

These Minutes are unofficial and subject to modification upon review of the commission at their November 2, 2021 meeting.

CITY OF STEVENS POINT POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSION MINUTES MEETING OF OCTOBER 5, 2021

- 1. Roll Call:** Commissioners Kirschling, Moore, Mrozek, Ostrowski and Wescott

Also Present: Fire Chief Finn, Police Chief Zenner, Alderperson Mary Kneebone, AC Moody, Lt. Williams, Attorney Beveridge, Lisa Jakusz, AC Gemza, Alderperson Christianson, Drew Egan, Mayor Wiza, Brandi – SP Metro Wire

2. COVID update – Fire and Police Departments

First responders across Portage County have begun receiving their third booster shots for the Pfizer COVID 19 vaccine. Assistant Chief Gemza said that firefighters, law enforcement and other first responders who got their second Pfizer shot six months ago are now eligible for their third dose.

Countywide 53 percent of residents have received at least one vaccination, while 50.7 percent have completed vaccinations. On the UWSP campus 85.7 percent of staff have been vaccinated and 57 percent of students have been vaccinated.

Gemza reported that Portage County is considered a high transmission county. He reported the Delta variant comprises the majority of COVID cases being seen by medical facilities in our county. Hospital beds are at 92.7 percent capacity and ICU beds are at 95.4 percent capacity. Gemza reported that only 27 percent of the areas ventilators are in use. Also, the county no longer has one ambulance dedicated to transporting COVID positive patients. The county has purchased a couple of decontamination units that ionize units after each use.

Chief Zenner reported the Police Department was prepared for problems in area public schools related to the district's mask requirement but so far it hasn't been an issue.

3. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Kirschling moved, seconded by Commissioner Mrozek to approve the September 14, 2021 minutes.

Ayes, all; nays, none. Motion carried.

4. Confirmation of bills

Commissioner Kirschling moved, seconded by Commissioner Ostrowski to approve the confirmation of the September 2021 bills.

Ayes, all; nays, none. Motion carried.

5. Fire Chief's Report/EMS report

Significant events:

- Received our new utility unit 51U1
- Purchased a new trailer for the training site
- Metro Fire calls (5)
- Structure fires (0)
- Vehicle fires (0)
- Brush, grass, wildland fires (0)
- Cooking fire contained (0)
- Overheated cooking (0)
- Other fires (10)
- Rescue (1)
- EMS assist calls (70)
- False alarm responses (12)
- Hazardous materials responses (6)
- Other responses (3)
- Total fire losses (\$550,000.00)
- Total Property saved (\$4,500,000)
- Total responses (102)
- Training: EVOC 4 hour practical training; Fire Engineering Hump day Hangout; Ray McCormack – FDIC keynote speech; SPFD crew technical rescue training. Total Training Hours: 304
- Fire inspections: Certificate of occupancy (1); fire alarm inspections (0); general fire inspection (160); general/liquor license inspection (0); re-inspection/liquor license inspection (1); re-inspection (6); sprinkler system (0); complaint inspection (3); special event permit (0); ANSUL/Hood inspections (0); self-certification (0); tent inspection (5); consultation (75); re-inspection certificate of occupancy (1)
Total inspections: 252
- Public Activities: None.
- EMS Training: SPFD completed the practical driving obstacle course for Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC)
- Conducted Tempus monitor training with Hull First Responders.
- Citizens Academy: The Academy members participated in Emergency Operations at the Stevens Point Airport.
- Public Relations: On September 6, Medic 2 crew participated in the Stockton Fire Department open house.
- New Equipment: Stevens Point Fire Department received four VOCSN ventilators for use on the ambulances. We were able to secure the ventilators by participating in the "State of Wisconsin's Portable Ventilators Stewardship Program." The program repositioned 1500 ventilators around the state. We will utilize the ventilators and in the event of a hospital having a shortage of ventilators, we would make them available for use. The cost of maintenance will be covered under a three year maintenance plan provided by the State of Wisconsin.

Commissioner Kirschling moved, seconded by Commissioner Mrozek to accept the Fire Chief's Report for September, 2021.

Ayes, all; nays, none. Motion carried.

Chief Finn announced he will retire effective January 3, 2022. The Chief provided the Commission with a letter dated October 5, 2021 announcing his intent to retire.

Commissioner Kirschling moved, seconded by Commissioner Ostrowski to accept Chief Finn's letter of retirement.

Ayes, all; nays, none. Motion carried.

6. Update on Collaborative Problem Solving – Fire Department

In light of Chief Finn's announcement that he will retire effective January 3, 2022, the Commission believes it is in the best interest of the Fire Department to postpone the problem solving process until a new chief is selected.

Commissioner Kirschling moved, seconded by Commissioner Wescott to postpone the collaborative problem solving process until 2022 or a new Fire Chief is selected.

Ayes, all; nays, none. Motion carried.

7. Approval of Fire Department entry level hiring list

The SPFD executive staff compiled a list of qualified entry level candidates for approval. Three names are submitted in alphabetical order for recommendation to be placed on the October 2021 eligibility list, which is in effect for one year from the date of approval.

Commissioner Wescott moved, seconded by Commissioner Moore to approve the Fire Department entry level hiring list as presented.

Ayes, all; nays, none. Motion carried.

8. Update, with possible action, exit interview policy – Fire and Police employees

The PFC will formally adopt a procedure whereby two commissioners will participate in an exit interview to be offered by The Human Resources Manager. If the exiting employee responds in the affirmative to an exit interview, the HR Manager will work to schedule two commissioners who would then perform the exit interview and share the information with the remaining commissioners. If for any reason the exiting employee is not able to make the interview, a written questionnaire will be made available for completion only if the questionnaire is completed in the presence of the Human Resource Manager.

Commissioner Wescott moved, seconded by Commissioners Mrozek to approve the above procedure as discussed.

Ayes, all; nays, none. Motion carried.

9. Police Chief's report

The Department would like to make you aware of the following project(s) status updates:

COVID-19 Related:

- All Department functions operating at full capacity

Note of Interest:

- Crossing Guard Beverly Betro has retired after 16 years of service. Due to limited use of the crossing at Michigan Ave and Jefferson St, the position will remain vacant and crossing discontinued.
- Key Department members continue to meet with other county-wide public safety personnel for training/setup of our new records management system (RMS). The Motorola RMS is on schedule and training will begin for all employees this month.
- Lt Williams provided Active Shooter training "Run, Hide, Fight" for employees at the Holiday Inn.
- Honor Guard displayed the Colors at the MABAS conference at the Holiday Inn and SPASH Homecoming.
- Investigations Bureau currently has a significant workload, including several investigations involving crimes against children.
- Investigations Bureau has begun background investigations on five applicants for vacant officer position. We anticipate presenting a candidate to the PFC at the November PFC meeting.
- Sergeant Ballew and K9 Barry will be receiving a Meritorious K-9 Narcotics Find of the Year Award at the Wisconsin Law Enforcement Canine Handlers Association (WLECHA) conference. The Conference will be held in the Wisconsin Dells the beginning of October. A more detailed outline to be submitted in next month's report.

Calls of Interest:

- **09/01/21 – Driving Complaint/Crash – Kwik Trip South** - Officers dispatched to a driving complaint at Kwik Trip on Church St. Male driver located and appeared highly intoxicated. Subject was uncooperative and aggressive towards Officer. Subject positioned himself within approximately six inches of Officer while make threats to harm. Officer pushed the Subject backwards while instructing him to stay back. The male subject initiated a physical confrontation with the officer resulting in an ineffective Taser deployment. Backup officers arrived and subject ultimately taken into custody. Subject arrested for OWI 1st offense and resisting arrest.
- **09/02/21 – Overdose/Welfare Check – 1430 Torun Rd.** - Officers responded to a call of a drug overdose. Officers arrived and located two females who had overdosed on methamphetamine. Both were conscious upon arrival. Upon medical release, both subjects taken into custody on warrants from Department of Corrections.
- **09/10/2021 – Suspicious Activity – Shell Station 2733 Stanley St** – Officers responded to a report of a possible drug deal being committed. Surveillance conducted by Detectives and occupants identified from previous contacts. A traffic stop as the vehicle left the location. During traffic stop, one of the two male occupants consumed heroin in his possession and started to overdose in front of Officers. The male was unresponsive/not breathing. Subject removed from vehicle and narcan administered. Subject transported to SMH and then to Wausau ICU. He is currently stable. Both subjects arrested for possession methamphetamine, heroin, drug paraphernalia, and felony bail jumping.
- **09/22/2021 – Crash – 1300 Franklin St** – Officer sent to an accident where female driver crashed into a parked car. Two young children were also in the vehicle. Female driver ultimately arrested for OWI Drugs 2nd Offense, possession of Fentanyl, Methamphetamine, marijuana, and Schedule IV drugs. Child Protective Services contacted for children.

- **09/22/2021 – Disturbance – 2600 Bush Ct** – Two females subjects involved in a physical altercation. One female was chasing the other with a knife stating she was going to kill her. Subject ultimately arrested and jailed for Domestic Disorderly Conduct while being armed.
- **09/22/2021 – Traffic Stop – Division St @ Fourth Ave** – Traffic stop on vehicle going 53mph in 25mph zone. Upon stopping, male driver immediately exited and confronted officer. Subject refused to comply with officer and became actively resistive. Ultimately arrested for OWI, Felony Bail-jumping, and resisting arrest.
- **09/25/2021 – Overdose/Death** – Officers responded to a call involving a deceased 37 year old female at a residence within the city. Cause of death suspected to a drug overdose with history of previous drug issues. Investigation Bureau called in and investigation continuing.
- **09/26/2021 – Disturbance – 501 John's Drive** – Officers responded to a report of a male entering an apartment, without consent, and threatening the occupant with an AR- type gun. Subject pointed it at another male and a physical altercation ensued. During the altercation, two rounds were fired from the weapon. Suspect also reportedly strangled the Victim, who nearly lost consciousness, before departing residence. A perimeter was established at Suspect's last known address and Detectives called in to assist with preparing a search warrant. Prior to obtaining a warrant, the Suspect observed exiting the residence to smoke a cigarette. Suspect taken into custody without further incident. Search warrant executed and weapon was located. Male in jail on numerous charges including attempted homicide.

Monthly Use of Force Reporting (annual total in parenthesis):

Number of Use of Force Incidents: 6 (64)

- **9-7-21** – An SPPD K9 Officer had located a stolen vehicle and conducted a traffic stop. The driver of the stolen vehicle stopped and immediately fled on foot. K9 officer deployed his k9 to apprehend the suspect by biting him. The K9 did bite the suspect in the back of the leg, but the suspect was able to get over a fence and run away. The suspect was located hiding in a ditch and other officers pointed their duty weapons at the suspect, taking him into custody. The suspect suffered only minor injuries
- **9-11-21** – SPPD Officers were attempting to arrest a suspect on local warrants. The suspect was attempting to flee inside an apartment. An officer removed his Taser and issued a warning to the suspect that he would be tased if he opened the door to his apartment. The suspect surrendered and taken into custody without incident or injury.
- **9-13-21** – SPPD Officers were trying to apprehend a Suspect involved in a physical assault who was attempting to flee on a bike. The suspect failed to stop for a squad with lights and siren activated. Another SPPD officer was able to get ahead of the suspect and when the suspect got close, the officer was able to push the suspect off his bike and into a bush. The suspect was then handcuffed without injury
- **9-20-21** – SPPD Officers were investigating a 911 hang up call. Upon contact with the resident, they encountered an injured female, who was crying. She was hesitant to provide information about what was occurring and appeared very nervous. Officers were concerned someone was inside who had assaulted the female and tried to keep her from leaving the residence. Officers entered the residence with their guns drawn, announcing their presence. They encountered a male inside who was cooperative. Male Subject taken into custody without incident or injury.
- **9-22-21** – A SPPD officer conducted a traffic stop with suspicion the driver was operating while under the influence. Once the suspect was out of the vehicle, he became resistive both verbally and physically. The SPPD officer was forced to go hands on and attempted to gain compliance with wrist pressure. The subject resisted several times but the officer was able to get handcuffs on him and held to the ground until more officers could arrive for assistance. No injuries.

- 9-26-21 – SPPD Officers were investigating a call of shots fired and a physical disturbance. Officers had made a perimeter around the suspect residence. The suspect stepped out of the residence to smoke and officers took him into custody without incident. Officers had out their service weapon during the arrest, pointing them at the suspect. No injuries

Mental health related incidents

- Officers Responded to the following:
 - 48 Welfare Checks
 - Two Emergency Commitments
 - 11 Voluntary Commitments
 - One Veteran Affairs assist at the Salvation Army
 - Zero completed suicides

K-9 Unit

- K9 Fala on Family Leave
- K9 Unit received a \$5,000 donation from the Jack Stand Car Club
- K9 Barry deployments include the following:
 - Three traffic stop deployment
 - Six location searches
 - four agency assists
 - One track and apprehension

Training:

- Assistant Chief Kusow attending Command College at Fort McCoy.
- Lt Williams attending Leadership in Police Organizations (LPO) training in La Crosse, WI
- Lt Brooks attending LPO training in Kenosha, WI.

Auxiliary Unit:

- eight events held, totaling 109.75 hours, included:
 - Pacelli Panacea
 - Three SPASH Football games
 - SPASH Homecoming Dance
 - UWSP Football Game

Commissioner Moore moved, seconded by Commissioner Kirschling to accept the Police Chief's report for September 2021.

Ayes, all; nays, none. Motion carried.

10. Annual evaluations of the Police and Fire Chiefs

The deadline to submit completed evaluations is December 3, 2021. Chief Zenner is asked to complete a self-evaluation and forward to his liaison.

11. President's Report

Nothing to report.

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.