



PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE & COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HYBRID MEETING

Monday, April 15, 2024, at 5:00 PM

Snoqualmie City Hall, 38624 SE River Street & Zoom

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair: Rob Wotton

Councilmembers: Cara Christensen and Catherine Cotton

This meeting will be conducted in person and remotely using teleconferencing technology provided by Zoom.

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CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

AGENDA APPROVAL

PUBLIC COMMENTS

MINUTES

1. Approval of the minutes dated April 1, 2024.

AGENDA BILLS

2. **AB24-015:** Ordinance Relating to the Misuse of Emergency Response System

DISCUSSION

3. Public Safety Committee Priorities Review

NEW BUSINESS

ITEMS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

ADJOURNMENT



PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE REGULAR HYBRID MEETING MINUTES

April 1, 2024

This meeting was conducted in person and remotely using teleconferencing technology provided by Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

Chair Wotton called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

Committee Members: Councilmembers Rob Wotton, Cara Christensen, and Catherine Cotton.

Mayor Katherine Ross and Councilmember Bryan Holloway were also present.

City Staff:

Mike Chambless, City Administrator; Brian Lynch, Police Chief; Mike Bailey, Fire Chief; Deana Dean, City Clerk; and Jimmie Betts, IT Support.

AGENDA APPROVAL: The agenda was approved as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no public comments.

MINUTES

1. The minutes dated March 18, 2024, were approved as presented.

AGENDA BILLS: There were no agenda bills.

DISCUSSION:

2. Community Risk Assessment/Standard of Cover presentation provided by Chief Mike Bailey. Discussion followed. This item will be brought to Council after the accreditation site visit which is scheduled April 21-25, 2024.
3. Strategic Plan update and Deputy Chief position update. Chief Bailey indicated the department is moving ahead with the fire department strategic plan to be completed through Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) and scheduled for July 22-25, 2024. Chief Bailey noted the Deputy Fire Chief position has been posted, closing on April 15, 2024. Councilmember Cotton noted she would be available as a panelist.

NEW BUSINESS: There was no new business.

ITEMS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION: No items were noted.

ADJOURNMENT - The meeting was adjourned at 5:44 pm.

Minutes taken by Deana Dean, City Clerk.

Recorded meeting audio is available on the City website after the meeting.

Minutes approved at the _____ Public Safety Committee Meeting



BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OF SNOQUALMIE

AB24-015
April 22, 2024
Ordinance

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB24-015: Misuse of the 911 Response System	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
PROPOSED ACTION:	Adopt Ordinance No. xxxx in order to hold suspects criminally accountable for their actions by creating a misdemeanor level offense.	

REVIEW:	Department Director	Brian Lynch	4/1/2024
	Finance	n/a	Click or tap to enter a date.
	Legal	Outside Counsel	4/3/2024
	City Administrator	Mike Chambless	4/8/2024

DEPARTMENT:	Police		
STAFF:	Brian Lynch, Police Chief		
COMMITTEE:	Public Safety	COMMITTEE DATE: April 15, 2024	
EXHIBITS:	1. Draft Ordinance No. xxxx		

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ n/a
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ n/a
APPROPRIATION REQUESTED	\$ n/a

SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

This proposed ordinance is intended to reduce the number of false requests for emergency services or misuse of the 911 emergency response system which occurs within the City of Snoqualmie, threatening public and officer safety, and resulting in the waste of city resources. This ordinance would hold violators criminally responsible for their actions.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The Revised Code of Washington (RCW) allows prosecution for false reporting where the false information is made that the caller knowingly causes the evacuation of a building, place of assembly, or transportation facility; causes public inconvenience or alarm; or an emergency response to take place.

It also allows for prosecution for telephone harassment but is limited to situations in which the caller is contacting or attempting to contact a specific person to harass, torment or embarrass that person.

BACKGROUND

The Snoqualmie Police Department contracts 911 services with the Issaquah Police 911 Center. That 911 Center is experiencing a high number of repeated harassing phone calls on the non-emergency line, as well as the actual 911 line, from citizens that are not reporting an emergency, nor are they reporting new information for a previously reported incident. One citizen has called the Issaquah 911 Center 264 times since January of 2023 (2023 = 115 calls and 2024 = 149 in just the first three months of the year). This caller usually calls the non-emergency line, but recently has resorted to calling the 911 line directly. Their calls come in clusters, such as the twelve calls in fifteen minutes that occurred on March 21, 2024.

Currently, this caller can never be charged criminally, or held accountable for their actions under the Revised Code of Washington. The need for an ordinance that contains language specifically addressing the misuse of the 911 system is needed as a matter of public safety.

ANALYSIS

Approval of this ordinance would allow the Snoqualmie Police Department to deter any further abuse and misuse of our 911 system. This ordinance does allow for any citizen to continue to use the 911 system as it was intended to be used.

BUDGET IMPACTS

There are no budget impacts.

NEXT STEPS**PROPOSED ACTION**

April 22, 2024: First Reading of Ordinance No. xxxx Misuse of the 911 Response System.

May 13, 2024: Second Reading of Ordinance No. xxxx. Move to adopt Ordinance No. xxxx Misuse of the 911 Response System.

ORDINANCE NO. XXXX

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SNOQUALMIE, WASHINGTON, CREATING A NEW SECTION OF THE SNOQUALMIE MUNICIPAL CODE WITHIN TITLE 9, RELATING TO THE MISUSE OF THE EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEM; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the City of Snoqualmie utilizes the Issaquah Police Communications 911 Center as its communication and dispatch center to provide emergency assistance to the residents of the City of Snoqualmie; and

WHEREAS, it is potentially a danger and misuse of public resources when individuals call the emergency communication system when no emergency exists, using time and resources of the communication center and Snoqualmie and Issaquah Police; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined it is in the best interest of the City to adopt a new section to its criminal code to prohibit misuse of the 911 emergency response system;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Snoqualmie, Washington, as follows:

Section 1. A new section 9.88 of the Snoqualmie Municipal Code is hereby adopted to read as follows:

Chapter 9.88

Misuse of the 911 Emergency Response System

9.88.010 Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is intended to reduce the number of false requests for emergency services or similar misuse of the 911 emergency response system, which occurs within the city and results in the waste of city resources, by providing a criminal penalty for violators, and imposing an administrative fee.

A. A person commits the crime of Misuse of the 911 Emergency Response System if the person knowingly:

1. Makes repeated non-emergency calls, irrespective of the duration of time between the calls, to the Issaquah Police Communications center or Snoqualmie Police non-emergency line for a purpose other than (a) to report a situation that the person reasonably believes requires prompt service in order to preserve human life or property or, (b) to report new information in an active investigation. Repeated calls include, but are not limited to, the repeated reporting of incidents, without providing new information, which have already been reported, repeated requests to speak to specific officers, or the harassment of specific officers using rude, lewd, or threatening language; or
2. Makes an emergency call or calls to the Issaquah Police Communications 911 Center for a purpose other than to report a situation that the person reasonably believes requires prompt service in order to preserve human life or property; or
3. Allows another person to use communications equipment owned, rented, or leased by or under the control of the person to make an emergency call or calls to the Issaquah Police Communications 911 Center for a purpose other than to report a situation that the other person reasonably believes requires prompt service in order to preserve human life or property.

9.88.020 Definition:

- A. "Misuse of the 911 system" is a request for emergency response services when no actual emergency exists, and when the caller does not have a good faith basis to request emergency assistance. This includes, but is not limited to, repeated calls, continuous

calls, and harassing calls to 911 when no emergency exists. This chapter shall not be applicable to mechanical actions of requests for assistance, nor shall it be interpreted to impose liability on any person who makes a good faith request for emergency assistance base on a reasonable, factual basis that an emergency situation exists.

- B. “Person” means and includes any natural person, partnership, joint stock company, or corporation of any character whatsoever.

9.88.030 Penalties.

Unless otherwise provided in this chapter, any person violating any provision of this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, be sentenced to a fine not to exceed \$1,000 and/or 90 days in jail.

9.88.040 Imposition of Fees.

In addition to any criminal penalty, the city may impose administrative sanctions up to five hundred dollars per incident at the request of the 911 emergency response agency upon any misuse of the 911 emergency response system.

Section 2. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect five days after its passage and publication, as provided by law.

Section 3. Severability. If any portion of this ordinance is found to be invalid or unenforceable for any reason, such finding shall not affect the validity or enforceability of any other section of this ordinance.

Section 4. Corrections by the City Clerk or Code Reviser. Upon approval of the City Attorney, the City Clerk and Code Reviser are authorized to make necessary corrections to this ordinance, including the correction of clerical errors; references to other local, state or federal laws, codes, rules, or regulations, or ordinance numbering and section/subsection numbering.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Snoqualmie, Washington this ____ day of
May 2024.

Katherine Ross, Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Deana Dean, City Clerk

David Linehan, Interim City Attorney