



CITY OF LAKE FOREST PARK

CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA COVER SHEET

Meeting Date	August 10, 2023
Originating Department	Police Department
Contact Person	Mike Harden, Police Chief
Title	Ordinance 23-1274/Amending the 2023 Budgeted Positions and Salary Schedule incorporated in Ordinance No. 1256 adopting the 2023-2024 Biennial Budget.

Legislative History

- First Presentation: July 24, 2023 - Committee of the Whole
 - Second Presentation/Action August 10, 2023 - Regular Meeting
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Attachments:

1. Ordinance 23-1274
 2. Exhibit A - Adopted Salary Schedule and Amended Salary Schedule
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Executive Summary

At the July 24, 2023, Committee of the Whole meeting, staff requested direction from the Council regarding the need to hire three additional limited term Police Officers. The consensus of the Council was to move forward with the hiring of three additional officers in order to continue to provide the same level of service for the citizens of Lake Forest Park. In order to do that, the 2023-2024 Budgeted Positions and Salary Schedule needs to be amended.

Background

The police department currently operates with 23 Full Time Employees (FTEs), of which 21 are commissioned officers. There are two open positions for police officers, and a new recruit was hired on May 1st but will only attend the academy in December. This recruit will start working as a solo officer on the road around August 2024. Additionally, a Sergeant recently resigned on July 15th, but they have been reassigned to administrative duties until May 2024 to focus on staffing and re-accreditation for 2024. This leaves one more open FTE and a Sergeant position to fill, resulting in four positions that are not deployed on the road, reducing the patrol to 11 deployable elements. Furthermore, there are

officers out due to injury and paternity leave. Retirements are another major concern, with six commissioned officers currently eligible to retire, including those in leadership roles from Sergeant to Chief. Additionally, seven commissioned officers will be eligible to retire within the next three years, which means approximately one-third of the police department will be eligible to retire in that timeframe. The hiring process has been challenging, with numerous applicants going through oral boards and background checks. Unfortunately, many applicants did not pass these stages, significantly prolonging the process. Only one applicant has been successfully hired, and a few laterals and potential good hires remain on the civil service list. To address these staffing challenges and prepare for expected changes in the coming years, the city requests authorization to over-hire by +3 positions from the budgeted 23 FTEs. These additional Limited Term Employees (LTEs) will allow the department to navigate the extensive hiring and training process more effectively. Newly hired employees will undergo a one-year probationary period to ensure their long-term success within the department. As officers leave due to retirement or other departments, these LTEs will fill in the currently approved budgeted positions. By over-hiring, the department can open opportunities for promising candidates who may need to rank higher on the civil service list. It also provides backup options in case some applicants fail to pass backgrounds, fail to fit into police work or struggle during the basic academy or field training program. Over-hiring has been a successful practice in the past for the police department and is commonly employed in the private sector. It helps maintain the department's health and culture while preparing for the arrival of new police officers. Considering the projected retirements, current staffing levels, and sustainability projections, approving the authority to exceed the current budget by up to +3 positions is essential to address the existing gaps and build a strong team for the future. Taking action now will allow the department to maintain its effectiveness, culture, and training standards as it moves into a new era of policing.

With the option to hire three additional LTEs, the Police Department will be able to maintain the level of service that the citizens have expected from the Police Department.

Fiscal & Policy Implications

The average cost of employing a patrol officer, including benefits, ranges from \$150,000 to \$180,000. Considering the plan to over-hire three additional officers, the total request for the salary fund would be a maximum of \$540,000 over the budget. However, this amount will vary over time due to the dynamic nature of staffing. As new officers are hired and receive their salaries, there may be periods when some officers leave, resulting in salary savings during the times when these three additional positions still need to be staffed.

The chart below shows the current positions with the proposed new positions highlighted:

Police							
Police Chief	1.00						15,129
Lieutenant	2.00	8,316	8,871	9,425	9,979	10,534	11,898
Sergeant 2	4.00						9,475
Sergeant 1	0.00						9,002
Police Officer	9.00	6,409	6,916	7,467	8,009		
Limited Term Police Officer	3.00	6,409	6,916	7,467	8,009		
Detective	2.00	7,050	7,608	8,213	8,810		
Traffic	1.00	6,730	7,262	7,840	8,409		
K-9	1.00	6,730	7,262	7,840	8,409		
Support Services Officer	1.00	5,093	5,457	5,820	6,193		
Records Specialist	2.00	4,914	5,089	5,264	5,436	5,609	5,784
Domestic Violence Advocate	0.35	4,823	5,145	5,466	5,788	6,110	6,431
	26.35						

Alternatives

<i>Options</i>	<i>Results</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopt Ordinance No. 23-1274	Provide the option to hire three LTE; the Police Department will be able to maintain the level of service that the citizens have expected from the Police Department.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not adopt Ordinance No. 23-1274	Three LTE will not be hired.

Staff Recommendation

Adopt Ordinance No. 23-1274, amending the 2023 Budgeted Positions and Salary Schedule that was incorporated into Ordinance No. 1256, adopting the 2023-2024 biennial budget.