



## COLUMBUS POLICE DEPARTMENT

159 S. Ludington St.  
Columbus, WI. 53925  
920-623-5919 (Main)  
920-623-5930 (Fax)

January 16, 2025

Mayor Hammer  
Members of the Common Council  
Columbus Police and Fire Commission:

### **RE: POLICE DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT, DECEMBER 2024**

Attached is the monthly report for the Columbus Police Department.

Please feel free to contact me at any time if you have questions.

Chief Dennis Weiner



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## PERSONNEL

The department is not fully staffed. Current staffing as of January 16, 2025:

	Authorized by Budget	Actual
<b><u>Sworn Officers</u></b>		
Full-time sworn police positions:	10	8
Patrol Officer Full time	6	5
Sergeant	1	1
Lieutenant	2	1
Chief	1	1
<b><u>Clerical</u></b>		
Office Manager (full-time)	1	1
Public Safety Clerk (full-time)	1	1

Current Staff:

Name	Date of Hire
Chief Dennis Weiner	02/18/2008
Lieutenant Roger Witthun	12/17/2001
Lieutenant Darrel Ward	09/19/2022
Sergeant Mike Rosecky	12/30/2022
Officer Julia Knoll	01/03/2022
Officer Matt Dammen	01/03/2023
Officer Spencer Trevorrow	07/31/2023
Officer Colton Hayes	07/30/2024
Officer Cole Vance	08/05/2024
Officer vacant	
Officer James Kicmol (part time)	09/25/2023
Office Manager Erika Kellar	02/04/1999
Public Safety Clerk Kimberly Kehoe	01/13/2025



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### PERSONNEL:

Lieutenant Witthun retired January 2, 2025 after 26 years with the Columbus Police Department. At his request, there was no formal gathering, recognition or proclamation. A small luncheon all department staff attended was held on his last day. He was presented with a plaque from the department and gifts from staff. Mayor Hammer and Police and Fire Commissioners Larry Olson and Marcus Meier also attended.

The process to fill the vacant Lieutenant position has been ongoing. I expect to announce the filling of that vacancy in the near future.

Interviews were conducted for the Public Safety Clerk position. Kimberly Kehoe was hired and began on January 13, 2025. Kimberly has experience working in multiple office environments, including the Columbia County Courthouse. She was also previously a firefighter which will help her duties for the fire department. Her training is ongoing.

We sincerely appreciate Bonnie's willingness to come out of retirement for several months to fill in during the gap.

### FLEET/EQUIPMENT:

The 2025 squad arrived at the end of the month. It will likely not be equipped until March or April. Our equipment outfitter is backlogged, and additionally I could not order some of the equipment until after January 1, 2025 to be under the new budget. One or two pieces of the most important equipment (squad camera and radio) have reported 8-12+ week delivery times.

I reported last month we took delivery of a brand new, free, Smartboard, thru the government LESO program. We have already used this Smartboard several times, including for map and assignments during the briefing of staff and volunteers for the holiday train, as well as for mapping and assignments of a search warrant we executed. It has also been used for Zoom or Team meetings.

Part of my 2025 budget included the replacement of department badges. A majority of our badges are weathered and polishing them as well as trying an ultrasonic cleaner did little good and even damaged one more. In my 20 years with the department, we have only replaced a couple badges, including when the previous Chief left and was allowed to keep one, and a Lieutenant's badge which was weathered and the clasp broke was not worth repairing. To be more personalized and unique to our community, our new badges were custom designed, will be oval in shape and have our historic city hall as the background. They have been ordered. These custom badges cost less per badge than traditional ones.

### COMMUNITY EVENTS:

Officers Knoll, Dammen, and Hayes participated in the annual Columbia County Shop with a cop event at Walmart in Portage in early December. Officers were paired up with children to purchase gifts for family members. Following that they went to the Sheriff's Office to wrap the gifts and have lunch.

### TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT/CITATIONS:

During the month of November officers issued 66 traffic citations, 166 warnings and 40 ordinance citations.



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### MATTERS OF INTEREST:

December was an unusual month for pursuits.

One of our officers attempted to stop a vehicle on W. James Street for a traffic violation. It fled from the officer and a short pursuit was initiated before the officer lost sight of the vehicle and terminated the pursuit. The incident remains under investigation.

A pursuit was started by the Columbia County Sheriff's Office outside of Columbus. It went north on USH 151 to Beaver Dam and doubled back through Columbus. We had officers placed at 2 turnarounds on USH 151 with tire deflation devices deployed. The suspect driver managed to drive in the median and shoulder, and avoid the devices. He later crashed in Madison while being pursued by other departments.

The Dodge County Sheriff's Office had a pursuit southbound on USH 151 through Columbus. One of our officers was able to deploy a tire deflation device successfully, which caused the vehicle tire(s) to go flat. The suspect then stopped and was taken into custody without incident.

The Dodge County Sheriff's Department had an ATL (attempt to locate) to arrest a suspect from a domestic abuse incident and provided a vehicle description. An officer observed the vehicle and it pulled into a random driveway to a residence. When the officer stopped at the base of the driveway to make contact with the suspect, in an attempt to get away, he backed up intentionally into the squad. The officer did a trained maneuver called a PIT (pursuit intervention technique) on the suspect vehicle, by intentionally pushing it with his squad and disabling it. The suspect was taken into custody without incident. The squad sustained minor damage, as the large wraparound push bumper took the brunt of the impacts.

The department received information and executed a drug related search warrant on a residence in the city. Controlled substances and drug paraphernalia were seized. Additionally, prescription medications were being used that didn't belong to persons who do not reside there were seized. Citations were issued thru municipal court and criminal charges were also requested through the district attorney's office.

Officers were dispatched to a disturbance at the hospital. A female was getting violent with staff, including yelling, screaming and attempting to strike them. She also was very violent with officers, kicking, swinging and trying to bite them. She was decentralized to the floor by officers and medically sedated by staff. She was later transported to Winnebago Mental Health Institute in Oshkosh. No one was injured.

Another incident of an extremely violent person occurred in December. It was believed he was having an adverse reaction to methamphetamine or heroin use and required a minimum of 2 officers, for 8-10 hours, at the hospital, before coming down from the episode. He was eventually released and there were no charges.

An elderly resident received a phone call from someone representing to be from a cell phone company, claiming to be able to offer him a much better deal than his current provider. He provided this person with the log in credentials to his current cell phone account and later discovered \$3,600 in new phones were charged to his account and shipped to New York. The victims cell phone company is holding him responsible for the \$3,600 as he provided the log in credentials to the scammer.

A resident received an email from CashNet, which is an alternative online loan provider. The email was about the loan she had taken out, when she in fact had not taken out a loan. The loan was able to be canceled. The suspect applicant did have all the victims necessary personal identifying information to successfully and apply and receive the loan. This matter is under investigation.



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An officer made a traffic stop for speeding and observed signs of drug use in the vehicle. A probable cause search of the vehicle discovered blue pills that tested positive for MDMA (Methylenedioxymethamphetamine), street name Ecstasy, which is a hallucinogen and stimulant. Officers also found a stun gun in the vehicle. The suspect was arrested and taken to jail.

We had 2 separate incidents of people who got off the Amtrak in the city that created issues. One was told to get off due to exceeding where his ticket was paid for, and the other got off on his own for an unknown reason. Neither involved police involvement at the train station. It was their subsequent behaviors in the community that generated a large number of calls.

One of the persons generated at least 10 calls to the PD in an 8-hour period, as he worked his way thru town on foot. He was pan handling at various businesses and approaching people out in public asking for money or food. He was bothering customers at one of the convenience stores, was warned, continued, and management had us remove him from the property. We offered him a ride anywhere reasonable he wanted to go and he refused. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> day he accepted a ride into Madison to the bus station to try and find a way to get back to Chicago.

The other we received a couple calls about, refused any help, and the calls stopped.

We are having increased calls and incidents with vaping devices, specifically juveniles and vape pens, many containing illegal level THC vape cartridges. I will be coming before the council in the near future with a vaping ordinance used in other communities. Our current ordinance(s) don't address those violations adequately.

### CALLS FOR SERVICE:

#### Columbus Police Department Total CAD Calls Received, by Nature of Call

Nature of Call -----	Total Calls Received -----
911 HANG UP	20
ACCIDENT PROPERTY DAMAGE ONLY	6
ACCIDENT WITH PERSONAL INJURY	1
ASSIST ANOTHER AGENCY	15
BURGLAR ALARM	4
FIRE ALARM	2
MEDICAL ALARM	1
ANIMAL COMPLAINTS	12
ANIMAL BITE	1
BATTERY	1
BOND VIOLATION	1
BUS PASSING	1
CAR VS DEER	1
MENTAL HEALTH COMMITMENT	3
CITIZEN ASSIST	17
CONTROLLED	8
DISORDERLY CONDUCT	4
DEATH INVESTIGATION	1
DISABLED VEHICLE	3



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DOMESTIC ABUSE	2
DPW	2
DRIVING COMPLAINT	12
ELUDING	3
EMS CALL	19
ESCORT	1
EXTRA PATROL	21
GENERAL FIRE	2
FIRE GAS LEAK/CARBON MONOXIDE	1
FLEET MAINTENANCE	3
FRAUD	3
HARASSMENT	1
ROAD HAZARD	2
HOUSE WATCH	2
JUVENILE INCIDENT	3
LOST AND FOUND	4
NOISE COMPLAINT	1
OUT WITH PERSON	5
OPEN DOOR	7
ORDINANCE VIOLATION	2
OWI	3
PARKING ENFORCMENT	32
PARKING VIOLATION	12
PROPERTY DAMAGE	3
SEARCH WARRANT	1
SECURITY	131
SPECIAL EVENT	2
SQUAD DAMAGE	1
SUSPICIOUS	12
THEFT	1
TIPS/LEADS	1
TRAFFIC CONTROL	1
TRAFFIC STOP	224
TRANSIENT	1
UNWANTED PERSON	3
VEH LOCKOUT	4
WARRANT	4
WEATHER	1
WELFARE	9

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Total Calls: 644