



***Public Safety Committee
(Virtual Meeting)***

Chaired by Council Member Jones

Committee Members: Jones, Moore, Williams, and Johnson

August 19, 2020 – 4:00 p.m.

3rd Floor Council Chambers

Minutes

Present (3):

Committee Member Christopher Williams, Committee Member Britt Moore, and Committee Member Tyrone Johnson

**Participating
Remotely (1):**

Chairman Victor Jones,

**Also Present
Remotely:**

Council Member Monica Peters

Staff Present:

Randy McCaslin, Deputy City Manager; Greg Ferguson, Assistant City Manager, Eric Olmedo, Assistant City Manager; Lori Loosemore, Code Enforcement Manager; Reggie Hucks, Inspection Services Director; Chris Weir, Fire Chief; Michael McNair, Community Development Director; Lisa Vierling, City Clerk; and Mary S. Brooks, Deputy City Clerk

**Staff Participating
Remotely:**

JoAnne, Carlyle, City Attorney; and Travis Stroud, Interim Police Chief

As part of the city of High Point's COVID-19 mitigation efforts, in-person attendance was not allowed at this meeting. Instead, the meeting was live-streamed, and the public was provided a link to listen to the meeting as it was being live-streamed.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Victor Jones called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

PRESENTATION OF ITEMS**2020-323 Hotel Code Enforcement**

Staff will provide information regarding issues of concern and enforcement action relative to the Traveler's Inn on Green Street.

Randy McCaslin, Interim City Manager; spoke to concerns raised by council and citizens regarding enforcement actions relative to the Traveler's Inn on Green Street; recognized Travis Stroud, Interim Police Chief to provide police department concerns; and introduced Reggie Hucks, Inspection Services Director, to provide an update on the hotel's current condition.

Mr. Hucks provided a brief history regarding past complaints with the Traveler's Inn hotel; said there were three modular units on the property that were condemned and removed; spoke to the permanent residents occupying the hotel; to the fire hazards; said that the owner was given an opportunity to bring the hotel up to code, but did not; spoke to the restaurant portion being used as a storage facility; they have been ordered to clean it out; leaking roof; and the need to reinspect.

Committee Member Moore asked was the taxes current on the property. Lori Loosemore; Code Enforcement Manager responded that she did not have that information at this time, and would provide it when received.

Council Member Peters inquired on other code violations at the hotel; and asked was there an appearance of drug use there. Mr. Hucks replied that there were no major violations; spoke to concerns where the residents were using hotplates and drop cords which resulted in fire hazards; and that there were syringes (for drug use) on the property.

Ms. Loosemore spoke to the zoning violations; provided the definition code for hotels; said a survey was conducted on the number of permanent residents, which resulted in 26 people; voiced concerns for residents with small children and health issues.

Interim Chief Stroud provided two years of data (July 2018-July 2020) for 481 calls for service that included: 911, non-emergency, proactive officer on ground, etc.; said some of the call resulted in arrest, charges, 14 heroin over doses (one death), trespassing, sexual assault, etc...; and spoke to focusing on motel/hotel overdoses (Interdiction Initiative). Chief Stroud reported there have been a significant amount of calls to the hotel overtimes (6,595+).

Committee Member Moore inquired on the amount of resources deployed to the hotel. Interim Police Chief Stroud replied to having limited resources; to the amount of drug activity in the parking lots; and to having officers' presence in the area to help drive away criminals.

Committee Member Johnson asked was the Traveler's Inn the worst hotel for criminal activity. Interim Chief Stroud replied no; and noted Hotel NC on Brentwood was probably ahead of the Traveler's Inn in terms of the number of calls.

Interim City Manager McCaslin spoke to having a holistic approach; to the zoning violations and issues at the hotel; to involving the legal/city departments to address the issues with the hotel; to resolution comparisons from other cities; and said that staff would provide an update to the committee regarding addressing issues at a later date.

Committee Member Moore asked for a cost analysis for addressing the hotel's issues; and to looking at legal options.

JoAnne Carlyle, City Attorney, said having the statistics at this time would help in moving forward regarding addressing the hotel's issues.

Committee Member Williams voiced concerns with the living conditions at the hotel; to reaching out to the Housing Authority and community partners to assist the residents with housing; and to addressing similar properties with the same issues.

Council Member Peters suggested getting the process going for the top four hotels; and to addressing concerns/issues for them.

Interim City Manager McCaslin advised that staff would try to assist the residents because many times places like this are a last resort for them and they have nowhere else to go; and to also include other hotels to address their issues.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 4:29 p.m. upon motion duly made and seconded.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary S. Brooks, Deputy City Clerk

Victor Jones, Chairman
Public Safety Committee