



CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION DEPARTMENT REPORT

TO: Matthew R. Schmitz, MPA - City Manager

FROM: Biran Lau – Police Chief

DATE OF MEETING: September 2, 2025

ITEM TITLE: Department Report – Police

Officer Daniel Eschen graduated from the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy on August 22 and has returned home. While attending the academy, Officer Eschen received the ILEA Fitness Award, placing him in the 300 Club, a true testament to his dedication. We look forward to having him back now to serve the community.

We are pleased to announce the hiring of Officer Brandon Bagby as our newest patrol officer. Officer Bagby is a certified officer who resides in town and was previously employed by the City of Jesup. Officer Bagby's first day on patrol will be September 8th, marking the beginning of his field training with our department.

We have initiated the promotional process for a Captain and night shift Lieutenant position, which will entail some restructuring of the command staff to better serve the community with our current staffing levels. This fills the void from when Brian Lau was appointed to Chief from the previous rank of Captain. It will also fill a much-needed night supervisor void. The promotional appointments will take place on October 1st, following the completion of the testing and selection process.

The Independence Police Officers participated in their annual firearms qualifications, that was held at the Buchanan County Wildlife Association. We were assisted by the Buchanan County Sheriff's Office and the State DNR in verifying our qualifications, as our department currently lacks a firearms instructor. Officer Jason Ohrt has been enrolled in an upcoming training that will assist our agency in the future.

The Axon team was onsite at the Police Department this last week installing patrol car cameras, and the new body cameras have all been deployed to our police officers. This changeover was a very smooth process with the Axon team, and we are grateful for all their help. The officers now have updated cameras and technology, which will benefit the city as a whole.

The Independence Police Department participated in the "Cupcakes with Cops" event, organized by Building Direction for Families, in First Ward Park. This event had a good turnout and fostered a good relationship between our youth and the officers.

The Independence Streets Department and Parks and Recreation Department assisted in completing paving and landscaping at the front of our building, which has also addressed some water issues and made the Police Department more inviting to the public. A very big thank you to both departments for all your help!