



**Meeting Minutes of the  
BOARD OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

**January 5, 2023**

**6:30 pm**

**A Hybrid meeting Via Zoom and at City Hall Council Chambers**

**16860 Main Street**

**APPROVED**

**Committee Members in Attendance:**

Marshal Jeffrey Bader  
Board Member Christopher Preston  
Board Member Vince Loyal  
Board Member Kevin Gleason  
Council Member Liaison Dave Bertolino  
Police Liaison Captain James Mundel, St. Louis County Police

**Also Present:**

Rick Brown, Director of Public Works  
Steve Cross, City Administrator

**Absent:**

John Bradley, Assistant Chief of the Metro Fire District

**I. ROLL CALL**

A roll call was taken at 6:30 pm, with the above noted as present.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. Kevin Gleason made a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting held on October 13, 2022. Chris Preston seconded the motion. All Board Members voted in favor and the minutes were approved.

**III. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Marshall Bader reviewed the guidelines for Public Participation and Public Hearing Procedures.

Larry McGinnes of Ward 3 voiced concerns about the safety of a local outdoor shooting range, and spoke in favor of revising gun regulations to increase separation between neighborhoods and allowable shooting areas.

Sharon Delmore of Ward 3 supported the statements made by Larry McGinnes

Joe Delmore of Ward 3 voiced concerns about a local outdoor shooting range, concerns for safety and spoke in favor of revising gun regulations to increase separation between neighborhoods and allowable shooting areas.

Sara Bryant agreed with the people in public comment who spoke before her and stated that the incidents that have occurred might also be a much more serious private issue between neighbors. As a gun owner she does not want gun rights taken away because of the actions of one resident. If regulations must be changed, changing it for the betterment of all is her preference.

Chris Von Gruben agreed with most of the public comments that came before him and that the shooting area distance regulations need to be changed. He stated that every time the gunfire begins, he must bring the grandchildren inside, and that there was shooting after 9:00 pm at the range on New Year's Eve.

Rob Knoll admitted to not be aware of the specifics of the current issue, but voiced concerns that changing gun regulations due to one incident might be overreach. He added that many Wildwood residents have personal shooting ranges on their properties and have safely used them without incident for many years. He is in favor of keeping the current ordinance, handling this incident separately, and thinks changes in their current regulations will eliminate most Wildwood residents from being able to use their personal ranges.

Alan Blair of Ward 3 lives near the gun range and stated that it has been stressful for 6 months. He spoke in favor of revising gun regulations to increase separation between residence and allowable shooting areas.

David Followell of Ward 3 voiced complaints about the nearby gun range, complained about bullets in his back deck, bullets whizzing through the trees, and the lack of respect for neighbors when firing excessive gun fire of automatic weapons on a regular basis. He stated that it only takes one bullet for something to happen to someone.

Lisa Shirley of Ward 3, mentioned that she is a responsible gun owner and lives next to the gun range. She explained that she purchased her property two years ago, with the intent of allowing their children a space to play outside. She expressed frustration that for the last 5 months ordinances were ignored by the owner of the gun range, and that they were not enforced by the City and the police, and that she has worried for her children's safety. She is requesting that the ordinance be revised to include the protection of private playgrounds and the protection of property, not just a residence. People cannot be expected to stay in their residence because a neighbor decides to discharge gun fire. Residents should be able to use their property and be deemed worthy of protection. She suggested to increase the distance to discharging a weapon to 400 yards from playgrounds and personal property. She also suggested that semi-automatic weapons and fully automatic weapons only be discharged in a city approved indoor firing range. She said that no one should have to go through what her neighborhood has gone through for the last five months for the city to enforce ordinance.

William Shirley of Ward 3 thanked the City for recent action taken and acknowledged the verbal promise, of the gun range owner, to their neighborhood, to stop shooting. He stated that his goal is to work together with the City to prevent this from happening in any neighborhood in Wildwood ever again. He explained various problems with the gun range, many regarding the issue of weapons fired while children are in the back yard. He expressed concern that the City approved Mid-America Fire Arms as a business even though it was not a primary residence. He expressed concerns about the inadequacies of the current gun regulations regarding its relation to the current definition of playground. He asked that the City look to neighboring cities for gun regulations. He added that he is a gun owner and does not look to change the second amendment but would like to strike a balance, that would be his preference.

Chris Crawford declined to comment but provided a comment card.

Reverend Mark Smith says that he is a resident of Town and Country but serves as Pastor at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Ward 3. He is a strong advocate of the second amendment but is concerned about the safety and the noise during church services and programs. The congregation is considering starting a pre-k program but is concerned of the impact the gunfire would have on youth education at the church. Please keep the shooting range well out of Ward 3.

Charles St. Onge is a gun owner and agrees with everything the pastor said before him. He stated that law enforcement is here to protect our lives and mentioned that law enforcement stated that "nothing has happened yet". It only takes one bullet, and it could be a child or himself, or his friends, or people at the church.

Maria Gabriella Chavez described a previous living situation that was publicly violent. They moved to Wildwood because it is safe and beautiful, and she loves her neighbors. She is conscious of her neighbors when there is noise, and she hopes her neighbors will do the same. She does not feel that this issue can be solved among neighbors and is asking the City to consider the safety of all the people involved. She is in favor of changing the gun regulations so that they are clear enough so that people know when they are breaking the law.

Andy Arett lives 1,000 feet away from the shooting range. He played an audio of an automatic weapon firing. He noted that when his three children hear that sound, they know to come inside.

Amanda Brand is a real estate agent in West County and wanted to bring that perspective. She has helped a lot of families who have bought houses here and love Wildwood. She believes that this shooting range is going to affect property values. They love that they can have larger yards here and they love the parks. She now feels that she cannot go to her friend's house anymore because she is concerned with her children's safety.

Marshal Jeff Bader thanked everyone for their comments and for being respectful of everyone's time and commended the group for the way they conducted public comment.

Board Member Vince Loyal had his hand up during Public Comment. He addressed the Marshall and noted that statements made in public comment were worthy of attention and that he hopes to become more informed and to support their issues.

**IV. FOR INFORMATION**

- A. No Items

**V. OLD BUSINESS**

- A. Board Member Vince Loyal brought up a discussion from the October meeting to as police if they had spoken to private schools in Wildwood regarding their safety and intruder policies. Captain Mundel responded that the police have contacted private schools regarding their safety policies.
- B. Board Member Vince Loyal asked if the annual crash report from 2021 is now available. Captain Mundel responded that it is now on the website.

**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Discuss Modifications to Firearms regulations.  
Marshall Bader explained that the Board will discuss all information that was given to them regarding this issue in public comment and that they will make recommendations to the Council based on the best interests of everyone in the City.
- B. Council Member Liaison Dave Bertolino asked the City Administrator as to the steps for making changes to Firearms regulations.  
The City Administrator responded that the City Staff recognizes that it is time to review the firearms ordinances which may be outdated. Distances, types of weapons, time of day, etc. will be taken into consideration. The current ordinance will be emailed to the Board so that it can be reviewed and discussed at the next meeting.  
Dave Bertolino asked for information regarding the City Attorney's opinion, and the ordinances of surrounding communities. No motion was required.

**VII. MISCELLANEOUS**

- A. No items

**VIII. NEXT MEETING**

Thursday, February 2, 2023, at 6:30 pm in person

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Board Member Christopher Preston motioned to adjourn. Board Member Kevin Gleason seconded the motion. All members voted aye, and the meeting adjourned at 7: 19 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Scherer

Administrative Assistant for Public Works