

# CITY OF LYNDEN

## POLICE DEPARTMENT

Steve Taylor, Police Chief  
(360) 354-2828



### Public Safety Committee Meeting - 03/07/2024 Agenda

Police Department - 203 19th Street  
4:00 PM March 07, 2024

#### **Call to Order** 4:00PM

**Roll Call:** Committee Members Present: March Wohlrab, Lee Beld, Gary Vis  
Others Present: City Administrator John Williams, Police Chief Steve Taylor, Lieutenant J. Bos, Police Support Services Manager Sharon Clark, Fire Chief Mark Billmire, Fire Support Services Manager Kinsey Dehaan.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

1. January 2024 Draft Minutes: Approved

#### **Items from the Audience**

***Scheduled- None scheduled.***

#### ***Unscheduled (20 Minutes)***

*Audience members may address the Committee on any issue other than those scheduled for a public hearing or those on which the public hearing has been closed. Prior to commenting please state your name, address, and topic. Please keep comments under 4 minutes.*

Cynthia Ripke -7000 block Guide Meridian: Would like to see Citizen's Police Academy brought into the school district- Middle school and up. Expressed thanks to the City of Lynden for keeping marijuana dispensaries out of the city limits. Inquired about different proposed fire taxes and was referred to Whatcom County tax assessor office due to her living outside of the city limits and was advised that the City of Lynden does not have separate Fire tax lines.

Mikhail Nichols- 2000 block Anders Ln- Voiced some concerns over Law Enforcement response to Domestic Violence incidents with the community as well as concerns over perceived racial and gender biases being present due to personal negative experiences.

#### **Committee Items**

2. Downtown Parking – Community Development brought forward the request that employees of downtown businesses park off the street and not in front of the businesses on Front Street. Would also like to see the 3-hour parking time limit enforced on Front Street. (This entails needing to create a position to monitor this daily as well as a system to impose and uphold any fines issued.) Would parking on side streets then create another parking problem?  
Committee conversation about other parking options included a parking garage, (The

current cost to build a parking garage at this time is estimated to be 80,000.00 per parking stall.) Acquiring property downtown to put in an additional parking lot for downtown employees and overflow parking. While conversations continue a letter will be sent to downtown business owners asking that their employees use side street parking, leaving the parking spaces on Front Street open to customers visiting the downtown businesses in the interim.

3. Public Safety-Chamber of Commerce Events 2024(Permits) – The Chamber of Commerce has submitted their annual event list. The Public Safety Committee is moving the list forward to the next upcoming council meeting for full council approval.

### **Fire Department Items**

4. -LFD Annual Report 2023 – See attached report.  
\*\*additional stat for the year- There were 677 (28% of the time) Overlapping calls (anytime simultaneous calls are occurring) in 2023.\*\*
5. Public Safety Committee Meeting - LFD January report. – See Attached report.
6. - LFD- Response volume. See attached report.  
Committee member Lee Beld wanted confirmation that the department staffing level has not changed since 2017. Historically the department has relied on its combination status of career and volunteers to help offset staffing needs. The department is down to only 1 volunteer. The department applied for a SAFER grant in 2023 with hopes of adding two additional full-time career positions but was not an award recipient.

Areas with high response volume.

-High response areas include our adult family homes and the 1600 block of Grover.

7. LFD February 2024 Report- See attached report
8. Ladder 75 Update – Firefighter Brink, Firefighter Hastings and the department mechanic have gone over most recent specs for the build. Firefighter Hastings and the department mechanic will be making a site visit in April to check on progress and have any questions answered. Delivery date has been bumped up from spring of 2025 to November or December of 2024.
9. Part-Time recruitment update. – Panel and Chief's interviews concluded, presenting eligibility list for Civil service approval and the next meeting.

### **Police Department Items**

10. Public Safety PD Stats - January 2024- See attached report

11. Public Safety PD Stats - February 2024 -See attached report

-Body Worn Camera's- There are currently four in use. We expect within 3-6 months that they will be utilized department wide. We have been getting positive feedback from the officers currently using them.

-Hiring Update: Annika Bierlink will be sworn in at the March 11<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. We won't have an academy date for her until July, so she will be able to help as needed in records. We will be working with HR to begin the process to fill her vacated records position.

- Proposal to add two Corporal Positions- See attached proposal

In the amended RCW there is a NO pursuit stipulation during times there is no assigned supervisor on duty. The addition of adding two Corporals will limit the time our department does not have a supervisor on duty and ensure there is a supervisor on shift for as many hours as possible throughout a 24-hour period.

Citizen Mikhail voiced agreement that supervisors need to be available throughout the shift and having gaps in supervisory coverage creates a safety hazard as well as an inefficient system pertaining to pass downs from shift to shift.

Committee Member Beld asked if during times when there is no supervisor scheduled if there was the option of "acting" paying the senior officer out of class pay to stand in as "acting supervisor" and mentioned that Whatcom County Sheriff's Office has been doing this for multiple years. Chief Taylor will investigate to see if having an "acting" would fulfill the supervisory requirement necessary per the RCW. Chief Taylor also advised that agencies similar in size are going in the same direction of adding Corporals due to the amended RCW. Should the request for additional Corporals be approved, it would be around summer that the promotional process would be completed. Due to having an unfilled position since October we would be within budget capacity for 2024 to finance the promotions. The promotions would then be included in the budget process moving forward. City Administrator Williams advised that the next step would be to present this to the Mayor for his approval on the budget adjustment. The Public Safety Committee is in support of the request and will move it forward for Mayor approval.

**Adjournment:** 1718