Police and Fire Commission Meeting

Whitewater Municipal Building Community Room,
312 West Whitewater St., Whitewater, WI 53190
*In Person and Virtual

Tuesday, October 13, 2026 - 6:00 PM

Citizens are welcome (and encouraged) to join our webinar via computer, smart phone, or telephone. Citizen participation is welcome during topic discussion periods.

Police and Fire Commission Meeting

October 13th, 2026 at 6:00 PM

https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/246606074530401?p=jKFDBOwJVkOjT9ozqV

Meeting ID: 246 606 074 530 401 Passcode: y62vY64s

You can also dial in using your phone:

Phone Number: 1-929-229-5663 Phone Conference ID: 726 410 770#

Please note that although every effort will be made to provide for virtual participation, unforeseen technical difficulties may prevent this, in which case the meeting may still proceed as long as there is a quorum. Should you wish to make a comment in this situation, you are welcome to call this number: (262) 473-0108.

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Commissioner Kathryn Boyd.

ROLL CALL

Present:
Commissioner Kathryn Boyd
Commissioner Beverly Stone
Commissioner Mwita Binagi
Commissioner Marissa Aranda
Police Chief Daniel Meyer
Police Captain Adam Vander Steeg
Police Captain Ryan Taft
Assistant Fire Chief Ryan Dion
Support Services Manager Sabrina Ojibway

Absent:
Commissioner Tom Miller

APPROVAL OF AGENDA
A commission member can choose to remove an item from the agenda or rearrange its order; however,

introducing new items to the agenda is not allowed. Any proposed changes require a motion, a second, and approval from the Commission to be implemented. The agenda shall be approved at each meeting even if no changes are being made at that meeting.

Motion made by Commissioner Stone, Seconded by Commissioner Binagi to approve agenda.

Voting Yes: Commissioner Boyd, Commissioner Stone, Commissioner Binagi and Commissioner Aranda. Motion passed.

CONSENT AGENDA

Items on the Consent Agenda will be approved together unless any commission member requests that an item be removed for individual consideration.

1. Approval of Minutes for May 12th, 2026

Motion was made by Commissioner Binagi, Seconded by Commissioner Aranda to approve the consent agenda.

Voting Yes: Commissioner Boyd, Commissioner Stone, Commissioner Binagi and Commissioner Aranda. Motion passed.

HEARING OF CITIZEN COMMENTS

No formal Commission action will be taken during this meeting although issues raised may become a part of a future agenda. Participants are allotted a three minute speaking period. Specific items listed on the agenda may not be discussed at this time; however, citizens are invited to speak to those specific issues at the time the Commission discusses that particular item.

To make a comment during this period, or during any agenda item: On a computer or handheld device, locate the controls on your computer to raise your hand. You may need to move your mouse to see these controls. On a traditional telephone, dial *6 to unmute your phone and dial *9 to raise your hand.

There were no citizen comments.

REPORTS

2. Fire Chief's Report

a. Personnel Update

Firefighter/Paramedic Tanner Stark submitted his resignation of FTE status and will be transitioning to Paid-on-Call status. Alex Rohde was moved from an LTE position to FTE.

b. Training Update

The training center is complete and being utilized. The Fire Department has conducted their first live burn and will continue to work on various job performance requirements until winter.

c. Community Engagement Update

Fall Fire prevention is currently in progress. During October, the Fire Department has visited two first grade classes, participated in the Washington Elementary “Pick a Day,

Come and Play" event, and conducted multiple fire extinguisher training sessions with over 200 attendees' year to date.

d. Equipment Update

The install of the base station radio and station alerting in the apparatus bay is almost complete. The ambulance that was sent out for refurbishing is back and in-service. New kitchen countertops were installed in the Fire Department the previous week.

3. Police Chief's Report

a. Personnel Update

The Police Department currently has an applicant in the background investigation stage for their dispatcher hiring process. The patrol officer hiring process closed on Friday, and the department is looking to hire up to two officers from that group of 20 applicants. Capt. Vander Steeg will be administering the written test for that group on October 14th and 15th. Patrol Lieutenant Ryan Aldrich's last day was October 4th, and he will be taking a position with the Walworth County Sheriff's Office. Patrol Officer Cody Schenker's last day was October 9th as he is taking a position with the Eagle Police Department.

The Police Department picnic was held on August 6th. Congratulations were extended to the 2025 award winners:

1. Civilian Community Service Award: IT Technicians Cris Crane and Andrew Swartz
2. Exceptional Service Award: Communications Coordinator Heidi Gempler
3. Distinguished Service Award: Detective Justin Brock
4. Trainer of the Year: Lieutenant Blake Dorman
5. Lifesaving Medal: Detective Justin Brock and Officer Saul Valadez
6. Civilian of the Year: Dispatcher Jeannette Gonzalez
7. Officer of the Year: Lieutenant Taylor Krahn

b. Training Update

Sworn staff completed Taser recertification training in August provided by in-house state-certified instructors. All sworn staff completed Rescue Task Force (RTF) training in September and October.

c. Community Engagement Update

Officers played soccer and basketball with local students at the School Supply giveaway at the Armory on August 17th. Officers attended the "Pick a Day, Come and Play" event at Washington Elementary on October 1st.

d. Department Updates to Include: Noteworthy Trends in Call Volume/Domestic Violence Cases/Drug Cases, PD Evidence/Training Garage, Outdoor Range, Immigration Liaison Federal Funding, Flock Cameras, and 2027 Initiatives: K9 and Aurelian AI-Assisted Dispatch Being Requested at the 10/19/2026 Finance Committee Meeting

Noteworthy Trends:

1. General PD Call Volume continues to increase:

- 2022: 11,976
- 2023: 12,383
- 2024: 14,245
- 2025: 16,375
- 2026: 17,430 (pace)

2. Domestic Violence incidents continue to increase annually. The department is working on addressing this with their Community Impact Team and the lethality assessment program:

- 2022: 51
- 2023: 74
- 2024: 77
- 2025: 93
- 2026: 96 (pace)

3. Concerning drug trends. So far in 2026, the Police Department has responded to three drug overdose deaths, and they have also seized a bus that was being used as a meth lab.

PD Evidence/Training Garage: Construction is scheduled to be completed by the last week of October or the first week of November. This facility will be used to hold the department's long-term evidence storage and will also be utilized as a training space.

Outdoor Range: The construction of an outdoor firearms range that will be used for PD training is almost complete. The soil and earthwork for the range was completed by Tanis at very low cost. The range will contribute to cost savings for the department due to reduced fuel consumption and overtime associated with transportation to the Walworth County outdoor range.

Immigration Liaison Federal Funding: On September 1st, the Police Department received the Notice of Award from the Department of Health and Human Services – Administration for Children and Families. This is a federal grant for $85,000 to fund an immigration liaison position that will be supervised by the City Attorney. The position was posted a few weeks ago by city HR and, to date, has received very little interest. If the posting does not generate qualified applicants, the department will be working with the granting authority to determine if they are able to adjust how that money can be utilized.

Flock Cameras: This topic is frequently in the news and has been discussed extensively at recent Common Council meetings. Whitewater Police Department currently utilizes 13 Flock cameras within the city, and they have been an extremely valuable investigative tool. The department made some internal adjustments to their use of Flock (increasing their audit frequency, reducing the number of departments they share data with, decreasing the number of staff with access to search, and reducing the retention period of the data), and with those changes the department feels they are mitigating risks while continuing to retain the benefits of the system.

2027 Initiatives Being Requested at 10/19 Finance Committee Meeting:

1. K9 – The department will be requesting to utilize funds (saved through vacancies) to purchase a K9, associated training and outfitting a K9 vehicle in 2026.
   - This is primarily in response to some of the recent concerning drug trends. Currently, there is approximately $23,000 in the K9 donation fund that can only be used for this purpose.
   - Total costs in 2026 will depend on how Council decides to move forward with squad outfitting but range from approximately $25,250 to $90,000 if the K9 funds are utilized.
   - Moving forward the department will be requesting to include the approximately $8,100 annual costs of the program in the PD budget.
2. Aurelian AI-Assisted Dispatch – The department will also be requesting to add funding for AI-assisted dispatching in their 2027 PD budget at a cost of $31,500 annually.
   - Aurelian analyzed the Communication Center's call volume and estimates that 60-80% of their call volume could be handled by their AI product.
   - Staff conducted an on-site observation of the Aurelian system at the Waukesha County Communications Center and were impressed with the integration of Aurelian with their daily processes.
   - Human review of all AI handled calls still occurs.
   - Implementation of Aurelian is not intended to replace humans in dispatch but simply remove some of the burden of the less important calls so dispatchers can focus on the more critical calls and tasks.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Adjourn to Closed Session, TO RECONVENE, pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes 19.85(1)(c) "Considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility". Items to be discussed:

4. Interview of Patrol Lieutenant Candidate(s)

Motion made by Commissioner Binagi, Seconded by Commissioner Aranda to go into closed session.

Voting Yes: Commissioner Boyd, Commissioner Stone, Commissioner Binagi and Commissioner Aranda. Motion passed.

The Police & Fire Commission went into closed session at 6:21 p.m.

RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION

Motion made by Commissioner Binagi, Seconded by Commissioner Aranda to go into open session.

Voting Yes: Commissioner Boyd, Commissioner Stone, Commissioner Binagi and Commissioner Aranda. Motion passed.

The Police & Fire Commission went into open session at 7:10 p.m.

5. Announcement of Recommendation Concerning Whitewater Police Department Promotional Process

Motion made by Commissioner Aranda, Seconded by Commissioner Binagi to endorse and recommend the promotion of Derek Johnson to the position of Patrol Lieutenant for the City of Whitewater Police Department.

Voting Yes: Commissioner Boyd, Commissioner Stone, Commissioner Binagi and Commissioner Aranda. Motion passed.

Motion made by Commissioner Aranda, Seconded by Commissioner Binagi to endorse and recommend the promotion of Hunter Martin to the position of Patrol Lieutenant for the City of Whitewater Police Department.

Voting Yes: Commissioner Boyd, Commissioner Stone, Commissioner Binagi and Commissioner Aranda. Motion passed.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

A Special Session meeting was requested for mid-November for the purpose of interviewing patrol officer candidates. Commissioner Boyd requested a discussion of the review of the Police & Fire Commission interview questions in closed session with no formal action to be taken.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Commissioner Binagi, Seconded by Commissioner Aranda to adjourn.

Voting Yes: Commissioner Boyd, Commissioner Stone, Commissioner Binagi and Commissioner Aranda. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

A quorum of the Common Council may be present. This notice is given to inform the public that no formal action will be taken at this meeting.

Anyone requiring special arrangements is asked to call the Office of the City Manager / City Clerk (262-473-0102) at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.