



MINUTES

CITY OF WAUPUN

Police & Fire Commission (PFC) Meeting
Waupun Safety Building – 16 E. Main Street, Waupun
Wednesday, March 20, 2024 at 4:45pm

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 4:50pm by PFC President.

ROLL CALL

Present: John Bett (PFC Vice President), Bambi Buchholz (PFC Citizen), Tara Rhodes (PFC Citizen/Secretary), Mike Thurmer (PFC Citizen/President), WPD Chief Jeremy Rasch, WFD Chief BJ DeMaa
Member(s) absent (excused): N/A Teresa Heidemann (PFC Citizen), Bobbi Jo Kunz (Council Member-Ex Officio)
Guests: N/A

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Minutes from the January 18 meeting were presented for approval. Motion to approve minutes as submitted at 4:50pm by J. Bett, B. Buchholz second; all in favor, motion passed.

Minutes from the February 1 meeting were presented for approval. Motion to approve minutes as submitted at 4:51pm by J. Bett, B. Buchholz second; all in favor, motion passed.

Minutes from the February 12 meeting were presented for approval. Motion to approve minutes as submitted at 4:51pm by J. Bett, B. Buchholz second; all in favor, motion passed.

GENERAL DISCUSSION AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION CONCERNING THE NORMAL OPERATIONS OF THE WAUPUN POLICE DEPARTMENT (WPD) AND WAUPUN FIRE DEPARTMENT (WFD)

WPD Update (Chief Rasch)

Staffing:

- Deputy chief interview tomorrow with one qualified internal applicant; if selected would need to backfill position. The interview panel includes Chief J. Rasch and the Ripon police chief and Fond du Lac Assistant Chief. Because this selection is at the discretion of the Chief of Police, the PFC is not involved in the hiring process; Chief Rasch will notify the PFC via email with appropriate update(s).
- Current process included three candidates with none advancing to PFC interview at this time. A new process was opened.
- Chief Rasch shared newer officers Effert, Roberts, and Cupery are doing well. Roberts and Cupery are in police recruit school and Effert is in field training.

Departmental Operations:

- All staff were invited to provide input on a set of core values for the department. Based on input, 5 Core values identified are: integrity, teamwork, trust, accountability, and professionalism.
- A committee has been established to discuss/develop a mission and values for the department.
- The department has been contacted by an area high school student interested in providing video services for the K9 program and recruitment.
- K9 Training has been going well and has included some deployments; with a short pause around vehicle sniffing. Chief Rasch shared the need for a K9 bulletproof vest and plans for online fundraising efforts coming soon. The K9 account does have funds currently available which are used for veterinary needs.
- Chief Rasch shared an update from the FDL County/Sheriff's Office; the Sheriff's Office is taking over dispatch, this was a department which reported to FDL County. Chief Rasch noted WPD and WFD

have board presence (along with other communities/county members) and is not expecting much change. The process included a review and amendment of the existing agreement and was approved at the March 19th County Board meeting.

- Annual training requirements are underway as well as “putting contest” as a team-building activity.
- There is a focus on process efficiency and effectiveness. A shared file program in place with the FDL County is going well and saving time/resources. A language line (interpreter service) began in February. A review of Open records requests show an average of 600 per year, some are large volume requests which are time-intensive; of a system to support process will be considered for next year’s budget.

Community Engagement:

- The senior citizen Academy is completed, this included the WPD, WFD and EMS. The program was well attended the participants had great questions; graduation ceremony was completed yesterday.
- Daily dodge radio station in Beaver Dam has a Community Connection radio program where WPD will be featured on a monthly basis; the WFD will be featured every-other month.
- WPD also participated in or had a presence at Waupun Icefest, CHS Open House, CWCS Community Service Event (presentation to staff/students), Dodge County Awards Banquet, SSM Open House (clinic), Waupun Business Alliance (event at Waupun Equipment) and FDL County Law Executive Awards (Chief Rasch outgoing President).

Calls:

- Volume has been down likely due to staff vacancies.
- Responses related to the following occurred: internet crimes against children (ICAC), overdose, death investigation/referral (from May 2023), undercover drug case, stalking, child sexual assault, death investigation of suicide, home invasion, missing money.

WFD Update (Chief DeMaa)

Staffing:

- 25 of 30 firefighter positions are filled; 12 of 15 EMR filled. Recent vacancies due mainly to attendance commitment requirements.
- Process started in March/ending in April has yielded one candidate; this is very concerning. Discussion around general decrease in volunteerism in firefighting but also volunteering in-general.
- High school intern will complete the entire year with the WFD. Chief DeMaa noting he has taken advantage of training opportunities, has participated on calls and is has been advocating for recruitment.

Departmental Operations:

- Staffing study (focuses on sustainable Fire, EMR, EMS staffing/structure) presentation is planned in April for WFD, then City/Township stakeholders. PFC attendance is recommended and Chief DeMaa will send out invite to members.
- Electric Vehicle (EV) training was recently held where 154 attendees from 34 agencies learned about how to appropriately respond to these situations. Chief DeMaa explained the toxicity of the smoke from EV fire embeds in the fibers of the firefighters gear and cannot be removed with cleaning. These are longer burning fires which require a significant more of water, as compared to a gas vehicle fire. Additional discussion on lithium ion batteries occurred.
- Walkthrough tour of the United Coop Facility was recently completed. This structure and services (food grain and soybean processing/drying) requires a significant level of emergency preparedness planning for rescues, including confined space and high-angle rescue planning. The Safety representative from the Coop is very engaged. Discussion around concerns with a significant increase in traffic once the Coop facility opens occurred; Chief DeMaa anticipating new/increased semi-traffic at approximately 200 per day.

Community Engagement:

- April 8th through April 12th is emergency weather and tornado Awareness Week and the city will experience 2 drills. The FDL County activates the weapon sirens for City of Waupun, thus City of Waupun will follow FDL County plan/timeline for these drills.

- WFD has received multiple requests from local groups to provide CPR training and have completed one session to-date.
- A group is presenting to the school board the request to provide a 'pre-prom crash event' on May 1st. This would be a simulated event which visually encourages students to make safe choices to avoid emergency situations.
- As noted in WPD update, WFD also participated in the Senior Citizen Academy.

Calls:

- High volume of calls in quarter one; with January and February combined having fifty-plus calls. Approximately 40 to 50% of these calls into the Township are motor vehicle responses, often on Hwy. 151
- EMR had approximately forty to fifty calls per month.
- Chief DeMaa specifically noted there have been multiple structure fires; including one to an elder care facility which had a great response by WPD officer. Debrief of this event has resulted in identification of opportunities for improvement which are being actively worked on.

CONSIDERATION-ACTION

EMS Compliance Captain promotion item planned was tabled.

FUTURE MEETINGS AND GATHERING INVOLVING THE POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSION

The next Commission meeting is to-be-determined. The PFC meets quarterly, at minimum.

If necessary, please send any agenda requests to Chief DeMaa or Chief Rasch so appropriate preparation(s) can be made.

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ADJOURNMENT

Motion at 5:59pm to adjourn meeting made by T. Rhodes, J. Bett second; all in favor, motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Tara Rhodes, Secretary