



## Police and Fire Commission Meeting Minutes – January 13, 2021

ABSTRACT/SYNOPSIS OF THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE OFFICIAL ACTIONS OF THE POLICE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WHITEWATER, WALWORTH AND JEFFERSON COUNTIES, WISCONSIN

Audio of this meeting can be accessed on the City of Whitewater web site at <http://www.whitewater-wi.gov/AgendaCenter>

- I. Call to Order, Roll Call – Commission President Glenn Hayes called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Members present: Glenn Hayes, Jerry Grant, Beverly Stone, Mwita Binagi

Members absent: None

Also present: Chief Aaron Raap and Support Services Manager Sabrina Ojibway

- II. Approval of Minutes from September 9, 2020 – On a motion by Grant with a second by Binagi the minutes were approved by a voice vote.

AYES: Hayes, Grant, Binagi

NOES: None

ABSTAINED: Stone

ABSENT: None

- III. Citizen Comments - Hayes read the following disclaimer: *“No formal Police Commission action will be taken during this meeting although issues raised may become part of a future agenda. Participants are allotted a three to five minute speaking period. Specific items listed on the agenda may not be discussed at this time; however citizens may speak to those issues at the time the Police Commission discusses that particular item.”*

There were no citizen comments.

#### IV. New Business

##### A. Chief’s Report

##### 1. Personnel Updates:

- a. For the first time in seven years, the Whitewater Police Department is fully staffed (both sworn and civilian) with no sworn member departures in nearly one year.
- b. In April of last year, then School Resource Officer Shane Brandl, currently Detective Lieutenant Brandl, left our country on a military deployment. This leave of absence goes through April of this year. Officer Michele Martin was selected and is currently assigned as the School Resource Officer.
- c. Community Service Officer Kyle Casasola, who is a student at UW-Whitewater studying criminology, is among the scholarship recipients receiving financial awards for the 2020-2021 academic year. Kyle was awarded the Amos Malone Criminology Scholarship Fund.

- d. This past November, Chief Aaron Raap was elected to serve a two-year term as the president of the Walworth County Executive Law Enforcement Association. This term began on January 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - e. Whitewater Police Department became eligible to apply for grants from the U.S. Department of Justice’s Discretionary Fund for the next three years. This is due to having met the standards necessary with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) for use-of-force standards. These discretionary grants will only be allocated to law enforcement agencies that meet certain standards from independent credentialing bodies.
2. Miscellaneous Personnel Training Update:
- a. Due to the ongoing pandemic, in-person training has been scaled back. However, a number of officers, along with a few dispatchers, were able to attend the following trainings: Crisis Intervention training, Nighttime Firearms training for sworn personnel, Special Events Team (SET) training with Walworth County law enforcement partners, Crimes in Progress for Dispatchers training, Police K-9 training, Investigating and Interpreting Video Recorded Use of Force Incidents attended by command staff members, Crime Prevention training, Peer Support training, Drug Trends and Investigative Techniques training, First Aid and Blood Borne Pathogens training for all sworn members, Interview and Interrogation training and Tactical Emergency Care training.
3. 2021 Police Department Budget Update:
- a. The Whitewater Police Department remained within their 2020 Operational Budget. The Whitewater Police Department came in under budget in their 2020 Personnel Budget due to vacancies at the beginning of 2020 and the Detective Lieutenant being off payroll due to his military leave of absence.
  - b. Chief Raap expressed appreciation that for 2021, the City Manager, Finance Committee and Common Council did not make any cuts to the Personnel Budget. However, the Operational Budget did receive a cut. Chief Raap noted that it is more common among law enforcement agencies of all sizes that 90% of a police department budget should be allocated to personnel, leaving 10% for operational costs. Whitewater Police Department has faced a decline in the percentage of their budget allocated to operational needs, dropping from 7.53% in 2008 to 3.77% in 2020. Chief Raap will be working with the City Manager and elected city leaders later in the year as the police department budgets for 2022.
4. Embedded Walworth County Crisis Employee Update:
- a. Beginning in early 2021, Whitewater Police Department will be receiving an embedded mental health crisis worker who will be coming to them courtesy of a pilot program which Walworth County Health and Human Services is

spearheading. It is anticipated that this professional will provide and participate in cross-training, provide on-site crisis services, assist with death notifications, participate in post-incident debriefings and increase access to mental health and substance abuse services. It is believed that participation in this pilot program will increase officer efficiency in response to these types of mental health calls for service and related needs within the community. Chief Aaron Raap expressed appreciation to be one of two departments within Walworth County to be selected for this program.

5. Community Engagement Update:

- a. One of the primary goals of the Whitewater Police Department during the pandemic is to guard against the erosion of police/community relations, especially in light of greatly reduced interactions and annual involvement in community events. Regarding the state and city mask wearing requirement, the police department seeks to educate, advise and warn. No referrals for charges have been made to either of the District Attorney's Offices nor to the Whitewater City Attorney.
- b. In late September, many officers and CSOs were assigned to the annual Discover Whitewater race series. Even as a scaled back event, it drew more than 300 participants and volunteers.
- c. In December, the Whitewater Police Department partnered with the Kiwanis and the Whitewater Unified School District in the "Cops 'N Kids" initiative. It consists of officers connecting with children within the community, reading a portion of a book to them and then presenting that child with the book in an effort to foster long-term relationships between community youth and police.
- d. With the approval of the City Manager and the Whitewater Unified School District Administrator, the Whitewater Police Department were able to partner with the Manager of the local Walmart to hold their 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Shop With a Cop event in early December. Participants adhered to current pandemic protocols and three young school-aged children enjoyed the event with three officers and three civilian staff members.

V. Future Commission Meeting Dates – The Police & Fire Commission plan to meet on Wednesday, April 14th, 2021 at 6:30pm.

VI. Future Agenda Items

None

VII. Adjournment - On a motion by Binagi with a second by Grant the Commissioners unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.

AYES: Hayes, Grant, Stone, Binagi

NOES: None

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ABSENT: None

The Commissioners adjourned at 6:53 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sabrina Ojibway

Support Services Manager