



# *CITY COUNCIL*

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## ***Public Safety Committee***

**Monday, August 1, 2011**  
**Council Office**  
**5 p.m.**

**Committee Members Attending:** D. Sterner, Chair, M. Goodman-Hinnershitz, J. Waltman

**Others Attending:** L. Kelleher, V. Spencer, C. Younger, C. Geffken, R. Natale, D. Robinson

Mr. Sterner, Chair, called the Public Safety Committee to order at approximately 6:10pm.

Mr. Waltman suggested that Mr. Natale use the Public Safety Committee forum to bring forward Codes related suggestions for ordinance amendments or new programs.

### **I. Citizen's Service Center: Implementation Report**

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the repeated complaint she has received, specifically, over the past weekend from citizen's who have made calls to the Citizen's Service Center (CSC). She stated that those who contacted her stated that they called the CSC many times over the past week and were put on hold for extended periods of time and no one ever released their call from the hold pattern to respond to their issue.

Mr. Sterner requested that Mr. Geffken provide a report on the actual number of calls coming in to the CSC and the number of calls that are actually answered. He also asked Ms. Kelleher to highlight the problem the Council office has been experiencing over the past week. Ms. Kelleher stated that over the past weeks the Council office has experienced an extremely high volume of calls transferred and citizen's walking in to the Council office that were referred by the CSC. She stated that it is difficult to identify transferred calls from the CSC. She stated that she has instructed Council staff to, starting today, to ask all walk-ins and call transfers if they have spoken to the CSC about their issue. Council staff can then track the number of referrals to the Council office.

Mr. Geffken reported that Ms. Weidel, Citizen Service Center Manager, is trying to resolve this issue. She stated that one specific employee was found to be transferring or referring people to the Council office and was instructed to stop this practice. Mr. Geffken also asked Ms. Goodman-

Hinnershitz to provide the names of the citizen's she spoke with over the weekend so he can follow up.

The issue will be discussed further next month.

### **Quality of Life Ticketing Update**

Mr. Geffken reviewed the report prepared by Mr. Kersley. He stated that the total number of Quality of Life tickets for June is 1,889, bringing the year-to-date total to 8,024.

Mr. Robinson stated that the appeal process is working well. Year-to-date fees collected after appeal total \$113,885.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz asked Mr. Robinson and Mr. Natale to reconsider the storage of trash and recycling receptacles in areas without baker alley access.

There was next a discussion on the application of a common sense amendment versus common sense application of the regulations versus the strict interpretation of the ordinance language.

Ms. Kelleher noted that other areas have the same receptacle storage language as is in place in Reading. She noted that these places do not use the ticketing process and issue citations on the first day a violation is discovered.

### **Housing Permit Ordinance Review**

Ms. Kelleher stated that the ordinance is almost finalized and will be reviewed with Council in a work session on Monday, August 15<sup>th</sup>.

During a discussion on the Housing Permit fee, Mr. Younger noted that the litigation on the Housing Permit fee is currently in the discovery process.

Mr. Sterner requested a breakout of properties inspected this year compared to last year. He also requested that Codes provide a report on the correction of the alleged illegal rental houses identified in the weekly reports prepared by Council staff.

Ms. Kelleher stated that in her view Codes staff is acting on the housing memos issued by Ms. Katzenmoyer, as many people who do not comply with the notices sent by Codes.

Mr. Natale stated that he will prepare the requested reports for the September meeting.

### **Update on Property Maintenance & Plumbing Codes**

Mr. Younger stated that the draft amendment to the Property Maintenance Code was prepared and sent in recently by Michelle Mayfield. He stated that this Code is not controlled by the International Commercial Code (ICC).

Mr. Natale stated that the version used by the City is based on a book used by other

municipalities and amended. He stated that the draft is being reviewed and is almost ready to be reviewed by the members of Council.

Mr. Younger stated that work on the Plumbing Code is incomplete; however work to amend the Fire Code is almost complete and ready for Council review.

The Public Safety Committee meeting adjourned at approximately 7:05 pm.

*Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk*