



Police and Fire Commission Meeting Minutes – August 22, 2023

ABSTRACT/SYNOPSIS OF THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE OFFICIAL ACTIONS OF THE POLICE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WHITEWATER, WALWORTH AND JEFFERSON COUNTIES, WISCONSIN

Video and audio of this meeting can be viewed on the City of Whitewater web site at <https://www.whitewater-wi.gov/AgendaCenter>

- I. Call to Order, Roll Call – Jerry Grant called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm.
Members present: Jerry Grant, Beverly Stone, Mwita Binagi, and Marissa Aranda
Members absent: Tom Miller
Also present: Police Chief Daniel Meyer, EMS Chief Jason Dean, Assistant Fire Chief Ryan Dion, Captain Adam Vander Steeg, and Records Specialist Cathy Swartz
- II. Approval of Minutes from May 10, 2023 - On a motion by Binagi with a second by Stone the minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.
AYES: Grant, Stone, Binagi, Aranda
NOES: None
ABSENT: Miller
- III. Citizen Comments - Grant read the following disclaimer: *“No formal Police Commission Meeting action will be taken during this meeting although issues raised may become part of a future agenda. Participants are allotted up to three to five minutes to speak about what they wish. Specific items listed on the agenda may not be discussed at this time; however, citizens may speak to those issues at the time the Police Commission discusses that particular item.”*
There were no citizen comments.
- IV. New Business
 - IV. A. League of Municipalities PFC Training Webinar – Grant stated that the upcoming training will be on October 25th. Chief Meyer mentioned this is only offered online and that registration is allowed up to the date of the training and will be paid by the city.
 - IV. B. Whitewater City Ordinance 2.28 Update – Grant stated that it is newly revised. Stone mentioned it passed at council and the appointment of a city council member has been removed. Grant mentioned that the law no longer allows it. Grant mentioned also that this gives the PFC authority over the fire department.
 - IV. C. PFC Document Review –
 1. Code of Ethics – Grant stated he would like to review the Code of Ethics at least once a year. Chief Meyer pointed out that the Responsibilities and Expectations document states that each commissioner needs to read and sign the Code of Ethics document when taking office. Chief Meyer was not aware if this has been done in the past. Binagi and Grant mentioned they have not signed it. Chief Meyer suggested that at the next meeting that all commissioners sign the Code of Ethics document and Grant agreed. Asst. Fire

Chief Dion mentioned that he believes there is a rider in the annex of the digital handbook.

2. Handbook for Wisconsin Police and Fire Commissioners – Grant stated that it's something that is received when you go to the training. Grant mentioned that everyone has a copy of it.
3. PFC Processes - Chief Meyer asked if the PFC members have had a chance to read through the rest of the processes. The Police Department's processes document needs to be reviewed due to some grammatical changes and minor changes to some processes that have recently changed. Asst. Fire Chief Dion mentioned that he included the most recent Fire document in the packet as well and it will be reviewed as the organization grows. The Fire Department document will not need to be reviewed at the next meeting.

Some changes to the Police documents mentioned by the Chief Meyer were: Page 2 -no more polygraph assessment and Page 4 -Under Suspension and Demotion – Request for a hearing should be in writing to the ~~PFC President and the Secretary~~ *Chief of Police then passed along to the PFC President*. The PFC members and the Chief will bring changes that they believe need to be changed to the next meeting to be discussed and changed based on what the PFC decides.

IV. D. Police Chief's Report

1. Personnel Update

- a. New Hires
 1. Patrol Officer Derek Johnson was sworn in on 7/24/2023.
 2. Dispatcher Kyliegh Jeffords resigned 7/11/2023.
- b. Two Dispatcher vacancies remain – interviews held 8/1/2023 and four backgrounds are being conducted.
- c. One CSO vacancy remains (replacing Derek Johnson). Capt. Vander Steeg posted the position and we have 12 applicants right now and will be holding interviews on September 12th.

2. Training Update

- a. Department-wide EVOC (Emergency Vehicle Operation and Control)/Pursuit Training provided for all sworn staff May 15th-17th at Jefferson Speedway.
- b. Department-wide Firearms Qualification training occurred between June 5th and June 26th for all sworn staff at the Walworth County Range. They are required to qualify twice a year.
- c. All sworn staff received the Department of Transportation's intoximeter update in July.

- d. Upcoming HRVC (High Risk Vehicle Contacts) training update on August 28th and 29th to provide all sworn staff with the state's updated model.

3. Community Engagement Update

- a. June 8th the PD helped escort participants in the final leg of the Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run from Cravath Lakefront to Perkins Stadium. The event will be held in Whitewater again in 2024.
- b. Lt. Nick Borchardt and Det. Justin Brock provided active threat training for staff at MacLean Fogg on July 27th. The training was recorded and the City Manager has asked that all City staff be required to view it. It is a 30-minute training.
- c. Lt. Nick Borchardt and Det. Justin Brock will again be providing active threat training for staff at Premier Bank on August 24th.
- d. The PD hosted Tavern Owner/Manager training on July 25th. Special Agents from the Wisconsin Department of Revenue-Alcohol and Tobacco Enforcement Bureau provided training for approximately 15 attendees including reps from the Walworth County Tavern League.

4. Equipment Updates

- a. The department purchased a DJI M30T UAS (drone) in June 2023. Officers deployed the drone for the first time on July 27th searching for a male who fled from a domestic incident. The department has had several other drone deployments since then, one was assisting the Fire Department with a possible plane crash in Rock County. Grant asked for a drone demonstration for the PFC. Chief Meyer mentioned that they plan to do a public demonstration within the next couple months and the PFC could take part in that demonstration. The drone cost approximately \$17,000 and was purchased entirely with donated funds using the department's Crime Prevention fund. This has IR and thermal imaging capability which is going to be a tremendous asset. The team of seven officers is led by Officer Jen Ludlum. The drone team received 8 hours of training on July 26th.
- b. In late July the department purchased a second, smaller drone intended for indoor use. This one can be used via a virtual reality headset. This will be used by the department's SRT Team to assist with clearing residences safely during search warrant execution. This drone was also purchased via donated funds.

5. Annual Report Review

A copy of the annual report was provided. Page 20 - there is a list of officer complaints that are released publicly in this document every year. Pages 22 to 33 list various departmental statistics. Chief Meyer offered to field any questions the PFC may have regarding the report.

6. Miscellaneous Topics

- a. The Whitewater Professional Police Association (WPPA) and the Whitewater Professional Police Supervisors Association (WPPSA) unions are still working through their respective collective bargaining processes.
- b. The police department received a \$500 donation from Generac on August 4th, to be added to our Crime Prevention fund.
- c. A new Search Warrant Response Team (SRT) was created. This team will be utilized for search warrant entries to ensure a safe and consistent response. A total of 11 officers comprise the team. Lt. Nick Borchardt is the Team Leader, Lt. Ryan Taft is the Assistant Team Leader. Some uniform outfitting and training will be occurring in the near future with minimal costs. The SRT Team is currently up and running.
- d. LEA Grant funds – With the balance of the grant money, the department's intent is to request approval to purchase Automated License Plate Reader (ALPRS) cameras. They are motion activated cameras that grab the license plates. The request will be for 3 of them with a two-year contract.
- e. On July 13th, the detective bureau assisted the Walworth County Drug Unit and Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) in executing a search warrant on the east side of the City. The search resulted in the seizure of an ounce of cocaine, \$50,000 cash, 5 vehicles, and a large number of fake documents and vehicle registrations.
- f. Annual Police Picnic and 2022 Awards Ceremony was held on August 16th: Officer of the Year – Officer Brandon Taylor, Civilian of the year – Support Services Manager Sabrina Ojibway and Records Specialist Angela Sahr, Lifesaving Metal – Lieutenant Nick Borchardt, Detective Anthony Heilberger, and Officers Haydon Beecroft, Taylor Krahn, Brandon Taylor and Richard Ellis; Trainer of the Year – Lieutenant Nick Borchardt; Distinguished Service Award – Officer Saul Valadez; and Exceptional Service Award – Communications Coordinator Heidi Gempfer, and Dispatchers Jeannette Gonzalez and Maci Shrock. Grant mentioned that this replaces the Police Week Ceremony.

IV. E. Fire Chief's Report (provided by Fire Assistant Chief Dion)

1. Personnel Update

- a. Six Non-Disciplinary Terminations occurred since the last PFC meeting. These terminations were due to failure to meet required participation and training benchmarks. Post-merger there were certain standards and trainings that had to be met and clearly communicated benchmarks were set. None of the terminations were disciplinary, staff just didn't meet the benchmarks.
- b. Three resignations since the last PFC meeting.

- c. The Whitewater Fire Department recognized Jim Rogers for 43 years of service and Terry Phelps for 55 years of service.
- d. Currently conducting interviews for paid on-call fire fighters and EMTs. First round of interviews for part-time positions is August 23rd. There is currently one full-time firefighter/EMT position open and applications are still being accepted.

Stone asked what the response time was for the last fire downtown as compared to before they had full time staff. Asst. Fire Chief Dion stated he believed the response time was under 2 minutes and noted that last year at this time it would have been around 5-8 minutes. He also mentioned that there are posts on social media weekly that provide updates and fire department metrics.

Grant noted that in the city ordinance and in the handbook that firemen cannot become full-time employees with the city until the PFC interviews them and the fire department develops a wish list. Dion mentioned that the list that is developed is the eligibility for promotion list. They won't establish an eligibility list for hiring yet. It will be demand based.

2. Training Update

- a. Mid-July presented the opportunity for training at the Hawk Bowl apartments site. The fire department was permitted to do nondestructive training by DLK. They are in talks with Aldi's corporate manager to do destructive training once it's sold to them. They've had 6 ladder training sessions, both ground ladder and fixed aerial device, with a plan to conduct search, rescue and forcible entry training.
- b. EMS training – EMS Chief Dean stated that they train monthly on different skills.
- c. EMS is operating at full paramedic level. They have three shifts running, and on two of the shifts there are two paramedics running, so two trucks that are Advanced Life Support (ALS) capable. The department is currently looking to hire one more paramedic. The last shipment of medication has also been received. They have one last step and that is to become Rapid Sequence Intubation (RSI) certified with hopes to be certified within the next six months.

3. Community Engagement Update

- a. In March, retired Asst. Fire Chief Scott Oldenberg passed away and his family made a cash donation in his namesake to the Fire Department. With that donation, the department purchased a new fire extinguisher training prop that allows them to facilitate a live fire in a safe and controlled manner. The intention is to use it to engage community groups and businesses in the use of portable fire extinguishers to combat incipient fire before it spreads and leads to loss of life and property. The

training prop has only been in use for a few weeks and they have had 3 sessions with over 40 participants (Mulberry Glen and two at Lavelle Industries).

- b. Last month the on-duty crew were special guests at Fairhaven, where they called out BINGO numbers for the residents.

4. Miscellaneous Topics

- a. The department will be purchasing a second set of turnout gear for firefighters. It is a National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA) recommendation to help combat the effects of post-fire carcinogens that contaminate the gear. This allows one set of gear to be properly washed and dried after a fire or hazardous materials incident, while still allowing personnel to respond to a subsequent call without donning contaminated gear. Looking to use funds from the Hickey fund (donation from a family of a retired fire chief that had passed away) currently in the community foundation. The Hickey fund is specifically for Fire and EMS health, safety and paramedic service.
- b. They will be reassessing their organizational chart in the future. Included in this will be the potential to develop a new officer eligibility list.
- c. The department plans to conduct reviews of their administrative procedures as they pertain to hiring and separation. Asst, Fire Chief Dion and Grant had a meeting a couple months ago and discussed the possibility of interviewing all full-time new hires and keeping the paid on-call (POC) positions as a simple certification process. Instead of a simple certification for full-time employees, they'll exercise the power in the PFC handbook to have the PFC interview all potential full-time candidates.

IV. F. Adjournment to Closed Session, to Reconvene per Wisconsin State Statute §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."*

1. Item to be Discussed: Interview of EMS Lieutenant Candidate

On a motion from Aranda with a second from Binagi, the Commissioners adjourned to closed session at 7:12pm.

AYES: Grant, Stone, Binagi, Aranda

NOES: None

ABSENT: Miller

IV. G. Reconvene into Open Session

On a motion from Stone with a second from Aranda, the Commissioners reconvened into open session at 7:32pm.

AYES: Grant, Stone, Binagi, Aranda

NOES: None

ABSENT: Miller

1. Announcement of Recommendation Concerning EMS Lieutenant Promotional Process

On a motion from Binagi with a second from Aranda the Commissioners moved to approve the promotion of Firefighter/Paramedic Crystal Griffin to the position of EMS Lieutenant effective August 22, 2023. This appointment is subject to the successful completion of a 12-month probationary period.

AYES: Grant, Stone, Binagi, Aranda

NOES: None

ABSENT: Miller

V. Future Commission Meeting Dates - The Police Commission will meet on Monday, November 13th in the Municipal Building Community Room.

VI. Future Agenda Items –

1. Have PFC Members sign the Code of Ethics document.
2. Review the PFC Police Processes.
3. Discuss the PFC interviewing all full-time new hires for the Fire Department.

VII. Adjournment - On a motion by Binagi with a second by Aranda the Commissioners unanimously voted to adjourn to closed session.

AYES: Grant, Stone, Binagi, Aranda

NOES: None

ABSENT: Miller

The Commissioners adjourned at 7:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Swartz

Records Specialist