

Commission Letter #: 337-10
Commission Meeting: December 6, 2010

Re: Proposal to Appropriate from the General Fund for the purpose of increasing Police Staffing

December 2, 2010

The Honorable Mayor
And
Members of the City Commission

I received the following email from Commissioner Andrzejak this morning. If the Commission is inclined to approve his proposal, I would request that we make two separate appropriations, one for the remainder of 2010-2011 and a second one, for 2011-2012. I would recommend delaying the second appropriation until the spring when we be making other adjustments to the 2011-2012 budget. The marginal cost to bring back 6 officers for the reminder of this fiscal year would be approximately \$375,000.

Respectfully submitted,



Donald E. Johnson
City Manager

Please place the following item on our December 06th, 2010 City Commission agenda:

Appropriation from the General Fund for the purpose of improving Police Staffing

It is my intent to broaden the discussion initiated by Commissioner Drinkwine at our last CC meeting.

That discussion focused on a longer term "band-aid" to address the concern of safety for our Police Staff, as well as the community, as a whole, due to valid concerns about the budgetary crisis that has resulted in the downsizing of our Police Department.

For background purposes, by unanimous consent of all members of the City Commission, we have followed a multipronged strategy, that included, not pursuing a millage request until reasonable concessions, and sacrifices were made by ALL employee bargaining units, including Police and Fire bargaining units.

To date, we have not attained the concessions in the Police and Fire unions, as we have with most of the other city employees. It is imperative that we negotiate these concessions with ALL employees to address our Structural Deficit. Solely relying on a millage to balance our future budgets will not be sustainable. Concessions are a necessary component.

Recent crime activity in our community (and nearby), has drawn the interest of some member(s) of the CC to revisit our strategy on how to handle the concessions/millage issue.

One strategy, apparently will be to pursue a millage prior to negotiating concessions from all employees. I make no editorial comment on this prospect, other than it would be a change in tact from our bargaining approach.

What I do want to address is the timeframe of such an approach.

If a millage request was placed on the ballot for a Special Election in May 2011, and it failed, it would not address any Police staffing issues.

If a May 2011 millage request was successful, new tax revenues generated from a successful millage passage would not be collected until July 2011, and it would take a month or two beyond that to add staffing from the revenue of a successful millage request.

The point being, if there truly is concern about low Police staffing, the "longer term" approach doesn't place officers back on the street until the second half of 2011.

What about now?

Therefore, I am proposing a short term "band-aid" to address this issue. This proposal addresses the safety concerns starting today, by infusing an emergency appropriation from our General Fund that immediately puts 6 patrol officers back on our streets, for the remainder of this Budget Year, and for the entire 2011/2012 Budget Year.

The following quote is from Police Chief Jahnke's memo dated 10/01/10 that was attached to Commission Letter #275-10.

"The increase of two officers per shift on road patrol would put all three shifts at their optimal levels. We would have enough officers to respond to calls for service in a timely manner, as well as, increase our proactive activities. These staffing levels would allow us to periodically detail officers for specific problems as the need arises."

The funding would come from the General Fund. The Finance Director recently reported that our financial standing improved (over projections) by \$1.519 M (Commission Letter 284-10, dated 11/08/10). In addition, preliminary reports from Oakland County indicate that housing values will not slide as much as had been predicted. Our budget has used the harsher projections as assumptions. This is another positive that we had not been counting on.

In summary, this proposal immediately places Police Officers back in service to our community and allows road patrols to operate at optimal levels. Recent financial updates indicate our financial situation has improved enough to fund this initiative. Hopefully, with the cooperation and participation of all stakeholders sharing in the process, even more police officers can be added back when approving next year's budget.

"Be it resolved, that the Royal Oak City Commission approves the immediate appropriation from the General Fund in the amount of \$1,064,000.00 for the purpose of improving the Police staffing in the Royal Oak Police Department by 6 road patrol officers for the remainder of the 2010/2011 Budget Year, and the same increase in staffing, for 6 road patrol officers for the 2011/2012 Budget Year."

Michael Andrzejak
Mayor Pro Tem
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