



CITY OF LAKE FOREST PARK

CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA COVER SHEET

Meeting Date	August 13, 2026
Originating Department	Executive
Contact Person	Phillip Hill, City Administrator
Title	Resolution 26-2095/ Confirming the Mayor's Offer of Employment to Diego Zanella as Chief of Police and Authorizing the Mayor to Sign the Employment Agreement

Legislative History

- First Presentation/Action – August 13, 2026
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Attachments:

1. Resolution 26-2095
 2. Employment Agreement between Diego Zanella and the City of Lake Forest Park
 3. Diego Zanella Resume
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Executive Summary

The Mayor has extended an offer of employment to Diego Zanella for the position of Chief of Police for the City. The Mayor is seeking confirmation of the appointment pursuant to section 2.16.020 of the Lake Forest Park Municipal Code and authority to enter into an Employment Agreement.

Background

Following the retirement announcement of Chief Michael Harden, the City embarked on a process to select a new Chief of Police. Two internal candidates were invited to interviews by the Mayor and City Administrator, members of the City Council, Human Resources, a member of the Lake Forest Park Police Guild, a member of the Lake Forest Park Civil Service Commission, and the City of Redmond Police Chief.

Diego Zanella was selected by the Mayor for the position of Chief of Police. The terms of the employment agreement are as follows:

Term of Employment Agreement:	5-years followed by 1-year automatic extensions
Base Compensation:	\$210,445.92/annually
Vacation:	Accrual same as other non-represented staff based on longevity and administrative leave, same as other department heads.
Sick Leave:	Same as non-represented employees
Health, Life, LTD:	Same as non-represented employees
Pension/Retirement:	Eligible for LEOFF
Severance:	3-months if terminated without cause within first year; 4-months if terminated without cause within the second year; 5-months if terminated without cause within the third year; 6-months if terminated without cause within the fourth year and beyond
Automobile:	City will provide a take home car as employee lives within 45-miles of City Hall.

Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission (WSCJTC)

In response to Senate Bill 5974 (eff. May 1, 2026), WSCJTC has provided information/clarification for the requirements of hiring a Chief (includes internal promotion). The city will need to submit an Eligibility Requirement Verification form to WSCJTC, following a full background investigation – no earlier than six-months prior to the date of employment, but before the Notice of Hire.

To meet this requirement, the Administration recommends that should Council confirm the appointment of Diego Zanella as Chief of Police, that the authorization for the Mayor to sign the Employment Agreement be subject to the full background investigation and submittal of the Eligibility Requirement Verification form to WSCJTC.

Fiscal & Policy Implications

The Chief of Police position is a budgeted and approved position in the 2025-2026 City Budget.

Alternatives

<i>Options</i>	<i>Results</i>
• Leave the Chief of Police position open	Failure to fill this vital role will seriously hamper the department's ability to provide expected levels of service
• Confirm the Mayor's selection of Diego Zanella for Chief of Police	The Mayor will sign the employment agreement, and the department will move forward with filling the Commander's role

Staff Recommendation

Waive the three touches and adopt Resolution 26-2095/Confirming the Mayor's offer of employment to Diego Zanella as Chief of Police and Authorizing the Mayor to sign the employment agreement subject to a full background investigation, and submittal of the Eligibility Requirement Verification form to WSCJTC.