



**MINUTES**  
**CITY OF WAUPUN POLICE & FIRE COMMISSION**  
**Waupun Safety Building – 16 E. Main Street, Waupun WI**  
**Wednesday, May 26, 2021 at 4:30pm**

*Upon reasonable notice, efforts will be made to accommodate disabled individuals through appropriate aids and services. For additional information, contact the City Clerk at 920-324-7915.*

**CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting convened at 4:30pm by PFC President in the Waupun Safety Building.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: John Bett, Zak Dickhut, Teresa Heidemann, Tara Rhodes, Michael Thurmer, Nancy Vanderkin (City Council Liaison); WFD Chief BJ DeMaa, WPD Chief Scott Loudon,

Member(s) absent (excused): N/A

**RECOGNITION OF MAYORAL APPOINTMENT AND NOMINATION OF APPOINTMENTS**

The following annual Commission Nomination and Appointments were recognized:

- Recognition of Mayoral Appointment of Citizen Teresa Heidemann.
- Recognition of Mayoral Appointment of Council Member Liaison N. Vanderkin.
- Nomination and motion by T. Rhodes, J. Bett for M. Thurmer for President; all in favor, motion passed.
- Nomination and motion by T. Rhodes, Z. Dickhut for J. Bett for Vice President; all in favor, motion passed.
- Nomination and motion by J Bett, M. Thurmer for T. Rhodes for Secretary; all in favor, motion passed.

The Commission will meet on quarterly basis; dates to be established due to wanting to align meetings with interview needs of Fire and Police departments.

**MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Minutes from the May 12, 2021 meeting were presented for approval. Motion to approve by J. Bett (Z. Dickhut second; all in favor). Minutes approved as presented.

**GENERAL DISCUSSION AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION CONCERNING THE NORMAL OPERATIONS OF THE WAUPUN POLICE DEPARTMENT AND WAUPUN FIRE DEPARTMENT**

WFD Update from Chief BJ DeMaa:

- Conditional offer made and accepted by all ten EMR candidates interviewed this month at 5/12 meeting. All candidates will next complete physicals and background checks. Anticipated EMR class start date in June through Moraine Park Technical College; dependent on availability of new curriculum (online or book); goal is for October start date on responding to calls.
- Averaging 12 calls/month in city; 5-6 calls in township. During the day, response is usually 11 of 30 members; with 16 of 30 responding to evening calls. Reasons firefighters are unable to respond is due to family and/or work commitments; Chief DeMaa noting that 18 is the minimum desired. Chief DeMaa is considering options to change the staffing model to ensure 18 are available, currently he is requesting information from other "like" fire departments across WI. This information will be shared with the Commission in the future.
- The Cadet program ended today (aligns with end of school); positive feedback from participants; one is anticipated to start fire school this fall and will likely look to rejoin fire department in "Cadet" role which is geared towards individuals pursuing firefighting as a career.
- Firefighters Joe Barnes, Tom O'Neill and Mike Tuler were sworn in 5/26; congratulations from the Commission.

- Effective June 1, 2021 Captain/Fire Inspector Paul Beder will be retiring; the Commission thanks him for 30 years of service. Due to timing of City Council/Commission meetings, the Council acknowledged receipt of P. Beder's retirement at their meeting 5/25/2021. The Commission also acknowledges this retirement. The WFD will begin process (interview) for Captain role.
- Discussion of the general process for the Cadet role. A motion was made by T. Rhodes (Z. Dickhut second; all in favor) to approve promotion of Cadet Selena Rosales to the Paid-On-Call firefighter position created by P. Beder's retirement.
- The job description for Deputy Fire Inspector job description was presented to the Commission as informational and was discussed. Wally Beekman currently performs in this role. A motion to approve a hiring process by J. Bett (Z. Dickhut second; all in favor) to hire an additional Deputy Fire Inspector. Candidates will come to the Commission for interviews and position will be posted publicly; selected candidate will be required to attend the WI Fire Inspector I class if they don't already have that certification.
- Emergency Management Drill completed successfully (simulated during Truck-N-Show) and focused on roles/responsibility of on-scene incident command and Emergency Operations Center.
- Community Services Open House held every other year; we are moving forward with this year's event scheduled for Monday October 4th, 5-8pm.

#### WPD Update

- On track for 14,000 calls for 2021; this would be the highest call volume ever experienced.
- Have been assisting the Lake Winnebago Area Metro Unit with heroin drug busts because Waupun is on the route of dealers who move drugs between the Fox Valley and Chicago. Local drug activity is up; with two recent heroin busts in Waupun noted.
- Currently have three vacancies (1 open position, 1 on FMLA, 1 opening, 1 in field training who will start to mid/late August). Chief Loudon discussed how difficult it is to keep up with normal operations and filling in for vacations and concerns around staff morale. He has requested City Council to reopen 18<sup>th</sup> officer position which had previously been approved but was on-hold. Chief Loudon noted the changes in the hiring process (now starts much earlier and includes sponsorship and academy participation) has extended the timeframe from months to over a year. Additionally, the increasing call-volume supports moving forward with 18<sup>th</sup> officer position. The current state of police force in the news has placed an emphasis on training which also increases time not spent on patrol.
  - Commission asked about sign-on bonuses; Chief Loudon noted this was discussed at City Council.
  - Motion made by J. Bett (Z. Dickhut second; all in favor) to request the City Council explore a sign-on bonus structure (amount, anticipated savings related to turnover/vacancy, milestone payout structure, etc.).
- Discussion related to the difficulties around responding to mental-health calls. Crisis response is handled at the County level. A Wellness Committee comprised of community services to begin related discussions.
- K9 Boomer doing better after a recent physical issue; looking into a step for police vehicle to help reduce impact of jumping in/out of vehicle.

#### **FUTURE MEETINGS AND GATHERING INVOLVING THE POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSION**

Next Commission meeting is not yet scheduled (the Commission meets quarterly, at minimum).

If necessary, please send any agenda requests to Chiefs BJ DeMaa or S. Loudon so appropriate preparation(s) can be made.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn meeting at 5:37pm made by Z. Dickhut (second by T. Rhodes; all in favor).

Respectfully submitted,  
Tara Rhodes, Secretary

*Cc: Commission members; WFD Chief; WPD Chief, Deputy Chief & Admin./Records; City of Waupun Mayor, Administrator / Director of Economic Development & City Clerk.*