

CITY OF SIGOURNEY, IOWA
MINUTES OF SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF
TUESDAY, MAY 24, 2022

The Sigourney City Council met in special session in the Council Chambers at City Hall on Tuesday, May 24, 2022, with Mayor Morlan presiding and the following Council members answering roll call: Isobaker, Lentz, Tish, Clark, Conrad and McLaughlin. Others present were: Allan and Kathy Glandon; Tami Gilliland; Christie Iosbaker, Sigourney News Review; Pat Miletich; Judy Peterson; Mallary Snakenberg; Gail McLaughlin; Rick Landgrebe; Karol Ireland; Isabelle Ireland; Chelsea Branstad; Nancy Morlan; Mike Leathers; Holly Van Voltenburg; Jeff Burtlow; Edmund Popelka; Adam Pence, Keokuk County Sheriff's Department; Richard Fortney, Police Officer; Don Northup, Director of Public Works I; Brent Gilliland, Director of Public Works II; and Angie Alderson, City Clerk.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. Council member McLaughlin moved, seconded by Council member Conrad, to approve the tentative agenda. Upon the roll being called, the following voted Ayes: Clark, Tish, Lentz, Iosbaker, McLaughlin and Conrad. Nays: None. Motion approved.

Council member Conrad moved, seconded by Council member Clark, to accept the resignation of Richard Fortney. Upon the roll being called, the following voted Ayes: Clark, Lentz, Iosbaker, McLaughlin and Conrad. Nays: None. Abstain: Tish. Motion approved. *(Council member Tish abstained as she is dating Officer Fortney.)*

Mayor Morlan addressed the public stating that most of the public knew that when he was running for Mayor his top priority was reestablishing the police department. Sigourney is privileged to have a great Public Safety Committee to accomplish this.

Council member Clark, Public Safety Committee Chairperson, opened with the following statement: The Public Safety Committee requested this special council meeting to discuss the city's current situation pertaining to law enforcement within the City and the resignation of Officer Richard Fortney. When we took office, this Council was told that due to the possibility of a civil suit the City's legal council recommended that we wait until September of this year to make any changes or try to hire officers to rebuild the Sigourney Police Department. That decision was the result of the previous attempt to hire officers. As a result, the City was still obligated by law to provide law enforcement protection to the citizens of Sigourney. The City decided to come into a mutual agreement with Keokuk County to have the Keokuk County Sheriff's Office provide law enforcement coverage for the City to help the Sigourney Police Department. To his knowledge this was not an attempt to dissolve the City Police Department and have the Keokuk County Sheriff's Office take over all police duties in the City. It has been implied throughout town that the City is looking at and wanting to get rid of the Sigourney Police Department. That is not the case. The Public Safety Committee has held several meetings and we have been trying to figure out what we feel are the problems we have with successfully sustaining a police department. We know the citizens of this town want a police department. That is why we are here, to get the entire council involved so we all can share input and hopefully come up with steps to rebuild and keep a sustainable police force. The Public Safety Committee has put together a power point to share what we feel are the problems we face as a small community. I hope everyone can have an open mind in this discussion as we try to find a workable solution to address concerns associated with the safety of our town. With that being said, I will ask Council member Iosbaker to present the slideshow.

Council member Iosbaker started a slideshow presentation he had compiled. Council member Iosbaker stated the purpose of presenting this material is to make information available to everyone so that the circumstances the City faces are understood so that we can have an informational discussion about what the best course of action going forward should be. Council member Iosbaker stated he thought it would be useful to acknowledge at the very beginning that the City Council has an obligation to provide police protection to the community. That is part of the fundamental justification for the existence of the City Council. He used the Iowa League of Cities information from their handbook. This outlines the responsibility of the City Council to provide police protection and references the Iowa State Code. Council member Iosbaker stated that we have to do something, and we have to figure that out. There are a couple of underlying assumptions. We made an assumption that in order to have an effective police department within the community over a long-term period of time we would need at least three individuals – a chief and two officers – at a minimum that would allow for reasonable coverage and to take into account that people need days off and things of that type. It also reflects historical staffing levels. If you have a sustainable department, you can then employ reserve officers. From discussions there are rules for utilizing reserve officers in that there has to be a certified officer on duty in order for a reserve officer to be on duty. Reserve officers as we are viewing them, are useful in terms of providing expanded services in special cases such as the Fourth of

July, National Night Out – events where you might need additional coverage. They cannot serve as a replacement for certified officers. In all cases as we have looked at this problem, we are trying to build a sustainable force. Trying to come up with a solution that will not just work for a couple of years but will work indefinitely given the financial envelope the City has to work with. Those are kind of the entry points. There are some challenges. If anyone has watched the news or have any interest, there is a shortage of law enforcement candidates – at least statewide and potentially nationwide. It was mentioned when Senator Ernst was in town and was an answer to a question from the Mayor. Her comment was that everyone within the state is having difficulty finding law enforcement employees. There are just not enough of them. Our local Sheriff's Department has been looking for new deputies. There is then the challenge of officer retention. If we can acquire them, if we can hire qualified personnel, the question we have to confront is can we keep them on the force. Looking at pay, it is a competitive environment and Sigourney is not in a favorable position to compete. Council member Iosbaker reviewed information he had put together. There were projections made for a new Police Chief salary at \$75,000.00 which is more than it has been historically. Council member Iosbaker reviewed a potential budget regarding the costs that have been spent in past years and what the future could look like. In 2019 the City spent \$241,000.00. With the financial projections ran, the new total to sustain the department at that pay grade and also taking into account other factors such as the cost of fuel, which is close to double. There were other adjustments made as well attempting to accommodate the different time periods and the realities we are working with. The new total budget would be \$322,000.00 annually with the Police Chief at \$75,000.00. We also ran a hypothetical matching the pay grade at the Keokuk County Sheriff's Department and the new total would be \$349,000.00 annually. Council member Iosbaker reviewed the expenses and revenues of the Police Department. The Police Department is not a revenue generating department and is not meant to be. Council member Conrad explained some of the funds that are coming in that are sources other than our tax base. Some of the money in the General Fund is borrowed and there will be some debt expenses that will be paid from there. Some of the grants are dollars coming in, but they are not taxed for. The General Fund levy is capped at \$8.10 per thousand dollars. This is for things that are repeated year after year. Some of the grants need to be taken out of the picture. The grants are not recurring and do not have any input on what the City is able to provide as far as police service goes. Retaining employees is the other problem. Council member Iosbaker reviewed a graph showing the past retention issues. With a few exceptions the City is keeping police employees three or four years. That has an impact on how frequently we are going to have to be training people if this level of rotation continues. The theory is, right or wrong, given the work force market as it stands today and our ability to provide salaries for employees there does not seem to be any real reason to assume this pattern will change. Council member Iosbaker talked about the impact of wages on the taxation. The primary source of funding for the police department is the 8.10 levy and that cannot be changed. There is another levy for employee benefits that can be increased. There would be a slight increase in the taxes to help cover the City's share of FICA, IPERS and insurance. Typically, all the funds are not expended in any fund if the City does not have to. There is enough money to sustain the department at this level that is reflected for the projected 2023 budget. City Clerk Alderson is concerned that to sustain a budget of that size, we would be systemically eating into our reserve fund. It could sustain the Police Department for a few years, but it would not sustain the department forever and is used for other departments as well. That raises the question if the salaries are set at a higher cost how long can the City keep the department going given the current tax base. That is an important question to answer, and we do not have all the answers. We have ideas and thoughts. Council member Tish asked where the money from citations go. City Clerk Alderson answered that it is in the General Fund under a Police revenue number, but the police do not have a separate fund such as water. Council member Iosbaker stated that the City has to think about whether we can attract people and can we keep them if we attract them. These are all questions that are going to have to be answered. The only way we are going to find out is to open up for job applicants and see who responds and then assess them for quality. We will have to look at it in light of what has been shared today. Council member Clark stated that the problem our Department has is that we are competing with the Sheriff's Department. An employee can leave this job, go the Sheriff's Department and make a substantial amount of more money. It is probably a little busier and there is more area to roam. The pay is the other problem which adds to the problem of retention. Council member Clark asked what attracts people to Sigourney, there is really not a whole lot to do here. We are not going to get the people from big cities to move to Sigourney and stay here. Historically that is a problem the City has. We feel that what we need to do is somehow shorten that gap in pay to try to keep people here, but where do we find that money to sustain a Police Department. If we cannot sustain, the money has to come from somewhere else or we have to let someone go. Karol Glandon asked what other option does the City have. Council member Clark stated that we are here because we do not have the answers. This is a problem that is being brought to the entire Council and public to figure out how do we sustain. Council member Iosbaker stated that he can think of only one lever that we can pull that would have a marked impact and that is the amount of coverage in terms of control hours and time on the job. In effect that is the way we have been coping for the last year or so. There is good and bad. You spend less money, but you have periods of the day where you do not have patrol officers out and that is an

opportunity for criminals to operate. Council member McLaughlin stated that she wanted to reiterate that as a member of the Public Safety Committee that they were not looking to dissolve the Police Department at all. That was not their intention at all. They did look at the 28E Agreement with the County because it was up for renewal and that is something we needed to do and have in place when you have a department of only one, you have to have additional coverage. She stated she does agree that the numbers are just not there.

Council member Tish stated that when it comes to finding \$20,000.00, which is only a percentage, this Council approved for all the Council to get nice laptops for \$14,500.00. That money was found just fine, but finding \$20,000.00 for the police department – right there is \$14,500.00. For Council member Tish, it is being educated on ways to make this work, has the Public Safety Committee reached out to Allan (*Glandon*) for any input any information any feedback anything. She also asked if the Public Safety Committee had reached out to Officer Fortney. Council member McLaughlin stated that the Public Safety Committee had invited Officer Fortney to the next meeting, so it is important to them. Council member Clark stated that every Public Safety Committee meeting is public. Council member Tish has asked for the information from the meetings and was told it has to be brought to the Council meeting because if she wants it and someone else does not think it should be available to her that we need to vote as a Council to have it. She has asked for the information from anyone because she likes to be prepared when she comes to Council meetings. She has asked the City Clerk. Council member Tish has asked if the Public Safety Committee has reached out to any other first responding entity such as the Fire Department, to the hospital to see when it comes to first responding this problem is bigger than just the City Police Department. There is a problem in the Sheriff's Office with dispatching. She understands that she is not educated on everything, but it is a big problem that everyone needs to work together to solve. People do not know about these things because they do not hear dispatch. Council member Clark asked what this had to do with sustaining the City's Police Department as that is what we are here to discuss. Council member Tish stated that we needed to work with all the entities to come to a solution. Council member McLaughlin stated that they have been meeting as a new administration and a new Public Safety Committee since January and they have not met that often and they are just in the beginning stages of collecting data. Then when Officer Fortney was invited to the next meeting, then he turned in his resignation. Council member Tish stated she just thinks there are other opportunities to get feedback and input so that all the first responding entities can make it work.

Mayor Morlan stated that he would like to open the meeting up to the public for questions and comments. Council member Conrad stated that public input is comments. You can ask questions, but if one Council member answers that is not necessarily stating everyone else's opinion. Public input is for the public to state things to the Council, so the Council knows their opinion. Mayor Morlan stated that he had talked with the City Clerk about whether to do this under public input and the public gives their comments or is this done under discussion of the police department which means there will be some feedback. Council member Conrad stated that discussion is generally the Council's discussion. Council member Conrad stated that if he is asked a question and is allowed to answer he is going to be giving his opinion and not giving the City's opinion. And that goes for each Council member. That is the problem and why the Council does not give answers to questions during a Council meeting. If questions are asked and/or opinions given that is something that would be taken to the next Committee meeting. Mayor Morlan stated he would like to have public input and limit each speaker to four minutes. Council member Clark stated that the purpose of the meeting was to get the other Council members involved to help guide the Public Safety Committee. That is why Council member Clark wanted this meeting as well as public thoughts.

Council member Conrad, from Finance and experiences, yes, the City should be able to provide some type of Police Department whether that is one Police Chief . . . it is an infinite combination of 100% and 0%. It could be 100% Sheriff it could be 100% the City with nothing else. So do not think of it that it has to be one thing or the other. It could be a combination of services. There have been a lot of bad situations that we have had to deal with in the last year and a half to where it is not at the level it has been budgeted for. Council member Conrad, as Finance Chair, thinks the City can continue to provide roughly this amount as that is what we can do. It will go up as the property valuations go up. That could give more dollars. He is happy to do that. He thinks the thing is what can the City provide for services. He has seen, as Council member Clark stated, the people that have been hired while he has been a Council member and are lucky as Allan was a person that liked to be here. He had family here and his family grew up here. That gave him a reason to stay here. Council member Clark is here in law enforcement not necessarily with the City anymore, but he has a connection to the community. He thinks comparing the City wages to the Sheriff's Department so that the City is not just their training force, which is what he felt the City was for a while. People would come here and not be certified. Allan would set them up for their training. They have a contract with the officers. The City has lost people to several places, and we have to look at who is going to stay in this area. It does not cost as much to stay here as big cities. He would not agree to pay the rates of a bigger city as the expenses are not as high here. As far as what can be financed it can be any

combination. As the City builds up the Police Department we will still have to work with the Sheriff's Department. We try to find a happy blend. The Sheriff's Department can terminate their agreement with us, and the City can terminate the agreement with them in 30 days. It is not like the City is tied into the agreement and there is no flexibility. How long will it take to train an officer, 6 months minimum depending on when the cycle starts at the law enforcement academy. We have not had very many certified officers apply. We were lucky when Officer Fortney was certified, that was beneficial. But most employees were not certified and after being here, then they could go elsewhere and what most employers want is an employee that can hit the streets running. We can be a training facility and it means it is ongoing and we will have the same officers for four years. Maybe that is the realistic view for law enforcement for Sigourney. That is Council member Conrad's opinion. He does not know if we should be at three or at one. He is willing to do that, and he feels like the City has been handicapped for the last year and a half by other things that have happened and will be resolving themselves soon. Council member Clark stated that he thinks we have to look at sustaining a police department on our own and not guaranteeing or thinking the Sheriff's Office is always going to want to provide that coverage with us. Council member Conrad stated that he understood that, and he understands that the Sheriff's Office as a finite resource. Council member Conrad stated to Council member Tish that he agrees that this is about Sigourney tonight. He does know that he has been reached out to by any of those other entities, so he does not want to put it all on Sigourney for not reaching out to the ambulance or to the Sheriff. Tonight, we are talking about Sigourney's law enforcement issues.

Council member McLaughlin stated she would like to reenforce that we were not looking to dissolve the police department. We do appreciate and will probably never find another Allan Glandon. Looking at the numbers we have a lot of work to do, and it will take the whole Council to come together and find a workable solution that is best for our town. Council member Lentz stated the retention is her concern. As a Finance Committee member, she understood the numbers better tonight. Council member Tish stated she is incredibly thankful that we have law enforcement to respond to emergencies. She lives here with her kids, and she wants her kids to be able to go outside and ride their bikes. She will jump through hoops to help find a solution. Mayor Morlan stated they walk their dogs at night, and it is reassuring when you walk your dogs at 10:30 or 11:00 at night that the police department rolls by. We have not seen that for a while. He also knows there are business owners here that are very concerned for their employees. When they have to leave at the end of the night and they have a satchel full of money to take to the bank, it is reassuring to have police around.

Officer Fortney stated that he is not leaving at all because of money. He had every intention of staying here, being here, building here. His reason is purely the lack of communication. He stated he was entirely in the dark the last year and a half. He knows that at the last Council meeting he was reached out to, to come to the Committee meeting, but at that point, from his perspective, it had already been a year and a half of being in the dark and literally living month to month not being able to know his schedule until seven to ten days before the next month started. Not being asked for his own input, not being asked when he had provided a list to the Mayor in January of this year, a list of ideas to assist in filling those gaps with the resources we had. It can be easy to get resources, utilize the reserves more. We have individuals in this community, we have one that is a state certified reserve and as soon as he did a field training program could start working as a reserve. There are solutions and ideas that he wanted to bring to the table and did not get the opportunity. And that is why he is leaving. From his conversations with Derek Albert, he stayed between two and three years, it did not have anything to do with money at least not initially. Deana, not to speak for her, she left to be closer to family. It is not that money is always the answer whether it is a positive or negative reason. If he were police chief, he would not need \$75,000.00 to be here. If he were looking at a raise today, yes, he would take a raise, but he is taking a pay cut to go to Mahaska County and work in EMS full-time. The money had nothing to do with it. It has just been the environment that has been created over the last year and a half. And as he stated in his resignation letter, the last four months have been considerably better, but there was over a year of buildup prior to that, and he was already in burn out by the time Jimmy took office and it is really hard to build back from that. If things were to get figured out six months from now, he would entertain the idea of coming back. He would be more than happy to entertain that idea, but he wants to see some, as he told Jimmy in January, he was burned out and as long as he could see progress he would stick around. That was not given to him and in a meeting with Jimmy about a month ago he was told it did not look good. He has bills to pay and a family. He has to do what is right for him and knowing that he has a job longer than at a month at a time was more important to him than the paycheck he got every two weeks. That is why he turned in his resignation. It had nothing to do with what he was getting paid he was very happy with what he was getting paid.

Allan Glandon shared why he stayed as long as he did. It was not the money. Money was adequate. The State Fire Marshall's Service was recruiting him, but he did not go. He stayed because he felt valued. He felt the Mayor and Council all worked together and that he was part of the team. He felt valued. One of the greatest people to

do that was Pat (*Miletich*). She was phenomenal and made you feel like you were an important part of the team. He constantly tried to get the raises to go up because he knew there were other people that did not have roots here and were from other areas and they were going to go on. He kept trying to do that, but it was chasing a target that kept moving. There are definitely things you can do besides money. Make them part of the team, make them a valued employee, treat them well. It does not pay all the bills, but it helps retain. Allan Glandon stated that he is also a school board member and wanted the Public Safety Committee members to know what the school is doing. He knows Council member Iosbaker has been present at some of the meetings as well as Mallery (*Snakenberg*). They have a company called Sight Logic that is evaluating the facilities at the school. Isabelle (*Ireland*) was present. They discussed various things and took polls of what a wide range of those present thought about the school. Then at the end they had them evaluate what the priorities were. There were four things such as functional space, running environment, facility infrastructure and safety and security. They were asked to rate those. Number one priority with parents, teachers and school administrators was safety and security. Part of that equation is a police department.

Christie Iosbaker asked if there was a minimum age requirement to be a police officer in the City. Officer Fortney answered a minimum of eighteen with a GED in the State of Iowa. You can be hired before being eighteen, but you have to be eighteen before you start the academy.

Chelsea Branstad stated she would like to echo what Allan (*Glandon*) said. She does not know if any of the Council members own a business or employ anyone in a struggling industry, but she does. She has a very big issue with being able to retain employees. We can pay them six figures, pay all their insurance, time off, give them the blue sky, but if they are not happy and do not feel valued in their job, they will be gone. They pay for their continuing education, give them a vehicle to drive and give them ridiculous things to keep them there and if they are not happy there, they are not going to stay. What you do with that she does not know, and it would be worth getting some input from the people that have left to figure out why they left. The other thing she would say is the education. How do you guys pay for education and then the employee has to stick around for so many years. She has done something similar. She does agree with Council member Tish in that if there is a hostile situation, EMS cannot go in until the police are there. She asked if we were willing to withhold medical care in a situation because our deputies cannot arrive as they are on the other side of the county. If no one is there, she guesses that EMS just waits. She stated that the money can be found somewhere, and she is very confident in that. Council member Tish asked when it comes to hiring certified officers if they would get a bonus (historically) instead of sending them to training. Is there a difference or just a pay difference. Council member Conrad stated there is a pay range that is budgeted for. Experience can go into that. There is not a set rate, that if you have five years of experience this is the rate, but there is a range.

Rick Landgrebe does not think anyone has left for money. There are two City guys here that probably could have gone to work for the State. He is guessing they like the environment they are in. Maybe there is an issue with the Police Department that they do not like the environment they are in. The pay competing with the County makes sense, but it also cannot be the top because now the County has to compete with Washington. They have already lost two to Washington. It is tough as you can never touch that circle, but to get close makes sense. Yes, the pay has to be close to the County, but he does not believe that will always be the reason someone will leave their job.

Council member Clark stated we are not trying to compete with the County but use the pay raise to attract people here. There is nothing here to do. Council member Clark left because it was boring. He wanted to go out and do law enforcement work. He wanted to bust bad guys. He does not want to stop Mrs. Miletich for not wearing her seat belt or going five miles an hour over the speed limit. When you crack down on this town and get all the riffraff out, it becomes very boring. He could not do it anymore, so he went to the Sheriff's Office. Completely different time now. They are moving back into town. We need active police in town, we do not need to pay someone to drive around and do nothing. We need to keep the riffraff out. He is in favor of a police department, but not a warm body driving a police car doing absolutely nothing. An officer needs to be active.

Mike Leathers stated that is what every employer is doing right now – hiring warm bodies. His works stops around eastern Iowa and covers nineteen stores, the employee retention comes down to leadership. It is not so much the pay, he calls on a lot of fire departments, sheriff's offices and police officers. This is happening across the whole nation. The biggest thing why people leave is they do not feel valued. It is not just here, it is everywhere. What is really happening is society has changed, technology has changed. He believes there will be revenue because we do need law enforcement because of things that could come. People are sick and tired of dealing with people. That is the retention problem. That is plain and simple. How do we as citizens get along with

everybody. Everybody has bills to pay, we all have bills to pay. It is that everyone is loving and caring like waving to your neighbor. As neighbors we should help each other. If there is problem down the road, does he need to wait on law enforcement. He is going to step in and probably help if there is a problem. He should not do that, but that is just being a good citizen and it does not matter if it is in this town, Hedrick – he is going to stop and help somebody. We should all do that. It is in the heart. People think they are just going to walk right by it. The mind talks it out of the heart, but it cannot connect it to. He is here because his son is in the Criminal Justice program now and he wants to work for the City or the County. But he also wants to do bigger and better things. He wants to work for the State Patrol. He might want to be DCI or a US Marshall. Don Northup was on the police force at one time too. Allan (*Glandon*) being on the force was around kids. We need to worry about the kids. That is the one thing he has not heard about is the kids. If there is not a presence for the kids, we have nothing. Whether it is the police department, the sheriff's department, the state patrol, I think it is important that we touch every kid in this community. If we do not, we all know what the consequences can be, but that is not just the police department. That is not just the Sheriff's Department. It is all of us in here.

Karol Ireland asked Officer Fortney when he was done, and he replied Tuesday. She asked what the plan was after that for law enforcement. Council member Clark stated that we have the 28E Agreement in place with the Sheriff's Department. Ms. Ireland understands that is what we have right now. Council member Clark stated we would like to take steps to try to put an ad out. It is Public Safety Committee's belief that it is not their responsibility to hire a police department. It is their responsibility to hire a Police Chief and then get that person involved with building the department. It is not fair for the City to just take three people and hire them without the Chief having a say. But the thing that slowed the process is being told we cannot do anything until September because we could possibly be sued. Ms. Ireland stated that she came here tonight with the understanding that the decision was being made that there would be no police department. Her concern is with the Sheriff's Department, not that she does not trust the Sheriff's Department, but like today in Texas with the school shooting there are fourteen kids dead. How long would it take the Sheriff's Department to get to the school. An entire school could be shot. The Sheriff's Office covers the whole county so it could be any school in the county. Council member Clark stated we are not Des Moines and are not going to have officers to respond all the time right away. Ms. Ireland stated that is her concern and everybody's concern. There has to be a way to figure it out. There is no way the County can cover it all. Isabelle Ireland stated that schools have a police officer on a campus just because of the security and safety issue for a specific campus. She thinks it is scary especially just graduating high school that we are able to have one person to cover the whole City when some schools have one person to cover that campus.

Going back to the reserves, if a Sheriff's Deputy were on duty could a reserve be driving around Sigourney during that time. Council member Clark explained that no. He stated that the way we got around it when Allan (*Glandon*) was here as Chief was that he was always on duty, whether he was working or not. He was always around town, and you could call him for anything. On call was basically him there to work if needed for a \$1.00 an hour. You cannot take a reserve and put him in a shift if there is not anyone certified in this department working. The problem that arises now is you are probably not going to get anyone new that is willing to give up – you have to stay in town, you cannot drink any alcohol – you literally have to be at beck and call, and you are not going to get paid. Or if you are, you are going to get paid very minimal. What is the point of him doing that when he could just work.

Mayor Morlan stated that he understands what Council member Conrad was saying earlier and he is adjourning the meeting. If anyone wants to stay and continue to ask questions, you can do that for the public and any Council that wants to stay.

The meeting was adjourned by Mayor Morlan at 7:22 p.m.

Mallary Snakenberg stated she worked for the City for seven years. She is not sure if Mayor Morlan remembers or not, but there was a year and a half that she was here, and she is not even sure he knows who she was. She worked for the City Clerk's Office for several years and then transferred over to the Police Department. She came here tonight as she is very passionate about our City. She came here and did not get paid very much, she started out around \$8.00. When she first came it was for \$8.00 and she worked her heart out and she loves our town. She loves our City. She now through her own business tries to get people to come into our town. She loves it and is passionate about it. It is a great thing. She thinks our Police Department is a huge aspect of that. She grew up here and felt safe. While she is out and about with her kids, she wants the same thing for them. She wants them to be able to wave at an officer and see an officer pull a high school kid over and be "oh crap" I better not rev my engine up. She was under the same impression when she came here tonight that maybe the police department was going to be dissolved and she was heartbroken. She is very happy to see as a City employee for years, she has been on the back end when someone comes in all angry and does not know what is going on.

That is why she is here. She does not live in town and thought maybe she should not, but she wants to be informed and know what is going on. But like other people said here tonight I think that dollars and funds have always been an issue. She has seen the crunch of the General Fund and has seen the back end of budget planning and trying to stick to that. The City does an awesome job of doing those things. But she does think the value of the employee should come at a high priority level and that comes with the Council. There are some of you that were on the Council when I was here too, and I just knew of you through the meetings. I never saw you face to face in my office. You did not ever ask me as an employee how I felt about things or what was going on. You are in charge of our town and have a big responsibility. She values the Council so greatly for doing these positions, but one thing Allan always said to her was I can give you lots of praise, but no raise. That is something that she transferred into her own business. She has learned to put as much value as she can into the people that work for her. That is crucial. That can be a big benefit when it comes to retaining an officer here and retaining the staff in general. It is an awesome place, the people that actually work in these offices are so much fun to work with and it is a great community. She left at the time Allan was retiring and she was seeing a turnover in administration, and she was nervous for her future. Now looking at things she is saying "on my gosh" and "thank God" I did not stick it out. Where would I be, what would be going on, what would she be dealing with. My stress as an employee would be through the roof. She thinks how you treat your staff and employees and the people underneath you are super important to see value as well as if you can get those dollars up would be awesome to try to be a little more competitive with the rest of the area around us. But all in all, the people that come here and work here are people that have stayed here for years. They want to be a part of the community. It is there, we just have to find it. Mayor Morlan stated that since he has been on the Council for five and a half years, they passed the budget, but he cannot say that he understood it. But the City has Council member Conrad that is an expert on it and Angie is also. He thinks we can sharpen our pencils and find a little bit of money here and there to help out with the situation. Mallary agreed after seeing the backend of things she thinks there is some spending that can be cut even with the police department. Once in a while she thinks there is some spending that could be cut down and trimmed up and it could happen. Allan Glandon stated that they never did spend their whole budget. Mayor Morlan stated that had been talked about.

Mike Leathers stated that he has worked in Pella quite a bit and gotten to know a lot of officers over there and they have a turn around right now. Pella is a wonderful community too. There are a lot of dollars over there. He asked one why he left. The Officer stated that he could deal with a domestic, OWI, drug charges. But the one thing he could not deal with was the internal people. Allan Glandon said "Amen." Then he talked with Marvin Van Donslaar, who is a retired Marion County Sheriff. They were talking about law enforcement and Marion County has quite a few funds. Mr. Van Donslaar stated the reason why they leave is they cannot get along with someone else. They pay pretty good. The City of Pella pays pretty good. He has been a lot of places and it all comes down to retention. There is not the leadership showing compassionate leadership. The "I care," "Thank you," "great job," "how is your family, your kids". That is the thing all these people are missing and that's why people are getting sick and tired of people, because there is not that compassion. It is no matter whether it is the Sheriff's Department or Police Department as long as there is a presence. That way we care about everybody. But we have to be in front and grow together. The funds can come from anywhere, donations, anywhere – there are grants. There is always something out there to make money. We just have to work together.

Chelsea Branstad stated she is not familiar with the contract with the County, what exactly does that do for the City. Do we always have someone patrolling. Mayor Morlan stated it is a 28E Agreement and if he remembers right, they are limited to eighty hours a month patrolling in Sigourney. Sheriff's Deputy Pence stated no it was eighty hours a week, but it was changed. City Clerk Alderson stated it was changed to \$150,000.00 per year. Deputy Pence stated that basically they respond to calls when needed and when they are free, they patrol the City of Sigourney, and the County gets paid. Mayor Morlan stated that it has been pointed out to him that the Sheriff's Department always has someone in the office during the day, so if there is some kind of emergency call, they can be there in minutes. But it is at night that there is one or two officer for the whole county and that is where a police department would be of value.

Mike Leathers stated we could all sit there and point fingers, but when comes to retention, social media is not helping anybody. It is not helping with people like you guys and the police. It is not all about the dollars. In a lot of Community Colleges their enrollment is dropping. Look at the Iowa State Patrol, their recruits are dropping. It is not just funds and not just here. Mayor Morlan stated society as whole is not as caring and concerned as it has been in the past. Mike Leathers stated how do we adapt to that environment.

Allan Glandon stated that before he retired, he offered to help the City with anything he could help with as a volunteer. When he retired, he repeated that. And he repeated it last year and again this year. And now is

repeating it again. All new Council members now are aware that I did make that offer many times. Council member Iosbaker thanked Allan and Mayor Morlan stated we would be talking to him.

Mike Leathers stated that his wife gets a lot of phone calls. There have been a lot of people that want to move out of state to different cities because of lack of police, lack of law enforcement and political things. The biggest thing she gets questioned on is what kind of law enforcement do you have. It does not matter if it is City Police, County Sheriff's Department – it is whether there is a presence. Yes, there is a presence and that is what they want to hear to draw people in. It does not matter who.

Pat Miletich stated it is called a quality of life. How important or valuable is the quality of life we have created here. Keep that in mind. Council member McLaughlin thanked everyone for coming.

Jimmy Morlan, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Angela K. Alderson, City Clerk