

## **POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSION**

Date/Time: Monday, February 26, 2024 at 7:30 a.m.  
Location: City Hall (407 Grant St) Council Chambers  
Members Present: W. Harris, W. Graef, K. Strasser and R. Reyer  
Members Absent: C. Bahr  
Others Present: M. Barnes, T. Baeten, M. Pauls, J. Kopp, J. Henderson, A. Cha

In accordance with Chapter 19, Wisconsin State Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted at Wausau City Hall and the Public Safety Building, and emailed to the City Pages in the proper manner.

### **Call to Order/Roll Call.**

The Police and Fire Commission meeting was called to order at 7:31 a.m. Roll call was taken of present Police and Fire Commission members to include Harris, Graef, Strasser and Reyer.

### **Minutes of January 22, 2024 meeting.**

Motion by Commissioner Strasser to accept the minutes, second by Commissioner Graef.

### **General Agenda Items: None**

### **Monthly Presentation of Police Department Operations.**

Captain Melinda Pauls provided an update on Patrol Bureau staffing. Officer Mark Kurtzhals and his K-9 partner Rio will be retiring in May. Officer Kathryn Cross and K-9 BO have been selected to fill this vacant position. She highlighted some of the major incidents in February and also provided an update on the completion of yearly in-service training for all sworn staff, as well as Fleet and radar equipment.

Chief Barnes addressed the issue of increasing open records requests faced by the Police Department. He emphasized recent legislation allowing for charging production costs to alleviate the burden on staff and potentially hire additional clerical positions.

Chief Barnes also provided an update on Homelessness, noting a recent increase in homeless individuals over the past two months. This influx has strained resources, leading to issues such as overcrowded shelters and public spaces.

### **Monthly Presentation of Fire Department Operations.**

Chief Kopp inquired if there were any questions on the Annual Report, to which there were none.

Additionally, Chief Kopp informed the Commissioners that the WFD has officially entered into an Auto Aid agreement with Safer Fire District, enabling both parties to automatically dispatch resources to each other's fire calls.

Chief Kopp further updated on staffing, mentioning the recent hiring of two firefighters/paramedics and ongoing interviews to address current staff shortages.

Furthermore, WFD is seeking to hire a Community Care Paramedic position to address unnecessary hospital transports and alleviate strain on emergency services.

**Closed Session Pursuant to Wis. Stat. 19.85(1)(c) the Wisconsin State Statutes considering employment of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercise responsibility for the purpose of interviewing one candidate for Firefighter/Paramedic with the Wausau Fire Department.**

Motion by Commissioner Graef to go into closed session pursuant to section 19.85(1)(c) for considering employment of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility for the purpose of interviewing one candidate for Firefighter/Paramedic with the Wausau Fire Department, second by Commissioner Strasser  
Roll call vote 4-0. Commission went into closed session at 8:22 a.m.

**Reconvene meeting into Open Session for the purpose of acting upon consideration of Closed Session item.**

Motion by Commissioner Graef to reconvene meeting into Open Session for the purpose of acting upon consideration of closed session item, second by Commissioner Strasser.  
Roll call vote 4-0. Commission went back into open session at 8:47 a.m.

Motion by Commissioner Reyer to appoint Boone Lorenz as Firefighter/Paramedic with WFD, second by Commissioner Graef. Motion carried 4-0.

**Next meeting: March 25, 2024**

**Adjourn.**

Motion made by Commissioner Strasser to adjourn, second by Commissioner Graef.