 to 45 days are allowed for this review, even though it typically does not take that long. He cautioned that should Council wait until the August deadline to submit a proposal, it takes a risk that the Governor or Attorney General, for whatever reason, might disapprove and basically disqualify the ballot proposal from moving forward in November.

President Hooper questioned when the revenue stream would be effective if approved by the voters in November.

Mr. Sawdon responded that normally, a 4029 Form is filed to certify rates by October 1 for the next tax billing cycle. He stated that there is the possibility that an amended 4029 could be filed after the election which would allow for a spread in 2015; however, he would have to look into that possibility to be certain.

President Hooper commented that it is possible that the City would not see any money until 2016.

Mr. Sawdon responded that on a normal 4029 certification, that would be correct. He noted that if an amended 4029 could be submitted and certified, it might be possible to spread on December 1 for 2015; however, that does not give much time to get from the November election to a spread by December 1 of the same year.

Mayor Barnett questioned whether the City has ever done that before.

Mr. Sawdon stated that he is not aware of that. He pointed out that the amended 4029 is only done in certain circumstances and he is not sure this would qualify. He commented that the worst case would be funding in Fiscal Year 2016.

President Hooper commented that another challenge Council would have to take up is whether to take funding from another source to supplement to pay the additional increase for 2015.

Mr. Wiggins questioned whether there was an indication of how long a three mill proposal would last.

Mr. Sawdon responded that many assumptions are built into projections; and the farther away from today, the less reliable assumptions become. He explained that the model was built with some of the same assumptions seen for the fiscal forecast, using projected rates of inflation. He commented that it appears based on the assumptions that three mills can support 15 people and provide the Fire Capital Fund with enough excess flow to meet at least the scheduled replacement as it is known today.

Mr. Wiggins questioned whether other hiring options were considered, such as hiring just EMS personnel or backup EMS services. He commented that other municipalities have different models.

Mr. Hetrick responded that one option in the presentation had to do with contract EMS. He noted that the PSITRC did look at neighboring communities in terms of how their contract EMS processes worked. He stated that the PSITRC had to keep in mind that they did not understand how those fees would adjust upward to get to the kind of a response time desired. He added that contracts are already in place with the union-paid people, which also causes a difference in terms of how contract EMS is compared for Rochester Hills versus other communities who are using mostly volunteer personnel. He mentioned that the PSITRC did not look at a special assessment.

Chief Canto stated that when considering hiring EMS-only people, the discussion must also include the need for having adequate fire coverage. Individuals only trained for EMS are not able to respond on the fire side, and vice versa. He stated that the best advantage is to have cross-trained, cross-staffed members providing services to the community.

Mr. Brown questioned why additional detail was provided in the wording for the draft Headlee Override Proposal versus the Charter Amendment.

Mr. Staran responded that while additional wording could be incorporated, content of the proposal language is dictated by State.

Mr. Brown noted that the Charter Amendment did not include an amount to be raised.

Mr. Staran responded that it is Council's option to include an amount. He explained that the Headlee Override must include the current level and what is proposed to move it up to. The Charter Amendment indicates that there currently is a dedicated amount in the Charter and the proposal is to change that number.

Mr. Brown questioned what the duration would be for a Charter Amendment.

Mr. Staran responded that the Charter Amendment is permanent. He pointed out that it would be three mills in the first year; however, the Headlee rollback would start working on that amount. He noted that this would also occur if the Headlee Override passed, restoring 2.5 mills for the first year, but rolling back again in subsequent years.

Mayor Barnett expressed his thanks to the Committee, noting that in his 15 years with the City, he does not believe that another committee has provided as much information or tackled tough issues. He thanked Chief Canto for his leadership. He commented that there are constraints on all sides of this argument and there are challenges in trying to come up with a perfect proposal that will be solid in 2025. He stated that the data presented to Council and ultimately to the community suggests that the city has an issue that needs to be addressed. He stated that Council must speak with one voice on whatever decision it makes, and noted that a well-educated and well-executed campaign is needed to have an informed, educated and ultimately motivated electorate. He stated that the Administration is there to help wherever it can. He noted that a positive to the Headlee Override is that it restores funding that the community originally supported in 1984. He commented that ultimately it comes down to residents of the community making a decision at the kitchen table as to how much they are willing to pay for emergency services. He commented that doing nothing is not an option. He pointed out that 99 percent of the City's residents believe they are safe in the community and 100 percent in the last survey were happy with the Fire Department. He commented that he is very pleased that there has been strong support for the Fire Department staff and hopes that continues no matter what Council decides.

President Hooper expressed his appreciation to everyone who came out to be a part of the discussion this evening. He noted that a vote would be taken on the issue at the August 11th meeting. He stated that public safety has always been his number one priority. He commented that he supports a three mill Charter Amendment. He noted that he would like to have available at the next meeting what mills would have to be levied initially and for what period of time to support 15 firefighters and contribute to the Capital Fund.

Mr. Sawdon stated that he would be able to give a rough idea what would be needed to support 15 additional staff; but he would need to know what is desired to contribute to the Capital Fund.

President Hooper noted that information should include the millage to be spread in the first five years, and then in years six through ten, if a three mill Charter Amendment were passed, to support the needs of the community and to provide the resources to yield the better response times that our community deserves. He suggested Council adopt a resolution to accept the Public Safety and Infrastructure Committee's report tonight. He suggested any Council member provide any questions they would like to see staff answer at the next meeting.

Mr. Wiggins stated that it would help him understand and provide information to the residents if it could be clarified what the difference between 9 and 15 firefighters can make on response times. He noted that it would be much easier to convey that, for instance, having nine additional firefighters, response times would drop to five seconds; or 15 new firefighters could allow a drop to four seconds.

Mr. Brown commented that he would like to understand what it would take to have this proposal implemented in 2015. Consideration over the possibility of a partial-year's salary for new hires could be reviewed, to determine whether hiring could occur before the millage funding begins.

Mr. Kochenderfer questioned how many years before a problem with funding would be encountered and Council would have to revisit the issue. He also noted that while it is difficult to quantify how the additional numbers will affect response times, he believes that it could be a very compelling argument and information to be provided to residents.

Ms. Morita stated that she would like to see some type of cost comparison with contract EMS to determine if that could be an available option for the City; and could be something that can be utilized at a 2.5 mill rate to get the better response times. She questioned that if the City could have 2.5 mills and also do a contract for supplemental EMS services. She stated that while it's not the same as having a Paramedic/Firefighter, having contract EMS to do transfers and perhaps some other calls might allow the City to keep a 2.5 mill rate versus what the City would have with three mills. She commented that this would help her to understand which would be the less costly alternative between the two.

Chief Canto questioned whether Ms. Morita wished that staff look at contract EMS performing transfers.

Ms. Morita responded yes. She added that if the City knows that a certain community consistently requires 25 percent of the City's calls, perhaps there is some way to staff that need with contract EMS ambulances just to take care of those communities and free up Paramedics to handle other events such as traffic accidents.

President Hooper stated that he looks forward to making a decision in two weeks on these issues.

A motion was made by Tisdell, seconded by Kochenderfer, that this matter be Adopted by Resolution. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 7 - Brown, Hooper, Kochenderfer, Morita, Tisdell, Webber and Wiggins

Resolved, that the Rochester Hills City Council hereby accepts the Public Safety and Infrastructure Technical Review Committee report on Fire Department Staffing as provided in the packet.

Enactment No: RES0181-2014

NEW BUSINESS

- 2014-0315** Discussion and consideration of ballot proposal language recommended by the Public Safety and Infrastructure Technical Review Committee for Fire Department Staffing Needs

Attachments:

[Proposal Headlee Override.pdf](#)
[Proposal City Charter Amendment.pdf](#)
[Charter Amendment Resolution \(Draft\).pdf](#)
[072814 Agenda Summary.pdf](#)
[Public Hearing Notice.pdf](#)
[Resolution.pdf](#)

Postponed.

- 2014-0316** Request for Approval of funding in the amount of \$35,000.00 for an educational campaign relative to the Fire Department Funding Ballot Proposal

Attachments: [072814 Agenda Summary.pdf](#)
[Resolution.pdf](#)

Postponed.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Regular Meeting - Monday, August 11, 2014 - 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before Council, President Hooper adjourned the meeting at 10:03 p.m.

*GREG HOOPER, President
Rochester Hills City Council*

*TINA BARTON, MMC, Clerk
City of Rochester Hills*

*MARY JO PACHLA
Administrative Secretary
City Clerk's Office*

Approved as presented at the September 22, 2014 Regular City Council Meeting.