



Police and Fire Commission Meeting Minutes
February 8, 2023

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

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

- I. Call to Order, Roll Call – Commission Chair Glenn Hayes called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.
Members present: Dr. Glenn Hayes, Beverly Stone, Marissa Aranda
Members absent: Jerry Grant, Mwita Binagi
Also present: Police Chief Daniel Meyer, Assistant Fire Chief Ryan Dion and Support Services Manager Sabrina Ojibway
- II. Approval of Minutes from January 11, 2023 and January 24, 2023 - On a motion by Stone with a second by Aranda the minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

AYES: Hayes, Stone, Aranda
NOES: None
ABSENT: Grant, Binagi
- 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. Police Chief’s Report
 1. Personnel Update:
 - a. In fall of 2022 the police department was restructured to remove the Deputy Chief position and replace it with a second Captain position. Having an Administrative Captain and Patrol Captain provides the department with greater flexibility and a better distribution of duties within the command staff.
 - b. Promotional/Hiring processes: David Gempler was promoted to the rank of Patrol Captain, Jacob Hintz was promoted to the rank of Patrol Lieutenant, Anthony Heilberger was promoted to the rank of Detective and Kenna Shrock was hired as a Dispatcher.
 2. Training Update:

The following department-wide training was completed in the last quarter:

 - a. Night range training - November
 - b. Courtroom testimony training - November
 - c. Defense and Arrest Tactics training - January
 3. Community Engagement Update:

- a. Cops 'N Kids book readings have been held quarterly at Whitewater elementary schools. Two books were read to selected classrooms and each student was provided with a book.
 - b. Shop with a Cop was held at Walmart on December 13, 2022.
4. Influx of Residents from Central America:
- a. Since late 2021 there has been a dramatic increase in residents from Central America; primarily Nicaragua. Approximately 700-900 individuals are the current best estimate based on school district enrollment.
 - b. A major concern for the police department specifically is building trust in law enforcement. Many people are leaving Nicaragua out of fear of the government and are requesting asylum here.
 - c. Challenges for the police department have centered primarily around communication/translation, housing/overoccupancy, transportation/unlicensed drivers and access to services.
 - d. In an effort to address communication issues, the interpreting service Propio was made available to PD and City staff. A 24 hour online Spanish for Law Enforcement course was offered to PD staff with three employees currently having completed the course. The Pimsleur Spanish course was purchased and made available to all PD staff. A translated list of helpful tips and resources was created for dissemination.
 - e. Officers are seeing three times as many unlicensed drivers within the last year and a half. Ride share opportunities were explored, school district personnel have reached out to business throughout the county but have not had success to date in establishing a program.
 - f. The Police Department and Neighborhood Services Department have met with management at locations where overoccupancy was a known issue, this continues to be a safety concern within the city.
 - g. To better understand the asylum process, the Whitewater City Council granted approval for the securing of an immigration attorney. Christopher and De Leon Law Office will be providing a 2-hour training on immigration issues in the Community Room on Thursday, February 23, 2023 from 4pm-6pm. The purpose is to address a number of questions posed by city staff and secure their services as a resource for future public meetings as well.
5. Upcoming Planning/Events:
- a. Planned review of the Departmental Mission, Values and Vision statements once City's planning meetings are complete.
 - b. Two-year policy review schedule was completed at the end of December 2022. Every single policy is reviewed to ensure no legal updates have impacted it. The current year (2023) is used to prepare department files for the on-site assessment in 2024.
 - c. The WPD MRAP (Mine Resistant Ambush Protected) vehicle will be transitioned out of the department and turned over to Cudahy Police Department. This transition

was prompted by changes from the Defense Logistics Agency which limited how these types of vehicles could be used. Due to the size of our agency, the limitations made use of the vehicle highly limited and not worth the cost to maintain it.

- d. Grant application for body-worn cameras through BJA (Bureau of Justice Assistance) and JSS (Justice & Security Strategies). Request of \$30,000 that would be a one-to-one match from the city. Current contract with AXON expires at the end of 2023 and quotes will be obtained from multiple companies.
- e. Working on providing active threat training for all city staff in 2023 with in person training to be conducted at the library on April 28th.

B. Fire Chief's Report:

1. Presentation of Final PFC Oversight:

- a. Assistant Fire Chief Dion provided the Police & Fire Commission with a final document outlining Whitewater Fire and EMS hiring. The Hiring Process document proposes that Fire/EMS Explorers are internally coordinated with the Boy Scouts of America. The PFC will have no oversight but may be made aware of the status of the program and the number of members. After an internal hiring process, a list of names for new hire Firefighters, EMTs or Firefighter/EMTs will be brought before the PFC by a Command Staff representative for certification and report in lieu of interviews. For internal promotions, qualified applicants will be brought before the PFC by a Command Staff representative for an interview. The PFC will certify an eligibility list in which the Fire Chief may promote from to fill vacancies until the list is expired or exhausted. For Fire Department Command Staff vacancies, the Fire Chief or Acting Chief will advise the City Manager, HR and the PFC. The City Manager will issue guidance on how the vacancy will be filled. For suspensions and terminations, if the Fire Chief seeks immediate suspension immediate notification of the PFC President will occur. If the employee seeks to appeal the suspension/termination they may have the right to appeal the action to the PFC. The PFC decision may be subject to judicial review. If suspension/termination is sought in regards to the Fire Chief, State statutory removal process is required. Can be initiated by the PFC or forwarded to the PFC by the City Manager. The Hiring Process document has been reviewed by the City Attorney and is in line with the Police and Fire Commission Handbook.

2. Presentation of Staffing Model:

- a. New staffing model was presented to the PFC. Paid-on-call program still exists, document only represents paid-on-premise employees. Salary resolutions have been passed by the City Council and received City Manager approval. There will be 4 Firefighter/EMTs on duty per day to respond to a variety of calls. The City of Whitewater Fire Department will be advancing their level of care by implementing a paramedic program, anticipated to occur by July 1st.

3. Announcement of Hiring Process:

- a. EMS Chief Ashley Vickers resigned effective January 31st, 2023. EMS Captain Jason Dean has been appointed interim EMS Chief.

- b. Firefighter/EMT Marc Taylor resigned effective January 2, 2023.
 - c. EMS Lieutenant Andrew Rowland resigned effective January 31, 2023.
 - d. Full-time EMT Megan Coakley transitioned to a part-time EMT on February 3, 2023.
 - e. EMT Steven Faulkner has an accepted resignation letter as of February 11, 2023.
 - f. Currently there are applications open for full-time and part-time Firefighter/EMTs, Fire Inspector and EMS Chief.
4. Fire and EMS Chief Transition from Part-Time to Full-Time Position:
- a. By the authority of the City Manager, the previous appointment by the PFC of Kelly Freeman to Fire and EMS Chief will move from a part-time to a full-time position on or around April 1, 2023. This is a matter of report as the commission has no statutory authority due to the salary increasing. A decrease in salary would necessitate commission recommendation/involvement.
- C. Adjournment to Closed Session, to Reconvene per Wisconsin State Statute §19.85(1)(c) *“Considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility”* and Wisconsin State Statute §19.85(1)(e) *“Deliberating or negotiating the purchase of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whether competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session”*.
- 1. Item to be discussed: Presentation of EMT/Firefighter Candidate for Certification.
 - 2. Item to be discussed: Committee to Present Updates to PFC Hiring and Promotional Interview Questions for the Rank of Patrol Officer and Detective to Entire Commission.
- On a motion from Stone with a second from Aranda the Commissioners adjourned to closed session at 7:42 pm.
- AYES: Hayes, Stone, Aranda
NOES: None
ABSENT: Grant, Binagi
- D. Reconvene into Open Session:
- On a motion from Aranda with a second from Stone the Commissioners reconvened to open session at 7:58 pm.
- AYES: Hayes, Stone, Aranda
NOES: None
ABSENT: Grant, Binagi
- 1. Announcement of Recommendation concerning Whitewater Fire Department Hiring Process:
- On a motion from Aranda with a second from Stone the Commissioners moved to approve the appointment of Ashley N. Dodd to the position of Firefighter/AEMT effective February 6, 2023. This appointment will be subject to the successful completion of a 12-month probationary period.
- AYES: Hayes, Stone, Aranda

NOES: None

ABSENT: Grant, Binagi

2. Announcement of Recommendation concerning PFC Hiring and Promotional interview Questions for the Rank of Patrol Officer and Detective:

On a motion from Aranda with a second from Stone the Commissioners moved that the interview questions for Patrol Officer and Detective be approved for future use.

AYES: Hayes, Stone, Aranda

NOES: None

ABSENT: Grant, Binagi

- V. Future Commission Meeting Dates – Police Chief Meyer requested the Police & Fire Commission retain the end of February/beginning of March for possible Patrol Officer candidate interview(s). Exact date and time to be published at a later date.

- VI. Future Agenda Items:

Interview of Patrol Officer Candidate(s).

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

AYES: Hayes, Stone, Aranda

NOES: None

ABSENT: Grant, Binagi

The Commissioners adjourned at 08:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sabrina Ojibway

Support Services Manager