

Note: Minutes are considered "draft" until reviewed at the next scheduled meeting.

Wednesday, February 13, 2013

MINUTES

5:00 PM

Public Services Committee Carnegie Town Hall

235 West 10th Street

Members Present: Council Member Sue Aguilar, Council Member Kenny Anderson Jr., Council Member Michelle Erpenbach, and Council Member Dean Karsky

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Tamara Jorgensen, CMC, Assistant City Clerk; Lorie Hogstad, CMC, City Clerk; David Bixler, Budget Analyst; and Jim David, Legislative/Operations Manager

1. Call To Order

Committee Chair Kenny Anderson Jr. called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. Review and approval of Minutes dated December 11, 2012

A motion was made by Council Member Sue Aguilar and seconded by Council Member Dean Karsky to approve the minutes. Anderson Jr. called for a voice vote and all members present voted yes. Motion Passed.

3. Review Sprinkler Requirements by Ron Bell, Chief Building Services Official; and Dean Lanier, Division Chief for Fire Rescue

Jim Sideras, Fire Rescue Chief, provided opening remarks. Sideras stated there is no equity in safety for homes or apartments if they do or do not have sprinklers. Sideras said the best chance for saving lives is when sprinklers work in tandem with the smoke alarms. He indicated that the Fire Rescue Department does not have enough staff for fire inspections and he has spoken with Administration about adding two more employees.

Ron Bell, Chief Building Services Official, spoke regarding the 2012 International Building Code and the history of the sprinkler recommendations. Bell stated that fifty states and the District of Columbia have adopted the International Codes at the state or jurisdictional level. Bell recommended that the City of Sioux Falls move forward with sprinkler requirements. Discussion followed.

Discussion was held regarding inspecting apartments. Sideras provided a background on the need to review apartments for working smoke alarms, checking to see if the alarm panels are up to date, review existing fire code violations, etc. Council Member Michelle Erpenbach referenced this as a need for businesses as well, not necessarily home owners.

Council Member Dean Karsky asked about sprinkler

system requirements. Dean Lanier, Division Chief for Fire Prevention, stated that sprinkler system installations require inspections and follow up maintenance. Karsky asked if the current codes apply to smoke detectors and what would happen if a smoke detector was turned off. Lanier responded that the inspection process includes checking to see that buildings do have the minimum amount of life saving equipment included. Karsky asked if a requirement was made to mandate that smoke alarms are hard wired, and if disabled would set off an alarm, if that could be a cost effective option instead of sprinkler systems. Lanier stated that is one option that has been followed in larger cities and could be given serious thought.

Lanier reviewed a PowerPoint presentation covering the reasons and the need for sprinkler systems. Lanier stated that an average of \$3.5-\$4.0 million dollars is lost every year due to fire property loss. Lanier reviewed temperature ranges and damages in apartments from fire.

Public testimony was taken from Dan Siefken, Executive Director of the South Dakota Multi-Housing Association; Eric Kritzmire, ADA Accessibility Review Board; and Craig Taschner, owner of Fire Engineering, Inc. Discussion was held regarding retro-fitting or remodeling buildings with sprinkler systems. Kritzmire explained that nursing homes, in order to get Medicaid funding, now have to be fitted with sprinkler systems. Kritzmire stated there were 8-9 contractors in Sioux Falls that perform this type of work.

Council Member Sue Aguilar spoke about retro-fitting a sprinkler system in a sorority house in Vermillion that was built in the 1930's. She stated there are various companies and various costs involved. Aguilar stated companies in Sioux Falls do a great job and, with the yearly reviews, are more cost effective. She stated we should review if we are only looking at it from a cost standpoint and that we should think about those that will be the most vulnerable.

Aguilar asked for input on the history of the sprinkler part of past ordinances. Anderson Jr. stated the sprinkler portion of the ordinance was removed and assigned to the Public Services Committee; the rest of the ordinance was approved. Anderson Jr. stated he would like to see a task force developed of fire professionals that could review this portion of the ordinance and make recommendations to this committee.

Karsky stated there were good arguments for having sprinkler systems. He states he understands the need to protect people equally but if an individual chooses to rent an apartment without a sprinkler system that is their choice to make. Karsky noted it does come down to choice about whether or not to build with a sprinkler system. Erpenbach spoke about how the affordable housing listing waiting list is now at four years long.

She noted there are hundreds of families on that listing that cannot afford housing in Sioux falls because their income does not support it. She

stated we are talking about "basic life safety" that should be available for everyone. She stated we have hundreds of experts that have reviewed and provided information in the updated code books. She suggested we be careful about creating more than what is "basic life issues".

Discussion was held regarding receiving additional feedback from apartment owners and industry professionals regarding sprinklers. Aguilar stated she would like to see "real numbers" regarding putting in sprinkler systems and the impact on insurance. Lanier addressed the committee about forming a task force consisting of fire staff, engineer

professionals and inviting staff from Community Development who work with low incoming housing.

A motion was made by Sue Aguilar and seconded by Michelle Erpenbach to form a task force who will return to the May 14, 2013, Public Services Committee Meeting with their recommendations. Aguilar recommended that Council Staff Members Jim David, Legislative/Operations Manager and David Bixler, Budget Analyst, are included on the task force. Anderson Jr. called for a voice vote and all members present voted yes.

Motion Passed.

4. Taxi Cab Ordinance by Jim David, Legislative/Operations Manager

David presented a PowerPoint presentation covering the following items: a review of Chapter 124; the frequency of inspection and suggested changes; the vehicle inspection form; surcharges and suggested changes; and other suggested changes.

Public testimony was taken at this time. Tom Olson, Stellar Limousine Services; Pat Malfero, City Wide Taxi; and Richard "Rico" Carlson, Rico's Taxi, provided input and suggestions.

Karsky asked David about the surcharges regarding gasoline. David reviewed the \$1.30 surcharge and indicated a rate analysis was done previously. David explained how the charges are figured per mile. Discussion followed.

Aguilar asked about regulations regarding signage on a vehicle. David explained that a seal is required on the lower left hand side of the back window. Jamie Palmer, Licensing Specialist, provided an example of what the seal looks like and how it is obtained. Palmer stated there are the following Vehicle For Hire businesses licensed in the City of Sioux Falls: 19 taxi companies; 5 limousine companies, 8 "general" (Town cars, etc.), 2 wheelchair transports; and 1 bus (Sioux Area Metro). Discussion followed.

Discussion was held regarding the differences between our existing taxi cab ordinance restrictions vs. ordinances in other cities. Discussion was held regarding whether or not it is the Council's position to regulate business in Sioux Falls. Karsky stated there is a need to monitor safety related needs, but does not know if they should monitor the number of businesses that are set up. Aguilar compared this to the number of garbage haulers. She stated the standards themselves would weed out those that

can and cannot provide the needed service(s). She stated the Council should set the standards.

Karsky asked if any of the taxi companies lease their vehicles from the taxi company. Richard Carlson stated that last year he leased two cars from two different companies.

Anderson Jr. volunteered to lead a task force to review this issue and will present an update at the Public Services Committee Meeting on Tuesday, March 12, 2013.

Erpenbach stated she was interested in drug and alcohol testing and criminal background testing. She noted these were public safety issues that need to be taken into account. Aguilar stated this was important because some of the cab companies transport students for the School District, so the public aspect is very important.

Patti Lyon, Assistant Chief of Police, gave an update on the background checks conducted by the Police Department. She stated they do not approve applications for registered sex offenders or individuals who have committed serious felonies. She noted that she has only denied a few in the 10 years she has been reviewing applications.

5. Open Discussion

Anderson Jr. invited Preston Evans to give testimony on Project T.R.I.M. Evans discussed his experience with Project T.R.I.M. and the Parks and Recreation Department. Evans displayed photographs of work that was done. Due to time restraints, the conversation ended and Anderson Jr. thanked Evans for his time.

6. Adjournment

Committee Chair Anderson Jr. adjourned the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

Tamara Jorgensen, CMC

Assistant City Clerk