



Meeting: Village Board
Meeting Date: 5/14/12
Agenda Item: 8b

Mission Statement

Delivering quality services in a courteous, cost-effective and efficient manner.

VILLAGE BOARD MEETING STAFF REPORT

REPORT TO: Burt R. McIntyre, President
Village Board of Trustees

REPORT FROM: Paul F. Evert, Village Administrator

AGENDA ITEM: Village Administrator's update on fireworks enforcement

ACTION REQUESTED: ___Ordinance ___Resolution ___Motion **X**Receive/File

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

At two recent meetings, the issue of the illegal use of fireworks was referred to staff. The first time this was done by Trustee Speaker. The second time it was brought up by a resident during public appearances.

This issue was looked into by the Fireworks Review Committee in February of 2007. This group consisted of then-Fire Chief John O'Connor, Officer Dagneau and President McIntyre. The report noted that the biggest problem standing in the way of the control of fireworks is that the state of Wisconsin allows for the sale of fireworks while our ordinance does not allow possession of fireworks, with the exception of sparklers and snakes. Fire Chief Janke, pursuant to our current ordinance, does issue permits for people who wish to put on a fireworks display. This ordinance was probably originally intended to serve as a mechanism for a local civic organization to sponsor an event at which a trained, licensed professional would be paid to put on a fireworks show. Instead, the permits are more frequently being used for people to shoot off fireworks for their own personal amusement.

Enforcement of the illegal use of fireworks is made on a complaint basis by the sheriff's department. Officers use their discretion in enforcing the ordinance if they can find the offenders. Very few citations have ever been issued.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

If it is the Village Board's desire to reduce the number of fireworks shot off in the Village, staff believes the starting point should be limiting the issuance of permits to those persons who are hiring a licensed fireworks professional to put on a fireworks show. In addition, the Village can issue a press release reiterating that Howard does not allow the use or possession, and the violators will be prosecuted once caught. However, there will not be a great deal of teeth behind such a threat.