

Village marshals to do more patrols

Written by CAROL POMEDAY

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Public Safety Committee sets procedures for enforcing ordinances, expectations for community presence

Village of Belgium residents can expect to see village marshals patrolling streets more and be visible at village functions.

The Public Safety Committee on Tuesday outlined procedures for the marshal and deputy marshal that will be finalized at a meeting next week.

Chairman Jason Acevedo, who was appointed last week to succeed Trustee Jeff Thiel, presented the procedures he would like adopted.

Marshal Brian Schrap and Deputy Marshal Justin Clemens, who is studying criminal justice, said the guidelines were needed and had few objections to the proposed procedures. The marshals enforce village ordinances.

“This is not about the past,” Acevedo said. “I want to know that the marshal and deputy marshal we have now can do these things. It’s all about accountability.”

Although board members had received complaints about the marshals, Acevedo said, those weren’t always conveyed to the marshals in the past. That will change, he said.

“We have too many people in this community who don’t want a village marshal and we don’t want to give them fuel,” Acevedo said.

Several people complained that they did not receive a quick response when they called with concerns, he said.

Acevedo said the cell phone provided by the village must be on at all times and in the possession of one of the marshals.

“We don’t expect you to answer calls at work or in the middle of the night,” Trustee Vickie Boehnlein said, but she said calls should be returned within 12 hours. The voicemail greeting should reflect the time span callers can expect a response, she said.

The following procedures were proposed:

- The marshal, who is paid \$3,000 annually, should average a minimum 4.5 hours per week and the deputy marshal, who is paid \$2,500, should put in four hours per week. Some weeks may require more hours and other weeks less time. Currently, there are no recommended hours.

- All hours must be put into a log and reported weekly to Village Clerk Kaity Olsen. Boehnlein said she would develop an online log for the marshals. Copies of the log will be given to Village

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Board members.

- The village vehicle must be used for all patrols. Marshals are not allowed to use their private cars. A magnetic village marshal sign will be purchased that should be displayed when used by the marshals.

“That car will become associated with you guys and authority,” Acevedo said.

The marshals are expected to target key times for patrols to enforce curfew, parking and other violations

- One marshal must attend Village Board meetings. The committee recommended the marshals be paid \$60 per meeting, the same as appointed and elected officials.

Since Schrap works nights, Clemens said he will attend the meetings.

The marshals can hear complaints that come to the board that should be investigated, discuss concerns and give input on ordinances, Boehnlein said.

- Marshals are to be present or patrolling during Luxembourg Fest, trick-or-treating, the Christmas parade, Pepi’s Dog Walk, the community rummage sale and other events requested by the board.

“Sometimes just seeing the vehicle calms people,” Boehnlein said.

The village will provide clothing, such as a vest that the marshals can wear, and a flashing light for when they direct traffic.

“We don’t know how to do your job,” Acevedo said. “You need to tell us that. You two work it out.”