



Police & Fire Commission Meeting

Whitewater Municipal Building Community Room,
312 West Whitewater St., Whitewater, WI 53190
*In Person and Virtual

Thursday, May 29, 2025 - 6:00 PM

Citizens are welcome (and encouraged) to join our webinar via computer, smart phone, or telephone.
Citizen participation is welcome during topic discussion periods.

Police and Fire Commission Meeting
May 29, 2025, 6:00 PM

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.
<https://meet.goto.com/597366141>

You can also dial in using your phone.
Access Code: 597-366-141
United States: +1 (224) 501-3412

Please note that although every effort will be made to provide for virtual participation, unforeseen technical difficulties may prevent this, in which case the meeting may still proceed as long as there is a quorum. Should you wish to make a comment in this situation, you are welcome to call this number: (262) 473-0108.

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Support Services Manager Sabrina Ojibway

ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Commissioner Jerry Grant
Commissioner Beverly Stone
Commissioner Mwita Binagi
Commissioner Marissa Aranda
Commissioner Tom Miller
Police Chief Daniel Meyer
Police Captain Adam Vander Steeg
Police Captain Ryan Taft
Assistant Fire Chief Ryan Dion
Support Services Manager Sabrina Ojibway

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A Commission member can choose to remove an item from the agenda or rearrange its order; however, introducing new items to the agenda is not allowed. Any proposed changes require a motion, a second, and approval from the Commission to be implemented. The agenda shall be approved at each meeting even if no changes are being made at that meeting.

Motion made by Commissioner Miller, Seconded by Commissioner Stone to approve agenda.

Voting Yes: Commissioner Grant, Commissioner Stone, Commissioner Binagi, Commissioner Aranda and Commissioner Miller. Motion passed.

CONSENT AGENDA

Items on the Consent Agenda will be approved together unless any commission member requests that an item be removed for individual consideration.

1. Approval of Minutes for March 24th, 2025

Motion made by Commissioner Grant, Seconded by Commissioner Miller to approve the consent agenda.

Voting Yes: Commissioner Grant, Commissioner Stone, Commissioner Binagi, Commissioner Aranda and Commissioner Miller. Motion passed.

HEARING OF CITIZEN COMMENTS

No formal Commission action will be taken during this meeting although issues raised may become a part of a future agenda. Participants are allotted a three minute speaking period. Specific items listed on the agenda may not be discussed at this time; however, citizens are invited to speak to those specific issues at the time the Commission discusses that particular item.

There were no citizen comments.

To make a comment during this period, or during any agenda item: On a computer or handheld device, locate the controls on your computer to raise your hand. You may need to move your mouse to see these controls. On a traditional telephone, dial *6 to unmute your phone and dial *9 to raise your hand.

NEW BUSINESS

2. Election of Police & Fire Commission Officers

SSM Ojibway called for nominations for the Chair of the Police and Fire Commission. Commissioner Grant made a motion to nominate Commissioner Miller, Commissioner Miller refused the nomination. Ojibway again called for nominations for the Chair of the Police and Fire Commission. Commissioner Miller made a motion to nominate Commissioner Grant, there was no second to the nomination. Ojibway again called for nominations for the Chair of the Police and Fire Commission. Commissioner Binagi made a motion to nominate himself, motion was seconded by Commissioner Aranda. There were no other nominations.

Voting Yes: Commissioner Grant, Commissioner Stone, Commissioner Binagi, Commissioner Aranda and Commissioner Miller. Motion passed and SSM Ojibway turned the meeting over to PFC Chair Binagi.

Commissioner Binagi called for nominations for the Vice Chair of the Police and Fire Commission. Commissioner Grant made a motion to nominate Commissioner Stone, motion was seconded by Commissioner Aranda. There were no other nominations.

Voting Yes: Commissioner Grant, Commissioner Stone, Commissioner Binagi, Commissioner Aranda and Commissioner Miller. Motion passed

Commissioner Binagi called for nominations for the Secretary of the Police and Fire Commission. Commissioner Grant made a motion to nominate Commissioner Aranda, motion was seconded by Commissioner Binagi. There were no other nominations.

Voting Yes: Commissioner Grant, Commissioner Stone, Commissioner Binagi, Commissioner Aranda and Commissioner Miller. Motion passed

REPORTS

3. Fire Chief's Report

a. Personnel Update

Daria Deible and Tim Girard were hired from the current eligibility list, their start dates were March 25th and April 3rd, respectively. All currently funded full-time positions are filled.

b. Training Update

The funds for the new Fire Department training center have been pre-approved by the WCF – Hickey Fund. Strand will be starting on the Engineering for the site in the near future.

Eight members completed ICS 300 level training through the Wisconsin Office of Emergency Management training program. The class was hosted at Jefferson Fire Department. It is 20-hour course on broad spectrum Incident Command and mitigation of large-scale incidents.

c. Community Engagement Update

Throughout January, February, and March, Assistant Fire Chief Dion and Police Chief Meyer attended over 20 community events to discuss the referendum and answer questions about both departments. With the passing of the referendum, the Fire Department will be hiring three additional firefighters with an anticipated start date shortly after January 1st, 2026.

The department participated in International Children's Day in April, and did a reading event with 4k students in May.

d. Department Updates to include: Dorm Room Completion, Spring Splash Overview and Insurance Services Office (ISO) Audit

The new dorm rooms are completed and the firefighters relocated from the old dorms on May 15th. Evening response times are anticipated to improve as the new dorms have shortened the distance from the sleeping quarters to the apparatus bay by hundreds of feet.

The department staffed additional personnel during spring splash to ensure safety and a timely response to calls for service within the community. The call volume during the operational period was more than double their normal average, with a financial impact of approximately \$2500.

Whitewater Fire Department is currently in the process of an Insurance Services Office (ISO) audit. Similar to the Police Department Accreditation process, this survey assesses the Fire Department's training, response, staffing, dispatch, water supply, and service delivery. This is a several month process, the outcome of which will direct fleet management as the department moves forward.

4. Police Chief's Report

a. Personnel Update

Patrol Officers Derek Johnson, Cailey Russell (promoted from CSO 1/3/25) and Melissa Kuchenbecker (hired 1/3/25) graduated from the 720-hour Law Enforcement Training Academy on May 8, 2025 at Waukesha County Technical College. Derek Johnson received the Leadership Award for their academy class, which is the highest honor for a recruit. They started field training the week of May 12th.

Community Service Officers Brooklyn Vavrina and Brooklyn Knurr were hired on April 4, 2025.

Community Service Officer Liam Fritz's last day with the department was May 10th. He graduated from UW-Whitewater and is now pursuing a full-time career in the Criminal Justice field.

Detective Kevin Gowan was hired on April 21, 2025 and is currently completing field training. Upon completion of field training, he'll assume his detective responsibilities.

b. Training Update

All sworn staff were trained in the Pursuit Intervention Technique (PIT) in March.

Walworth County District Attorney Zeke Wiedenfeld provided sworn staff with legal update training in April.

On April 16th, the Police Department hosted Human Trafficking Investigation training at the Innovation Center. The training was fully funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) National Training and Technical Assistance Center (NTTAC). There were approximately 35 attendees.

Department-wide Emergency Vehicle Operation and Control (EVOC) training was completed at Blackhawk Technical College in May.

c. Community Engagement Update

A Kiwanis Cops 'N Kids book reading was held at Lincoln Elementary on March 6th.

On April 2nd School Resource Officer James Garcia and Dispatcher Kenna Shrock attended Whitewater High School's annual career fair to provide students with some insight into what it's like working at the Whitewater Police Department.

SRO James Garcia attended the International Children's Day celebration at Lincoln Elementary on April 12th.

A Kiwanis Cops 'N Kids book reading was held at Washington Elementary on May 21st.

d. Department Updates to include: Public Safety Referendum Passage, Spring Splash Overview, PD Evidence/Training Garage, Removal of Public Comment on Social Media and an update on the School Resource Officer (SRO) Agreement

The Public Safety referendum passed on April 1st, 2025. Beginning January 1st, 2026, the police department will see increased funding for 5 additional police officers, 1 additional dispatcher, and an additional \$250,000 annually in capital. The hiring strategy is to hire some of those officers early (in 2025) which will help out the Field Training Officers by spreading out the hiring over a longer period. Most of the capital funding will be directed toward fleet management, allowing the city to avoid financing squads moving forward.

Spring Splash occurred on May 3, 2025. The PFC was provided with the after-action report (included in the agenda packet), preparation and response to the event was similar to that of previous years. The Emergency Operations Center hosted unified command consisting of representatives from the Whitewater Police Department, Whitewater Fire and EMS, Walworth County Sheriff and Drone Command. Mobile Field Force teams were deployed to disperse large crowds. Disorderly incidents included a physical fight at a large house party which resulted in a substantial battery and an individual displaying a handgun threatening to shoot another individual. Involved parties were taken into custody and transported to Walworth County Jail. Two incidents occurred where subjects actively resisted, resulting in an injury to an officer. Total event cost, to include staffing, food and materials was \$15,288.80 which was a reduction from 2024. A total of 86 individuals were arrested, 3 misdemeanor arrests, 5 felony arrests, 113 ordinance violations, 147 charges and 5 individuals confined in jail.

The department is currently working with Angus-Young on a construction design for a dual-purpose evidence and training garage. This was one of the key capital improvement recommendations made in the Fitch & Associates organizational and workload study completed last fall. The current plan is to construct the garage on the Wastewater Treatment plant grounds.

The Whitewater Police Department wishes to maintain their long-standing relationship with the Whitewater Unified School District and continue to have a School Resource Officer (and ideally add a 2nd SRO) in the schools. The current agreement is between the Common Council and the School District and expires June 30, 2025. The City provided a 120-day contract extension with the hopes of addressing the concerns outlined by the Superintendent (SRO coverage, interviewing juveniles in the schools, and mode of contacting the SRO). The School Board did not entertain the 120-day contract extension,

and were not provided the letter Chief Meyer wrote to accompany the contract extension. The School Board decided to begin an RFP process for the SRO. The Common Council is determining how to best move forward at the May 20th Council meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Adjourn to Closed Session, TO RECONVENE, pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes 19.85(1)(c) "Considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility". Items to be discussed:

5. Interview of Patrol Officer Candidates

Motion made by Commissioner Stone, Seconded by Commissioner Miller to go into closed session.

Voting Yes: Commissioner Grant, Commissioner Stone, Commissioner Binagi, Commissioner Aranda and Commissioner Miller. Motion passed.

The Police & Fire Commission went into closed session at 6:22 PM

RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION

Motion made by Commissioner Grant, Seconded by Commissioner Miller to go into open session.

Voting Yes: Commissioner Grant, Commissioner Stone, Commissioner Binagi, Commissioner Aranda and Commissioner Miller. Motion passed.

The Police & Fire Commission went into open session at 7:39 PM

6. Announcement of Recommendation Concerning Whitewater Police Department Hiring Process

Motion made by Commissioner Grant, Seconded by Commissioner Stone to endorse and recommend the hiring of Olivia Monson as Patrol Officer for the City of Whitewater Police Department.

Voting Yes: Commissioner Grant, Commissioner Stone, Commissioner Binagi, Commissioner Aranda and Commissioner Miller. Motion passed.

Motion made by Commissioner Miller, Seconded by Commissioner Grant to endorse and recommend the hiring of Jeremy Alexander as Patrol Officer for the City of Whitewater Police Department.

Voting Yes: Commissioner Grant, Commissioner Stone, Commissioner Binagi, Commissioner Aranda and Commissioner Miller. Motion passed.

Motion made by Commissioner Grant, Seconded by Commissioner Stone to endorse and recommend the hiring of Jack Bridleman as Patrol Officer for the City of Whitewater Police Department.

Voting Yes: Commissioner Grant, Commissioner Stone, Commissioner Binagi, Commissioner Aranda and Commissioner Miller. Motion passed.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Police Chief Meyer advised that the City Attorney has provided an opinion and direction on recording minutes during closed session which will be addressed at an upcoming meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Commissioner Miller, Seconded by Commissioner Stone to adjourn.

Voting Yes: Commissioner Grant, Commissioner Stone, Commissioner Binagi, Commissioner Aranda and Commissioner Miller. Motion passed

Meeting adjourned at 7:43 PM

A quorum of the Common Council may be present. This notice is given to inform the public that no formal action will be taken at this meeting.

Anyone requiring special arrangements is asked to call the Office of the City Manager / City Clerk (262-473-0102) at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.