

**City of Washington**  
**Public Safety Committee Meeting**  
**January 11, 2021**

Chairman Butler called the meeting to order at 5:09 PM via [Zoom Online Meeting 898 1472 0975](#)

**Voting Members present on Zoom Meeting:**

Chairman Brian Butler, Alderman Todd Yoder and Alderman John Blundy

**Other Officials present on Zoom Meeting:**

City Administrator-Ray Forsythe; Chief Michael McCoy, Deputy Chief Jeff Stevens, Fire Chief Brett Brown, Asst. Fire Chief, Jeremy Doerr, Aldermen Cobb, Alderman Stevens, City Engineer, Dennis Carr and WPD Admin Assistant, Linda Storer

**1. Non-Member Alderman wishing to be heard on a non-agenda item**

Alderman Stevens asked when the license plate readers were going to be tested on a trail basis? DC Stevens informed her that they have not been installed and WPD is still in discussion with vendor. PD will report the 60-day trial period to the Committee.

Alderman Stevens stated there is a traffic problem on Devonshire Road & Westgate. It is used by many motorists who speed through the neighborhood and don't stop for stop signs. She has researched prior meeting minutes and knows that this issue has been brought up before to the Committee. Would like to work out some sort of plan. She obtained a copy of Peoria's Traffic Calming Plan.

**2. Citizens wishing to be heard on a non-agenda item**

A letter from Romanie Lehman was read to the Committee regarding issues with the traffic problems on Devonshire and Westgate. It is attached.

The Committee and PD discussed the elements contained in the letter. Chief McCoy noted the PD would like an additional speed limit sign on southbound Westgate between Devonshire and Chelsea Place.

Chairman Butler is familiar with the area. He went and watched traffic the other day and noted that there were probably 100 cars that went through Devonshire and Westgate within a half hour. He is very familiar with this area and stated it is a collector street which is a "hot spot" for traffic. He also stated that the street layout isn't the greatest but that the City doesn't have very many options with its configuration because of private property and the park district.

Chief McCoy ran radar for 2 hours in this location and most motorists were traveling about 27mph. While a lot of traffic, most were not speeding. Historical

speed trailer results place the 85th percentile speeds generally within 5mph of the limit.

### **3. Approval of Minutes from December 21, 2020.**

A motion for approval by Chairman Butler; Motion to approve by Alderman Blundy and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman Yoder.

### **4. Business Items**

#### **A. Budget Overview/Staffing**

Police Department is seeking authorization for two additional police officers.

A civilian will be retiring this year.

Capital Accumulation: P25 radios, HVAC system repair of approximately \$30,000 will be a capital item if we don't repair it this fiscal year. Dealing with the evidence building. There are holes in the walls and it is not climate-controlled which is not good for the storage of evidence.

MERF funds for Car #7 which is due to be replaced along with the Tahoe.

Another newer concept is leasing vehicles. This is going to be explored.

WPD will present all of the above topics in a more detailed written outline. It will be sent to the Committee.

#### **B. SRO Contract Renewal**

Will add 2.5% to contract as this is the raise all patrol officers received with their new contract.

#### **C. Liquor license Class Consideration**

WPD is working to streamline the number of liquor license classifications. They advised the Committee that they have procedural questions with placing businesses within certain classes.

Committee would like a list of the current license vs proposed consolidated licenses to better direct the PD with final draft recommendation.

**D. Police Department Update**

Interview date for police officer applicants is scheduled for Friday, January 15, 2021.

There are not any new cases of COVID within the department.

The end of year report was submitted via email earlier this month.

**E. Fire Department Update**

Chief Brown advised the Committee that all things are going very well as it relates to the second ambulance stationed at NTFD building. They have almost finished updating one of their ambulance and will determine if the other one is worth updating. Since December 1st, 2020, WFD has operated in the both stations and the calls for service have gone really well. Fewer times that mutual aid has had to be called to cover.

Chief McCoy wanted to thank Jim Campbell again for all of his help in getting this done.

**5. Other Business**

None

**6. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn made by Chairman Butler, Alderman Yoder motioned and Alderman Blundy 2nd. Adjourned at 5:52pm.

OK  
MDM

## READ FOR PUBLIC COMMENT 1/11/2021

To the Public Safety Committee-

I emailed last month prior to the previous public safety meeting to bring attention to a known speeding issue on Devonshire and Westgate. We moved into one of the corner houses in February 2020 and quickly realized this summer that there is a chronic speeding issue on both of these streets. Although these streets cut through residential neighborhoods, they are used most often as a throughway to get from one side of town to another and there are limited speeding reminders or traffic slowing tools used on either street. I will not have you reread the email containing my original concerns and also some suggestions. Instead it is attached in a word document below.

Today I am emailing again to bring this issue to your attention as on January 4th, 2021 after asking politely a neighbor to slow down, he threatened me with a large hunting knife. I was shoveling snow on my sidewalk with my 3 year old girl and a grown man threatened me with a hunting knife over speeding in a neighborhood. In Washington, IL. This man lives 2 blocks away from me (not on Devonshire or Westgate but a side road that does not deal with the constant speeding traffic like my neighbors who share these streets do). There is a police report if you need to corroborate my story.

This absolutely cannot continue. This is a known problem, there have been multiple complaints from multiple neighbors as well as the previous owner of this house. It is certainly not my job to remind drivers to slow down and it is absolutely NOT ok be threatened with a knife secondary to this chronic and unsustainable issue.

This week it is a respectful female citizen being threatened by an armed grown man, tomorrow it may involve a gun or next summer God forbid a child is struck on his or her way to Washington Park, school, friend's house or the public pool and pays with their life for something preventable that has been raised over and over again to this committee and other overseeing bodies of government.

Enough is enough.

Thank you for your time and especially your sincere consideration in this matter

Romanie Lehman

# Submitted for public comment To be read 2-11-2021

My husband and I recently moved to Washington IL and purchased a home on the corner of Westgate and Devonshire. We love our new home and the community and look forward to being able to engage more fully in the future once this pandemic is improved.

I am emailing you today in hopes to address what I have come to understand is a common and long-standing issue with speeding on Westgate and Devonshire. These two streets are in the thick of a family neighborhood and adjoining Washington park as well as the public pool. We live on the corner of the T intersection between these two streets. Many children walk to and from school as well as to the park using these 2 main streets. I myself have a young toddler who is constantly playing outside, my neighbor across the street have a baby girl and 2 toddler boys that are often playing outside as well. I hate to think that we do nothing and one day come to devastatingly regret it when we lose one of our children to a preventable speeding issue. I understand this corner is an important connector despite being in a quiet family neighborhood, but we can do things to prevent a disaster in the future. According to American Journal of Public safety; Traffic calming has proven far more effective in preventing child pedestrian injuries than road safety education, which has been "unable to exert meaningful changes in the behavior of children". The current speed limit of 25 mph is completely reasonable, we are facing more of an issue with compliance.

We also need to keep in mind the snowplows that need to be able to work efficiently during the winter months and my proposals have taken this into account.

Here are several suggestions to increase that compliance without obstructing the snowplows. The city may even consider combining several of these suggestions.

- Speed bumps/Speed tables on Westgate (especially before the turn and crosswalk to go to park as well as around the level of the public pool where the presence of children is more likely) and Devonshire as well. The American Journal of Public Health found that children who live within a block of a speed hump have significantly lower odds of being struck by a vehicle. The Journal also found a 53-60% reduction in the odds of injury or death for children with traffic calming in their neighborhoods. Not only would this reduce speed in the neighborhood, but this option may also encourage people to use Main street and Peoria street instead of cutting through a family neighborhood. It would also increase the visibility of our local businesses to people driving through, which would be a great thing for our local business owners. An FHWA study on speed reduction found that the 85th percentile speed was reduced by an average of 18% with speed humps, 19% with speed cushions, and 18% with speed tables.

- Lane narrowing. This could be done with a highly visible bike lane or planters (the latter is trickier for snowplows but can be removed during winter months). I know this is one of the tricks my neighbors have been using to slow traffic for the past several years. They explained to my husband that they park their cars in a certain way to make cars driving down the street slalom from one side to the other and stop if an oncoming car is coming. We could expand on that without having to use our cars and have the city provide safer, better options instead. I know I prefer to keep my car in the garage myself. This again would also encourage people to use the business route more (Main street) and would increase the local business visibility. Bollards could be used as well especially around crosswalks (more on those below).

- More regular speed sign/slow down sign with radar. A landmark study from Bellevue, WA which concluded that "At the majority of radar sign locations, results show an overall reduction of vehicle speeds between 1 and 6 mph, even up to 8 years after the signs were installed. Due to this level of

effectiveness, the City will continue to use stationary radar signs..... to address vehicles speeds and/or..... motorist's attention....."

Research quoted in Wired Magazine found that radar speed signs "have proven to be consistently effective at getting drivers to slow down- reducing speeds by about 10%, an effect that lasts for several miles down the road."

- An increase in the number of crosswalks. These would also serve as reminders for motorists to slow down. One or two by the pool on Westgate and a couple on Devonshire would be ideal. These could be combined with a number of other traffic slowing tools:

- Rumble strips (careful, some are noisy so research would have to be done to get the ones that do not increase noise. Rumble bumps/strips are shown to slow traffic down by 8.9%.)
- Bright paint as a visual reminder to slow
- Bollards (some are removal for the winter months) on the edges that narrow the street at the location of the cross walks.

Just some thoughts and ideas. Obviously, there are a lot of options with a wide range of cost. From the little time I have been here it has come clear to me that this is a chronic issue that multiple city constituents have raised and would like this to be addressed.

Please let me know what the next steps would be to making a change and helping keep our children safe while playing in their neighborhood and going to the park or walking to school!

Thank you for your time and assistance with this matter

Romanie and Joey Lehman

Sources:

wikipedia page on "traffic calming" for some other ideas - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Traffic\\_calming](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Traffic_calming)  
[https://trafficlogix.com/how-traffic-calming-works/?gclid=CjwKCAiAINf-BRB\\_EiwA2osbxboVuZtZxsiLZ-XJpwsEX7FuZifdsWxBxW4Q8eNSZw1rqLSjZfoCDRoCUTlQAvD\\_BwE#Overview](https://trafficlogix.com/how-traffic-calming-works/?gclid=CjwKCAiAINf-BRB_EiwA2osbxboVuZtZxsiLZ-XJpwsEX7FuZifdsWxBxW4Q8eNSZw1rqLSjZfoCDRoCUTlQAvD_BwE#Overview)

<https://www.ite.org/pub/?id=e271b7f3%2D2354%2Dd714%2D518b%2D58ef17953fd3>