

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Wednesday, May 21, 2008, 11:45 a.m.
Room 113, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street,
Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Gene Carroll, Michael Cornelius, Dick Esseks, Wendy Francis, Leirion Gaylor Baird, Roger Larson, Lynn Sunderman and Tommy Taylor.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Ford, Chief Huff, Chief Furasek of the Fire Department; Rick Peo of the Law Department; Marvin Krout, Ray Hill, Stephen Henrichsen, Mike DeKalb, Brian Will, Christy Eichorn, Brandon Garrett and Michele Abendroth of the Planning Department; and other interested parties.

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: **Fire/Emergency Medical Protection**

The meeting was called to order at 11:45 a.m.

Chief Ford provided a brief history of the fire station locations beginning in 1908 and evolving through the present. The last fire station was added 11 years ago. Engine companies central to the city have average response times of 3.57 to 4.08 minutes. Engine companies on the peripherals have response times of 4.72 to 5.55 minutes. The National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) standard is 4 minutes.

In terms of medical response, brain damage begins at four to five minutes without oxygen. Brain death occurs at eight minutes. In terms of fire, a fire will double in size every two minutes. At flashover, which is when everything is so hot that it ignites in less than 8 minutes, the survival rate is zero.

Chief Ford noted that total calls for 2007 was 20,000.

Chief Ford addressed concerns in the City. Concerns in the City's core are high density population, high service demands, simultaneous incidents, and high call volume. Concerns in the City's peripherals are a growing response area, growing population, increasing service demand, fewer stations and long travel distances.

Chief Huff stated that one of the consequences of annexation is meeting the response time that is in the ordinance. There is really no good solution to this issue as a new annexed area may not warrant moving a unit there.

Chief Furasek noted that during a cardiac arrest, the statistics show that the closer you are to the fire station, the better your chances of survival.

Esseks asked for a separate analysis for newer development. He believes there is a responsibility to look at how far a fire station is from new development areas. If there are a significant number of people in jeopardy, that is a moral burden on the Commission. Chief Huff stated that there is no correlation to income or race, as everyone is at equal risk. New homes are generally not any more fire safe than older homes. Medical emergencies are typically for older people, but it does affect every demographic area. Most fire problems are at home, and most automobile crashes are close to home. The Fire Department reviews all annexations and provides a response to the Planning Department as to what the impact is on response times.

Carroll asked about the liability of the PC. Peo stated that in Nebraska, the City is not treated the same as private citizens for liability, so that does provide some exemption from negligence. In most of these cases, there is a duty to warn. A warning could be added to the annexation agreement indicating that response times on the fringe could be slightly higher. Many final plats also include a duty to notify the purchaser of any issues. There is also a responsibility of the purchaser to be an informed buyer.

Chief Huff also noted that it is important to identify early in the process where a future fire station will be located so that any purchaser knows what to expect for their neighborhood.

Gaylor Baird noted that when you live in the City limits, there is an expectation of a level of service, so there is an obligation to inform the public.

Peo added that there is duty to provide equivalent level of service in all areas of the City. However, that does not have to be at day one. There should be a plan to have services in all areas in the City.

Chief Ford noted that they are currently reviewing the service areas and determining if anything could be reorganized. There are many variables to consider.

Hill asked if there is an insurance rating for Lincoln. Ford stated that a company called Insurance Service Organization rates cities on their fire and emergency services and Lincoln is rated '3' which is a very good rating.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Abendroth
Planning Department

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