

VILLAGE OF FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS

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Approved Minutes Friendship Heights Village Council Public Safety Committee Monday, February 3, 2025

Council Public Safety Committee members present: Cheryl Tyler;
Bobby Pestronk; Melanie White.

Others present: Julian Mansfield; Al Muller; Patricia Canessa; Allen Evans; Roy Schaeffer.

At 6 p.m., Ms. Tyler called the meeting of the Friendship Heights Village Council Public Safety Committee to order. She referred to the meeting agenda.

Approval of Minutes: November 6, 2024

Mr. Pestronk moved, Ms. White seconded, to approve the minutes of the November 6, 2024 Public Safety Committee meeting. The motion was passed unanimously.

Resuming Off-Duty Police Program by hiring officers directly

Ms. Tyler reported on the pause in the off-duty Police program in late November due to concerns regarding adequate insurance protection for the Village. The County insurance representatives subsequently recommended that the Village hire the officers directly to ensure adequate insurance coverage as required. Mr. Mansfield presented the additional costs to hire the officers directly, including the employer's share of FICA and a \$500 charge for the workers compensation coverage that would not be charged by the County until FY 2027. The approved budget for the current fiscal year is enough to cover these additional costs due to the savings incurred since the program was paused. Mr. Pestronk inquired about the FY 2026 proposed budget and whether there would be sufficient funding to hire the police directly. Ms. Tyler indicated the Committee will come back to this topic after reviewing other items on the agenda.

Purchasing radar speed sign for Willard Avenue

Ms. Tyler reported that staff and Committee members solicited two proposals for purchasing a speed radar sign to be deployed on Willard Avenue. Because Willard is maintained by the County, the Police indicated the Village could donate the radar sign to the Police Foundation and have the Police or the County install and maintain the sign. The Village's attorney confirmed this would be an authorized purchase because it relates to public safety for Village

residents. Mr. Mansfield reported that the cost of the recommended proposal does not require advertising for bids, so he can proceed to purchase it. Mr. Mansfield will need to confirm with the Police and the County as to what type of agreement will be needed to implement the purchase and donation of the radar sign. The Committee agreed with this approach.

Update on FH Alliance Safety Meeting of January 27

Ms. Tyler reported on the Friendship Heights Alliance's safety meeting held on January 27. Representatives from the Montgomery County Police Department and Metro Transit Police discussed recent crime trends. There has been an increase in property crimes in the last quarter, particularly in the parking lot behind Rodman's and Crunch Fitness. On the Maryland side of Friendship Heights, crime overall remains relatively low despite the increase in property crime. Metro Police reported a 32% reduction in crime overall throughout the Metro system. Ms. Tyler noted the much improved lighting installed in the Friendship Heights Metro station rotunda. Lt. Elkin of MCPD reported that the police camera trailer at Wisconsin and Western Avenues has been removed for software updates and will be restored at the same location soon.

Resuming Off-Duty Police Program by hiring officers directly (continued)

Mr. Pestronk indicated that the Village Manager can choose to resume the off-duty Police program if he chooses since there was no Council vote on pausing the program. Mr. Mansfield indicated he will check with Village attorney Ron Bolt on whether a Council vote is needed to resume the program by hiring the officers directly.

After discussion, the Committee unanimously supported resuming the off-duty Police program by hiring the officers directly for a total of 40 hours per week.

Ms. Tyler indicated the Council will discuss recommended bonuses for the off-duty Police officers at the next Council meeting on February 10.

No other actions were taken by the Public Safety Committee. The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Cheryl Tyler", is written over a horizontal line.

Cheryl Tyler, Public Safety Committee Chair