

Present: Committee Chairman Ellis, Committee Members Sandlin and Gallion. Also present were Mayor Weese, Trustees Delhaye, Hughes and Village Clerk Slavik. Mayor Weese called the meeting to order. The meeting was called to discuss police wages and hiring more officers, as Officer Smitley will be leaving in July. Ellis said there is a wage gap between our department and other surrounding towns, and it will be hard to draw officers even to fill an upcoming vacancy. He said a \$4.00/hr increase would put Westville mid-way between the wage that the surrounding towns are paying.

There are 37 shifts open in July, including the loss of the 4th full time officer who is leaving. They also want to look at maybe hiring a 5th FT officer to also cut down on PT officers. Most departments are hurting and there just aren't officers to cover shifts. Chief Booe and Sgt. Varvel and Officer Wahlfeldt are present. Some of our officers have been offered positions in other towns, and they also get burned out not getting time off. Booe says the main issue is the wage gap. Booe said the shortage of available officers has happened beginning with this year. Booe said the new laws make it harder to fill positions. Weese said part of that is how the world is. Ellis said a former deputy reached out and would be willing to apply for the upcoming opening if the pay were better. Varvel said Tilton pays \$24/hour to a new officer just out of the academy. Georgetown is \$23/hr and going to \$26/hr. Our chief makes less than them. Varvel said they appreciate being able to go to their kids' games and going home to eat, so our top 3 officers are not planning to leave. Varvel gave a lot of statistics to justify hiring a 5th officer. State training mandates 30 hrs. every 3 years for officers, including hands-on, which begins July 1st. If we do not make the training, we get decertified, according to Varvel. Hughes asked what Danville officers make. They start at \$68,000.00/year, and within 5 years they are over \$100,000.00. Ellis said Westville was involved in 6 out of 9 officer-involved shootings. Gallion pointed out how many hours some of them have been working; one worked 20 hours in one day and they often work 12-hour and even 16-hour shifts. He says the money is there because of the OT we are already paying, which averages out to \$31/hour. Booe said we lose one full time officer next week and they have 2 vacations coming up. Varvel said there are times they work 40-50-60 days without a day off. It just takes one officer needing to be off to cause an issue covering shifts. Varvel said the state will eventually do away with PT officers. Training for an officer is 4 months, and Booe said the next class is full. Varvel said May of 2022 is the soonest there is an opening, and there are only 4 slots and then after that, it would be August 2022 before anyone could get in for training.

Ellis summarized that the pay increase is the issue to be able to fill the upcoming opening, and then they can be selective with the 5th officer. Delhaye asked and the Village pays for PTI; Booe said we do not get reimbursed. It is \$6,000.00 for UofI PTI and includes room/board/meals. Sandlin asked where the money is going to come from. Mayor Weese reminded us that the police owe \$72,000.00 for 2 vehicles, too. Weese asked Ellis what they need, and Ellis said \$4.00/hr. would put us middle- of-the-road and put us paying more than Georgetown. Varvel said we used to always be within that \$1/hr. difference; but not anymore. Weese would like Larson to go through some figures. Varvel has someone very interested depending on the pay and he is already qualified. We will have a Special Meeting June 30th at 7pm for a vote on the wage increase. Ellis hopes we draw someone already qualified. Booe said Danville and the Sheriff's Dept. are the only departments that have more calls than Westville does. Ellis said we want to take care of our officers and said we appreciate them.

Adjournment was 7:35pm