



TO: Hartford Police Department Personnel
FROM: Linnea Rader, Interim City Manager
DATE: November 10, 2023
SUBJECT: Ordinance Enforcement

As you are aware, officers of the City of Hartford Police Department will be providing ordinance enforcement moving forward. This means that all officers of the Hartford Police Department are considered enforcement officers for ordinances. There will no longer be a separate Ordinance Officer. The Police Department has always and will continue performing enforcement for many of the City's ordinances and will now have the responsibility for more.

When on duty any calls that include ordinance enforcement will continue to be the responsibility of the patrol person on duty.

The City will be split into sections with each officer assigned to a section of the City to evaluate and address ordinance issues. I understand that each of you have signed up for a section of the City. Each officer will proactively review all properties within their designated area at least quarterly and follow up on any ordinance violations. Again, these are NOT including any calls while on duty, but in addition to.

As with any situation involving enforcement, the first step is attempting to make contact with the property owner and/or resident. Having that initial discussion about the situation may allow for the situation to be addressed without further situation. Any ordinance allowed to be addressed with a conversation is preferred. If a conversation does not address the issue within a reasonable time frame, each officer will then proceed along the steps outlined in each ordinance.

Each officer shall keep a log of conversations and steps taken to address ordinances. That documentation will be provided to Lieutenant Ivy so he can log the information and keep City Hall updated. City Hall will be kept informed so they can provide support for the officer and a consistent message from the City is conveyed to residents.

Any officer that needs back up on an ordinance enforcement issue shall follow the chain of command including Lieutenant Ivy and Chief Prince. The City Manager (or Interim at this time) is also available to assist with situations that rise to that level.

A question that I already anticipate you may have is why we don't continue using a separate Enforcement Officer. Any Enforcement Officer wearing a uniform, carrying a weapon, and acting in accordance with the necessary laws must be MCOLES certified. The previous Enforcement Officer was a reservist and part-time designated Enforcement Officer. The laws do not allow that person to be uniformed and carry a weapon while providing enforcement. You can all imagine the concerns associated with a plain clothed and unarmed individual attempting to address some of these situations. The only other option that we can find is to contract with the Van Buren County Sheriff's Department to come into the City to provide this service. We feel our City Police Department Officers are more than qualified and able to provide a better understanding of the City itself to enforce these ordinances.

Thank you very much for your understanding of this situation. I honestly believe the best alternative for addressing ordinance enforcement is utilizing our police department rather than contracting it out to another department. I think you all have a far better understanding of the needs of the community as well as our residents themselves. I know it's an added responsibility, so please keep me apprised of how this is working and any suggestions you have to make this successful. Thank you again!

If you have any questions regarding this change, please let me know. You can email me at citymanager@cityofhartfordmi.org or contact me on my cell phone at 269-621-5282.

CITY OF HARTFORD