

**MINUTES  
POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSION  
Thursday, July 11, 2013  
City Hall, Room 310  
5:00 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioners Rod Goldhahn, David Nelson, Elizabeth Kostichka, Jim Coates, Lanny Schimmel

OTHERS PRESENT: Assistant Police Chief Lisa Sterr, Fire Chief David Litton, Assistant Fire Chief Michael Niefert and Human Resources Operations Manager Melanie Falk

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm by Commission President Rod Goldhahn. Roll call was taken as noted above.

**1. Approval of the minutes from the regular meeting of the Police and Fire Commission held May 9, 2013, and the minutes of the special meetings held May 29, 2013 and June 14, 2013.**

Comm. Goldhahn noted one minor correction on the May 9<sup>th</sup> minutes and that was to note that in item 5, line two, it should state "Police and Fire". Motion made by Comm. Nelson, second by Comm. Schimmel to approve the minutes of the May 9, May 29, and June 14, 2013 meetings with the correction to the May 9<sup>th</sup> minutes. Motion carried.

**2. President's Report.**

Comm. Goldhahn stated that there were no new items to report.

**3. Communications.**

**A. Budget Status Report**

**B. Budget Spreadsheet**

Comm. Goldhahn noted that again this month most of the spending was due to recruitments for Police and Fire candidates as well as the Fire Chief. Comm. Schimmel made a motion to approve the communications with a second by Comm. Nelson. There was no further discussion and the motion carried.

**4. Approval of Fire Department Promotion.**

Assistant Chief Niefert explained that the promotion was due to the retirement of David Kamps. Comm. Coates made a motion with a second by Comm. Kostichka to approve the following promotion:

- Promotion of Firefighter Kurt VandeKolk to Engineer, effective June 22, 2013.

**5. Fire Intern Hiring List recommendations. (Closed Session)**

Comm. Goldhahn read the closed session statement. Comm. Nelson made a motion to go into closed session with a second by Comm. Kostichka. Motion carried.

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Comm. Coates made a motion to return to open session with a second by Comm. Nelson. Out of closed session it was reported that a candidate was approved to be added to the Fire Intern Hiring List.

#### **6. Update on City Rehire Policy.**

Melanie distributed a copy of the City Rehire Policy that was adopted by the City Council on May 21, 2013. She reported that the Council made it clear that this would apply to all employees, including public safety. Melanie summarized the policy by noting that an employee must have had a minimum of three (3) consecutive years of employment with the City and not have been gone for more than six (6) months to be eligible for rehire. She went on to explain that if more than six (6) months elapsed between the time the employee left and the time they wanted to return, and they were a successful candidate, they would be treated as a new employee. Melanie noted that the policy provides service credit to a returning individual which is applied towards vacation accrual. She added that if the individual is hired into the same position that they left, the service credit would also apply to the salary rate. Melanie stated that the rehire policy does not apply to sick leave accrual or other benefits including Wisconsin Retirement eligibility, nor would it apply to seniority provisions. Lastly, she noted that all rehires are subject to a one (1) year probationary period.

Assistant Chief Niefert asked if a previous employee came to them within the six (6) month window, and the department is currently not hiring, could they be placed on a hiring list. Melanie said she would confer with Human Resources Director Boland on this question. Comm. Goldhahn added that the police and fire departments hire in blocks because they train in blocks, and a rehire could possibly be someone they would not have to retrain.

Comm. Kostichka asked what the previous policy for the police and fire departments was and Melanie explained that there had been an 18 month provision for rehire. She went on to note that rehires observed a probationary period and did not get service credit for vacation but did get service credit towards job bidding and vacation selection. Melanie added that the Commission still has the ability to set the pre-employment criteria and stated that in the past they required an application and did a background investigation, but there was no interview. Comm. Goldhahn reiterated that because the Council set the policy for all departments, including protective services, there is no decision to be made by the Commission to accept or reject it. Melanie confirmed that this is the policy now.

#### **7. Report from the Chiefs.**

Assistant Chief Niefert began the report for the fire department by saying they had a two year employee leave for a position in his hometown of Racine. He thanked the Commissioners that were able to attend the recruit graduation. AC Niefert added that he and Chief Litton have been going around to all of the stations and introducing the new Chief to the staff on all three (3) shifts.

AC Niefert reported that the Hook and Ladder Agreement went to Personnel Committee in June, and because the vote was tied at 2-2, it will continue for now. The union grievance relating to the agreement has not been settled and will go to arbitration. The program is moving slowly as they are not getting many patients that meet the criteria, and though

Bellin has talked to them about expanding the program, they will not do so at this time. Every call has gone well and they feel they are accomplishing what they set out to do. Comm. Goldhahn commented that he thought that AC Niefert did an excellent job presenting the department's and City's position during the hearing with the Personnel Committee.

Lastly, the Assistant Chief noted that special event season has been keeping them busy and specifically mentioned the Cellcom Marathon, Bellin Run and Fireworks on the Fox. He reported that the Packers had invited them to preview the new seating in the stadium and get familiar with the layout. This weekend Pierce Manufacturing is celebrating their 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by holding an event at the stadium. To honor fallen firefighters, they are having a "stair climb" where firefighters in full gear walk up 110 flights of stairs in memory of September 11, 2001. Because this event will be outdoors in high temperatures, and Pierce had not made provisions for this, the department will have an EMS team there. Comm. Coates asked if the department gives input to the Packer's administration on safety and logistics issues, and AC Niefert responded, yes, the fire marshals are there often.

Chief Litton thanked the Commission for their confidence in choosing him as the Fire Chief. He said that he takes very seriously the role of a public servant and his message to the crews this past week is to remind them that they are all public servants. Chief Litton said he appreciates the opportunity and will not let the Commissioners down. The Chief thanked Human Resources and Assistant Chief Niefert for their assistance and commended them for their professionalism. Chief Litton asked the Commissioners for clarification on what, when and by what means they want to hear from the department so that he meets their expectations. Comm. Goldhahn said they can have that discussion under the President's report at the next meeting.

The Chief added that he will be attending Pierce Manufacturing's open house in Appleton and will speak to them about the overtime costs generated by their event as he does not feel that the City should have to absorb that. Chief Litton and Assistant Chief Niefert left at this time.

Assistant Chief Sterr referred to the April meeting where Chief Molitor talked about the department goal of reducing burglaries and thefts by 10% during 2013. She referred to the end of the first quarter status report where they were down by 5.7% and noted they expected that number to change when the weather got warmer. The second quarter statistics show they are down 3.6% right now overall and because this is a fairly new initiative they continue to try different things. Data is always being reviewed and they are finding that some districts report that up to 50% of thefts and burglaries are caused by acquaintances. AC Sterr noted that East side districts are doing extremely well, while the West side districts continue to struggle. The department continues to go through the data and study why that is. She reminded the Commissioners that the plan is only six months old and they are working to perfect it.

In her traffic report, AC Sterr said that the seat belt and speed grants have been frozen by the Federal government so they have suspended those initiatives. She reported that the alcohol enforcement and OWI task forces as well as bicycle and pedestrian safety grants

are still available and will continue. AC Sterr reminded the Commissioners that the Chief had spoken previously about the possibility of a specific traffic unit, but that is off the table for now. In the meantime, the Traffic lieutenant is assigning extra officers to key trouble areas. There has not been a traffic fatality since September 2012 and that is being attributed to increased use of the OWI task force.

AC Sterr said that the department is at full staff right now with 186, but expects two (2) retirements in August. The candidates that will be reviewed tonight would potentially bring that staff level up again. The department currently has seven (7) recruits in training, with one of them completing training by the end of July. The Lieutenant promotional process that was delayed from June will be August 13 & 14, 2013. There are approximately six (6) candidates going through the process which includes the written test and interview.

The Assistant Chief reported that the Community Service Intern program is up and running. The CSI's have been trained to take calls and to date in 2013 they have assisted with 1900 calls compared to 600 calls in all of 2012. The department will get this information out to the officers to show them the results of the program. Online complaint reporting kicked off on May 1, 2013, and 42 emails have been received. These reports are read by the CSI's and assigned as needed for follow up with the more involved cases going to officers.

AC Sterr gave an update on the TRAP initiative with Wal-Mart, noting that the program has stalled temporarily while the Wal-Mart attorneys review the plan. In the meantime, the police department reached out to Festival Foods to start a pilot program. She reported that they are working out the details and Wal-Mart will join when they are ready.

The Assistant Chief noted that no major incidents were reported during the July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks event. The department had extra staffing on the bridge and the biggest task was telling people they couldn't bring coolers into the grounds.

AC Sterr handed out other statistics put together by the department. She briefly discussed staffing issues in the Investigative Unit as they are currently short staffed.

Lastly, the Assistant Chief reported a new initiative where citizens will be encouraged to keep track of their property by sending information, via the web or hard copy, to the police department where it will be entered into a data base. The information in the data base will help return stolen property that is recovered by the department. Citizens will be educated on how to add serial numbers or other identifying numbers on their property. The department is asking for donations from business partners for monthly drawings for gift cards to give as incentives for citizens who take part in the project.

#### **8. Voluntary removal of Patrol Officer candidate.**

Comm. Goldhahn referred to the memo recommending the voluntary removal of Amanda DeValk from the Patrol Officer Eligibility list as she has accepted a position with another police department. Comm. Nelson made a motion to accept the recommendation with a second by Comm. Schimmel. Motion carried.

**9. Review of Patrol Officer Candidates. (Closed session)**

Comm. Goldhahn read the closed session statement. Comm. Kostichka made a motion to go into closed session with a second by Comm. Coates. Motion carried.

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A motion was made by Comm. Kostichka to return to open session with a second by Comm. Coates. Motion carried. Out of closed session Comm. Goldhahn reported that the Commission had reviewed three (3) Patrol Officer candidates and accepted two (2) candidates for the hiring list and rejected one (1).

**10. Bills.**

- a. Psychological Consultants \$450.00
- b. Psychological Consultants \$450.00
- c. Psychological Consultants \$450.00
- d. Psychological Consultants \$450.00
- e. Indian Country Communications \$142.50
- f. Psychological Consultants \$450.00
- g. Psychological Consultants \$450.00
- h. PEI \$500.00
- i. Sidney Johnson \$811.35
- j. PEI \$1,000.00
- k. Able Taxi & Tours \$16.10
- l. Prevea Workmed \$245.00
- m. Prevea Workmed \$3,077.50
- n. Daily Dispatch \$225.00
- o. Hyatt on Main \$226.45

Comm. Schimmel made a motion to approve the bills with a second by Comm. Coates. There was no further discussion and the motion carried.

**11. Set date of next meeting.**

Due to scheduling conflicts, the regular meeting of the Police and Fire Commission scheduled for August 1, 2013, will be moved to August 8, 2013, at 5:00 pm in room 310 of City Hall.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Comm. Schimmel to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Comm. Nelson. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 6:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lola Becker, Recording Secretary

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rod Goldhahn, President