

PROTECTION & WELFARE COMMITTEE

February 5, 2013



President Michelle Kaltenberg called the meeting to order in the absence of Chairperson Greg Schopp at 6:00 p.m. In attendance: Trustees: Fred Albertz, Rory Holland and Greg Schopp seated at 6:02 p.m., and President Michelle Kaltenberg, alternate. Also in attendance: Police Chief Gary Bleecker, Administrator Mark Johnsrud, Clerk-Treasurer Joan Dykstra, School Superintendent Dr. Michael Garvey, School Board member Rick Kaltenberg and School Board member C.J. O'Neil.

Statement of public notice

This meeting was posted and noticed according to law.

Personal Appearances (limit two minutes per person)

C. J. O'Neil spoke in favor of an ordinance permitting the raising of chickens within the Village, and noted that the Park and Ride is very full and suggested that the state should consider purchasing more land, community gardens should be considered to support the food pantry and that she is against changing any parking regulations on N. Watertown Street.

Approve Minutes of August 7, 2012

An Albert/ Holland motion carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the Protection and Welfare Committee for August 7, 2012.

Discussion and Recommendation Amend 221-3 Vehicles and Traffic – Parking on Milwaukee St.

Rory Holland indicated that he had recently observed the problem first hand with vehicles stopped on Milwaukee Street during school pick up times. Chief Bleecker indicated that it is not a traffic offense to be stopped in a lane of traffic while waiting to turn into a public parking lot. Administrator Johnsrud explained that Village Code 221-3 Vehicles and Traffic permits parking along the Southside of Milwaukee Street from South Street to the drive of the school parking lot which is contrary to the signage indicating no parking during school hours. Conversely, 221-3 provides that persons may park on Grell Lane to pick-up or drop-off students and the signage only permits parking during school events. Greg Schopp asked how many complaints have been received about the danger of vehicles backing up on Milwaukee Street. Johnsrud stated that the Village received one written letter and the Police and Fire Commission had questioned the Fire Chief of this danger. Johnsrud also said that this section of Milwaukee Street is on the crest of the hill which causes additional concerns should emergency vehicles need to pass while the street is congested. Fred Albertz said that he has observed just such a danger while watching the Johnson Creek Fire Ambulance negotiate congestion when headed eastbound on Milwaukee Street. Dr. Mike Garvey indicated that a school safety study was completed in 2005 and has been updated annually. The Johnson Creek School District has followed recommendation made within the report. Vehicle congestion has not been alleviated and in fact may have increased from 2005 because of increase enrollments. The school did not make any request to the Village to make changes but the school would support a suggested right turn only lane on Milwaukee Street from South Street to the driveway entrance to the school parking lot. The school parking lot was changed with the Milwaukee Street improvements which eliminated the second egress from the lot. Chief Bleecker mentioned that while a right turn only lane would improve congestion it would also increase vehicle speed and that is dangerous around the school during this time. The JC Police department enforces the fifteen mile an hour speed limit while an officer is there, however an officer cannot always be there. Fred Albertz suggested a flashing light to show drivers that an emergency vehicle may be coming.

The committee made no recommendation to Amend 221-3 Vehicles and Traffic at this time.

Discussion and Recommendation Amend 96 Animals – Chickens

Administrator Johnsrud stated that Chapter 96 Animals prohibits raising chickens within the Village corporate limits and that a discussion was referred to the committee by the Village Board. Fred Albertz said that he personally does not have any issues with allowing chickens to be raised in the Village but controls must be in place. Rory Holland mentioned that the number of chickens should be limited and no roosters allowed. Administrator Johnsrud suggested that the committee should consider two issues to the raising of animals such as chickens, ducks, geese or turkeys within the Village; most residential lots are one quarter acre in size and that every property owner is entitled to the quiet enjoyment of their property and some property owners may see raising animals as detrimental to property values. Greg Schopp questioned whether home owner associations may prevent raising chickens within certain subdivisions. Johnsrud said that while the Village may permit raising chickens the associations could prevent raising chickens. Ella Frost, daughter of Robert Frost, 218 Cedar Street, spoke in favor of raising chickens in the Village. Robert Frost stated that he sees chickens as a pet and not livestock. Chickens are a part of the ecosystem of fewer pesticides, better fertilization and the use of garden-n-green uses. “Buck” Smith spoke in favor of raising chickens. Lloyd Schultz also spoke in favor of raising chickens and suggested reviewing the website backyard chickens. Peter Hartz spoke and indicated that while many communities permit raising chickens most communities have very few people who actually do raise chickens and cited Ellsworth, Medford, New Berlin, Neenah and Oshkosh. Peter Hartz said that he is aware of over five chicken coops within the Village and people don’t even know they are here. Chief Bleecker said that under Jefferson’s ordinance permitting chickens, the chickens must remain in a coop and that he has not received any complaints. Johnsrud suggested that a permit to allow chickens could be tiered, in that, if the coop is within an accessory building or garage and not visible from the street or adjacent properties that the permit would be an “as issue” permit. Should a person request an open coop which is visible from the street or adjacent property that the neighbors would have to be notified and permitted a say in the allowing the raising of chickens. Albertz suggested providing guidelines or a trial period so that if the permit holder is not responsible the permit could be taken away. Johnsrud said that citing a permit holder under the public nuisance ordinance is too cumbersome and expensive. Johnsrud suggested that a permit holder could be given “three strikes” where if a permit holder not be in compliance of the permit on three separate occasions the permit could be denied with re-instatement only at the will of the Village Board. Greg Schopp questioned whether chicken coops would attract more predators such as raccoon, possum, skunks and coyotes? Robert Frost said many communities require coops to be predator proof and feed must be stored in a rodent proof container.

Committee requested that staff gather additional information on ordinances within the surrounding communities of Lake Mills, Jefferson and Whitewater and report back at the next Protection and Welfare Committee meeting.

Discussion and Recommendation Amend 221-3 Vehicles and Traffic – Parking on N. Watertown St.
Rory/Albert motion carried to table indefinitely without discussion.

Adjourn

A Holland/Albert motion carried to adjourn at 7:31 p.m.

Greg Schopp, Chair
Protection & Welfare