



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

**FROM:** Jeremy P. Logan, Chief of Police

**DATE:** October 6, 2022

**TO:** City Administrator Dylan Mulfinger – Mayor Brett DeVore – Public Safety Committee

**SUBJECT:** Consideration of Drone Ordinance

Due to concerns expressed by a citizen at an Oelwein City Council meeting, consideration of enacting a drone regulatory ordinance was referred to the Public Safety Committee.

At first glance, I would offer that our community has not been plagued with issues surrounding drones or drone complaints from our citizens. To my recollection, this is the only "drone" incident that we have had in the past few years. This incident itself appears to be a misunderstanding that was mishandled by a citizen. Our officers handling of the matter was reviewed by our command staff and found to be appropriate. The decision to not file charges in this matter was supported by the Fayette County Attorney's Office, and when the subject filed a complaint on the handling of the matter to the State Ombudsman's Office, wrong-doing was not found.

Enacting a regulatory ordinance on drones will be difficult for law enforcement to enforce. Officers would have to:

- 1) Prove ownership of the drone
- 2) Prove intent of the drone owner/flyer
- 3) Prove the height of the drone in question
- 4) Catch the drone in the act of wrong-doing while simultaneously identifying the operator of the drone during that act.

There are FAA regulations on drone flying that already exist. Mainly, drone flying in our area is performed as recreation, by the schools, and by insurance adjusters. We have not had issues that would support an ordinance. The proposed ordinance would require a permit to fly, issued by the city, which would hinder our school districts promotional efforts and hinder the efficiency of insurance adjusters and other inspection services.

The Oelwein Police Department would not be supportive of enacting an ordinance that regulates drone flying at this time.