



# Rochester Hills Minutes - Draft

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## Public Safety and Infrastructure Technical Review Committee

*Thomas Blackstone, Dale Hetrick, Orville Hoksch Jr., Jorge Ipina, Walter Johnson, LeAnne Rogers, Tom Stephens*  
*Council Members: Greg Hooper, Michael Webber*  
*Youth Representatives: Pranita Balusu, Sharanya Pai*

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Wednesday, June 11, 2014

6:00 PM

1000 Rochester Hills Drive

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### CALL TO ORDER

*Vice Chairperson Stephens called the Public Safety and Infrastructure Technical Review Committee to order at 6:03 p.m.*

### ROLL CALL

**Present** 8 - Thomas Blackstone, Orville Hoksch, Greg Hooper, Jorge Ipina, Walter Johnson, LeAnne Rogers, Tom Stephens and Michael Webber  
**Excused** 1 - Dale Hetrick

### Others Present:

*Sean Canto, City Fire Chief*  
*Ron Crowell, City Deputy Fire Chief*  
*Allan Schneck, Director of Public Services*  
*Justin Urbach, President of the Michigan Association of Fire Fighters (MAFF)*  
*Paul Wright, President of the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF)*  
*Allan Schneck, Director of Public Services*

### PUBLIC COMMENTS

*None.*

### DISCUSSION ITEM

2014-0080

2014/2015 Priorities Discussion

**Attachments:** [Supp Press Release.pdf](#)  
[Educational Postcard - Final \(1\).pdf](#)  
[Supp. Facilities Improvement and Personnel Staffing Report.pdf](#)  
[Draft Ballot Language.pdf](#)  
[OCRC Guide to RoadFunding.pdf](#)  
[Appendix - Proposed 2014 Ballot Language.pdf](#)  
[Police Road Recom 030711\(1\)\(1\) \(5\) \(1\).pdf](#)  
[Purpose and Charge \(1\).pdf](#)

**Vice Chairperson Stephens** commented that he had missed the last couple of meetings and stated that the Educational Postcards were ready to be mailed to the City's residents.

Discussion ensued by Committee Members in regard to the work with the City's Cable Television crew on the script for the Educational Video to be broadcast on the City's Cable Channel.

2014-0242

**Attachments:** [Supp Questions part 2.pdf](#)  
[Supp Fire Department Staffing Questions for 061114 Meeting.pdf](#)  
[Supp ISO PPC Analysis.pdf](#)  
[Supp Survey Monkey.pdf](#)  
[Supp ISO PPC Info.pdf](#)  
[Supp 2011 MFS.pdf](#)  
[Supp TV Change Stats 2014.pdf](#)  
[Rochester Hills Population Projections.pdf](#)  
[Fire Station Building Report.pdf](#)  
[Comparison of Local Municipal Fire Departments.pdf](#)  
[Supp - Average Start Up Cost.pdf](#)  
[Supp. Facilities Improvement and Personnel Staffing Report.pdf](#)

**Chief Canto** introduced Paul Wright, President of the International Association of Fire Fighters as well as Justin Urbach, President of the Michigan Association of Fire Fighters to participate in the Committee's discussion in regard to the City's Fire Department personnel and staffing structure.

At the Committee's last meeting, Chairperson Hetrick had requested the Members to email their questions to him for organization so he could forward them to Chief Canto for his response.

Chief Canto provided the Committee Members with his response handout to their questions - 'Fire Department Staffing Questions for June 11 Meeting' - 18 pages (attached).

The Committee Members discussed the following:

- The difference between medical (i.e. cardiac, respiratory issues) and traumatic (i.e. car accident, gun shot, fall) emergencies;
- 'Peak' emergency call periods;
- Description of ambulance and transport services;
- International Association of Fire Fighters - full-time (FT) fire fighter paramedics;
- Michigan Association of Fire Fighters - Paid-on-Call (POC) fire fighter paramedics;
- The differences between FT fire fighters, 'volunteer' and POC fire fighters and recruitment (see the attached Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs Report);
- Job requirement certifications for the City's FT and POC fire fighter paramedics;
- POC retention, required training, shift structure and stand-by availability hours

*and responsibilities; salary levels;*

- The differences and possible benefits between 'part time' and 'on call' employees;*
- The number of units involved in call responses and transport;*
- Examples of response turn-around time and the number of units involved;*
- Procedures and mandated protocol - i.e. secured equipment and scene clean up;*
- Examples of fire fighter equipment and costs;*
- The City's previous experience with private emergency service companies and the poor response times;*
- The limitations and difference in professional certifications of private emergency service companies;*
- How the City gets paid for emergency services;*
- AccuMed Group - the City's billing company for emergency services;*
- The City's aging population and the number of nursing facilities;*
- Mutual aide in Oakland County*

**Chief Sean Canto** stated that when the fire millage was created, it was to support a volunteer fire department. He continued further that the City has experienced growth and development which includes parts of Oakland University, Rochester College and numerous assisted living and nursing facilities. He stated that many communities are experiencing similar issues in staffing fire departments with POCs. He has been working with both of the fire fighter unions to solve the manpower issues. He continued that he has been working with area communities to try to implement a 'mutual aide' (MA) to pool resources. He expressed his opinion that the City would be more dependent on the neighboring communities for MA. He stated that if the City were able to structure the POCs as more of a 'set part time schedule' rather than 'on call', that could help recruitment and retention to assure potential POC employees of a 'known' schedule. He complimented the POC's support in stepping up to fill in for 'bravo staffing' (ready and available to respond to minor injury emergency calls) during shortage of manpower because the City's FT are unavailable because the FTs are working on more serious, larger emergencies (i.e. fires, multi-car accidents, etc.).

**Mr. Urbach** shared that many fire fighter recruits in Rochester Hills will go through the initial fire fighter training. He noted that some recruits will move on to acquire paramedic certification to seek full time jobs to further their careers. He noted that many members had been lost to other cities for full time employment. He does not see attrition being completely eliminated, but that a structured, scheduled part time job may assist in keeping more POCs in the City. He stated that many of the POCs sometimes work as much as 20 hours in a fire situation and maintain full time jobs in addition to the POC shifts.

**Mr. Wright** agreed and commented that the FTs and the POCs get along very well, some POCs play on the IAFF member hockey team and have worked together especially well when there is a lack of manpower for a major incident. He continued that the two unions have discussed the possibility of a merge to become more integrated than before for the betterment of our system.

**Deputy Chief Ron Crowell** discussed AccuMed Group in regard to the City's billing for emergency services. He stated that MediCare and Medicaid have established some of the fee rates.

**Member Hooper** commented that the City's ambulance services generate revenue for the City. He noted that in the past, the City had had private ambulance services but due to poor response times, had discontinued the business relationships.

**Chief Canto** suggested that there were three (3) options for review in regard to the Fire Department Staffing structure:

- (1) To maintain a 'status quo' and not make any revisions (this would be a negative option); or
- (2) Become a full time career department (too costly); or
- (3) Continue the meetings between the fire fighter unions and the City's Fire Chief - the suggestion had been made for the employment of nine (9) full time fire fighters and add additional part time positions.

Discussion ensued by the Committee Members as to a ten (10) year, twenty (20) year financial plan as well as any impact of the Headlee Amendment rollback on the City's fire millage rate.

**Member Blackstone** commented that the Committee Members could continue the discussion and questions with Chief Canto, Deputy Chief Crowell, Mr. Wright and Mr. Urbach well into the evening. He suggested that the Committee Members review Chief Canto's response handout and then be prepared to make a decision or decision(s) for its recommendation to Council.

The Committee Members agreed that they would make a decision by its' next meeting to move forward with a recommendation to Council.

**Chief Canto** confirmed that the Committee Members would meet Saturday, June 14, 2014 at Fire Station 1 - Horizon Court at 8:00 a.m. to

*tour the City's five (5) fire stations. He explained that the Committee would be better able to discuss the City's Fire Station structures after the tour. He stated that the Building Department and an architect have been conducting structural assessments of the five (5) fire stations and had briefly made a few of the following recommendations:*

- Station 1 needs bunk area renovations;*
- Station 2 needs bunk area renovations, women's locker room and shower facilities, larger kitchen area;*
- Station 3 needs sleeping quarters (currently has couches for the fire fighters to sleep on);*
- Station 4 needs to address 'land lock' issues and may need to be redesigned; and*
- Station 5 needs women's sleeping and shower facilities.*

*He explained further that irregardless of the staffing structure, the fire stations need to be updated to current and efficient design structures to store the fire apparatus and equipment; he noted that the stations had been originally designed for a volunteer fire department.*

**Member Hooper** *asked if the Members could have a generic 50,000 square foot view point sketch with general comments for each of the fire stations for review notes during the Committee's tour. He also suggested that the Members could bring a camera or video camera for pictures to be displayed via lap top at the Committee's next meeting.*

**Chief Canto** *responded that he would speak with the architect to provide a sketch to be used for the Committee Members' tour.*

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

*None.*

## **NEXT MEETING DATE**

- Saturday, June 14, 2014 - 8:00 a.m. - Site Visit*
- Wednesday, June 18, 2014 - 6:00 p.m.*
- Wednesday, July 2, 2014 - 6:00 p.m.*
- Wednesday, July 9, 2014 - 6:00 p.m.*

## **ADJOURNMENT**

*There being no further business before the Public Safety and Infrastructure Technical Review Committee, Vice Chairperson Stephens adjourned the meeting at 7:15 p.m.*

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*Tom Stephens, Vice Chairperson*

*Prepared by Christine A. Wissbrun  
Recording Secretary, City Clerk's Office*