

**CITY OF PARK RIVER, NORTH DAKOTA, SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING,  
MONDAY, AUGUST 28, 2017 AT 7:00 P.M.**

**Published Subject to the Governing Body's Review and Revision**

The City of Park River Held a Special meeting of the Park River City Council on Monday, August 28, 2017 at 7:00 P.M. to discuss the policing contract and costs with the WC Sheriff's Department.

Mayor Stenvold called the meeting to order with the following Present: Council members Kyle Halvorson, Arvid Knutson, Dwight Byron, and Keith Anderson, City Attorney Tracy Laaveg, City Coordinator/Auditor Nancy Thompson, and Assessor/Deputy Auditor Ann Berg. Absent: Council members Mike Lorton and Robert Lundquist III, Public Works Director (PWD) Dennis Larson. Others present: WC Sheriff Ron Jurgens, WC Commissioners Karen Anderson & Lauren Wild, Larry & Cynthia Schiernbeck, Matt Peschong, Todd Kjelland, Cynthia Udby, Randy & Diana Hahn, Andrew Erickson, Sophie Loftsgard, Stella Blake, Casey Carver, Richie & Erica Sherlock, Blake Leadens, Chris Silbernagel, Pat Swift, Kerry Schmitz, Jim Mosolf, Wanda Kratochvil, Waylon Lietz, Louise Dryburgh, Jenny Holand, Laurie Jensen, Dean Skjerven, Duane & Judy Korynta, Bruce & Susan Phelps, Tracton & Victoria Lewis, Mike Helt, Allison Olimb, Charlie Chyle, Laurie Larson, Pastor Theresa & Gerry Brezenski, Linda Meberg, Dale Pecka, Joseph Fietek and Dayton Larson.

Mayor Stenvold and Sheriff Jurgens presented background information on police coverage, the rising costs of equipment, technology, and vehicles. They also provided information on how much of the property taxes paid to the county by Park River property owners are used for law enforcement. They also read the numbers and types of police calls for the past two years that the Park River units responded to along with the coverage by the WC Sheriff's Dept.

Byron, speaking on behalf of Lundquist & himself, felt the cost of policing is too high and thinks there is room for negotiation. He used the City of Minto as an example; they pay \$1.50 per person per month.

Jurgens explained that a deputy will make a pass through Minto two to three times per day for 15 to 20 minutes per time while Park River has two officers on duty for multiple hours per day; plus the county covers when the Park River officers are off for holidays, vacation or overtime.

Thompson explained there are services provided by the WC Sheriff's Dept for which the City is not billed plus the City would not receive fleet cost pricing for police vehicles. Jurgens noted dispatch and jail fees are two costs not charged to the City.

Councilmen Anderson asked if the recently lifted restrictions on used military equipment would help lower costs. Jurgens mentioned it should help in the future and that the department is always looking for programs to help lower costs and took advantage of one to purchase M-1 carbines. Sherlock stated equipment needs to be replaced and upgrade at least every ten years as it gets phased out. Radios, per federal mandate, needed to be upgraded from analog to digital.

Stenvold read letters from two businesses who could not attend; both were in favor of keeping a police presence in the City.

The floor was opened the floor to the public for comments. Condensed comments:

1. Ambulance personnel appreciate having an officer respond to their calls;
2. At times health care staff have needed an officer at one and the response time was immediately, in some situations having to wait for an officer to respond from another part of the county could be hazardous to staff and patients, health care staff also deal with an increase in opioid cases and see many things in an hospital setting that the public does not see, calls for police backup have increased over the past five years, and if you work with the incarcerated you would see the need for keeping a police presence in the community;
3. It is important to have police present in our community as it represents protection, feeling safe and secure to live alone, enjoy being outside with no worries, quick response time when needed, deter break-ins, ensure safety of children at the school, and law enforcement lives where they feel their families will be the safest;
4. Businesses appreciate the protection and quick response time the police presence brings to the City, you need to pay to get good representation, thankless low paying job, lots of complaints but not many compliments, several break-ins with all but one case solved.

Several people questioned if funds could be pulled from municipal utilities or sales tax to help offset costs. Berg explained most money made from the utility funds goes towards reserves and debt service. Money is transferred from utilities during the year to help finance the general fund. The sales tax funds are restricted as what they can be used for. The hospital receives one percent of sales tax revenues and the City's one percent split 50/50 between capital improvements and economic development and can only be used as designated.

Jurgens summed up by saying it comes down to the safety of the community, though Park River has a low crime rate things still happen at night that the public does not see or know about. In order to keep good officers we need to have current equipment, training, vehicles and good pay so they stay.

WC Commissioner Anderson is supporting the WC Sheriff's Department and as far as negotiating, you cannot cut services and keep everyone safe, plus Jurgens provides administration for the Park River office plus the WC Sheriff's Dept and does a good job along with the rest of the officers.

Knutson moved and Byron seconded to approve the police contract with the WC Sheriff's Department. Upon roll call vote, all voted aye. M/C. (Police contract on file with the city auditor and posted on the City's website).

Stenvold thanked all present for attending and showing their support for the policing issue.

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:11 PM.

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Dan Stenvold, Mayor

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Ann Berg, Deputy Auditor