



**OELWEIN POLICE DEPARTMENT
CITY OF OELWEIN, IOWA
MEMORANDUM**

FROM: Jeremy P. Logan, Chief of Police

DATE: September 28, 2023

TO: City Administrator Dylan Mulfinger

SUBJECT: Budget Offset Plan - Police

Consideration and research has been conducted in reference to the September 12, 2023 memo from you. That memo "Budget Cut Time", indicates that each department is to provide options to phase in budget cuts revenue streams over a three year period. The number provided for the police department is \$105,000 over three years.

As you are aware, many factors come into play when considering and making budget cuts. Most importantly is providing an efficient and effective budget for the least amount of money. Police staffing levels must meet the expectation and need of a community. The community of Oelwein has a high demand for services from a police department. Other considerations are factors outside the control of the Public Safety Chief. Some of those factors are:

- 1) Employee contract agreements. While outside the control of the Public Safety Chief, this area is certainly a necessity in order to provide effective pay and benefits to maintain staffing. The current contract calls for a 3% increase for the officers in July of 2025. This pace or greater will need to be maintained for many years in order to properly compensate officers and to be able to recruit quality new officers.
- 2) The return of dispatch operations. The City of Oelwein did not have any way to know that the county would drastically shift their billing methodology for dispatching services. The county suddenly drawing a line in the sand to increase dispatch cost from \$25,000 annually to \$140,000 annually, after the current budget was certified, created additional budgetary hardships. The city administrator and public safety chief worked aggressively to lower that expense by re-implementing a non-emergency dispatch center at the Oelwein Police Department. An important factor to recognize is that the dispatching budget falls completely on the police department budget lines. Dispatching services provided to the utilities departments, city hall, community development, and the fire department are not items in which those departments are tasked with budgeting for. hypothetically, if you estimated all of those services at 5% of dispatch time, that calculates to 10% of the desired cuts. That information is not provided as a request to have those department's budget lines contribute to dispatch services, that information is provided to provide perspective on the overall budget cut request and the significant number presented for the police department.
- 3) Ring Central - The police department worked diligently to receive grant funds that covers the expense of the monthly building internet/phone service, the monthly in-car mobile connectivity charge, back-up building internet fees and SD-Wan fees, and the annual RMS dispatch to car software fees. Those funds totaled approximately \$99,000 for fees incurred over 10 years. For simplicity, those funds are saving the City of Oelwein approximately \$10,000 per year for ten years. After those funds were received, the City of Oelwein joined the police department in an IP phone setup. The police department has been on an IP phone setup since 2014. With that project, the City of Oelwein contracted with Ring Central to provide IP phone services. A large share of those fees were shifted to the police department budgeted as non-budgeted expenses. This approximate \$12,500 annual fee is outside the control of the public safety chief. That expense has to be added into the police annual budget moving forward.



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- 4) Inflation - The costs of fuel, ammunition, police equipment, and services has met or in some areas exceeding the historic increase in inflation.
- 5) Legislation - The legislature continues to add to the required in-service training of officers. This unfunded mandate impacts more than just the cost of training, but the officer time needed to complete the training and replacing that officer while they are at training.

The current city administrator has performed his job in an effective and meaningful manner. In the past seven years, the police department has received systematic budget cuts in a number of line items. In FY2018, the police budget was cut back to the FY2015 funding levels, all while still honoring the employee (officer and dispatcher) contractual pay increases annually. The administrative assistant position was eliminated from the police department and additional cuts have been made in the personnel (training), equipment, utilities, uniform supply, vehicle (maintenance/fuel), reserve officer, office supply, and computer supply lines. Those cuts have been made, even with the costs increasing in those areas. I would challenge anyone to maintain budget lines in today's times at levels from five to seven years ago, let alone budget levels that have decreased.

For the sake of this proposal, the Independence Police Department budget will be compared to the budget of the Oelwein Police Department. I recognize that the property tax base in Independence, Iowa is greater than that of Oelwein, Iowa. However, the communities are like-sized and are geographically comparable. For those reasons, Independence is a fit comparable as this demonstrates the needs of our communities to provide law enforcement services.

The Independence Police Department has an authorized officer strength of twelve officers plus a police canine.

The Oelwein Police Department has an authorized officer strength of eleven officers.

The difference in salary budget lines between the two departments is approximately the difference in wages from Independence having one more officer than Oelwein.

The Independence Police Department has one administrative assistant and contracts for dispatch services through Buchanan County.

The Oelwein Police Department now has our own dispatch center again.

The budget lines for Independence's admin assist. and dispatch contract is approximately \$25,000 more than the budget line for the Oelwein dispatch center.

The current overall budget for the Independence Police Department (\$1,251,263) is greater than the current Oelwein Police Department budget, with the unanticipated re-implentation of dispatch factored in (\$1,173,285).



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In November of 2022, the City of Oelwein, under the guidance and operational control of the Oelwein Police Department, implemented the use of automated traffic enforcement cameras. Since the enforcement period initiated, the ATE's have demonstrated a revenue increase (11-13-2022 thru 09-25-2023), after all fees are paid to the vendor, of \$576,256. Moving forward, a conservative estimate of \$500,000 in annual revenue is expected from this safety enforcement equipment. Additionally, the Oelwein Police Department is presently in discussions with an area community that is in the process of implementing similar ATE's. The neighboring community is seeking the assistance of the Oelwein Police Department in processing the violations observed through that system. The Oelwein Police Department would receive a percentage of the revenue from those safety enforcement devices that is estimated at approximately \$110,000 annually.

The Oelwein Police Department is being tasked with cutting \$105,000 from the operational budget or increasing revenue the same over a three-year period. The following three proposals are being offered for consideration in relation to the budgetary memo provided by City Administrator Mulfinger.

- 1) The utilization of all revenues generated from providing ATE monitoring and processing for a neighboring community will cover the desired increase in revenue, or;
- 2) The utilization of \$105,000 from the \$500,000+ revenue from existing local ATE system will cover the desired increase in revenue, or;
- 3) The City of Oelwein currently has a Franchise Fee that by Iowa law can be utilized for non-salary public safety operational expenses. Shifting the costs of all non-salary police operational expenses from the General Fund line items to the Franchise Fee line items would remove approximately \$149,000 in expenses from the General Fund.

In review of the police department budget history, the budget reflects one that has been streamlined over the years, while maintaining the same number of FTE's over the past seven years and comparatively having one less FTE from the FY12 and prior budget years. While many city department's have increased in authorized personnel numbers over the years, the Oelwein Police Department has remained consistent, while fluctuating up and down, but not increasing overall numbers.

FY2012 and prior = 11 officers - 1 Administrative Assistant - 4 dispatchers	Total = 16 FTE's
FY2013-FY2016 = 10 officers - 1 Administrative Assistant - 4 dispatchers	Total = 15 FTE's
FY2017-FY2021 = 10 officers - 4 dispatchers	Total = 14 FTE's
FY2022- = 11 officers - 1 Administrative Assistant - 1 clerical	Total = 13 FTE's
FY2023- = 11 officers - 4 dispatchers	Total = 15 FTE's

In order to maintain effective and efficient public safety for the community of Oelwein, I respectfully request consideration of the options provided within this proposal.