

# **CITY OF STEVENS POINT POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSION**

**Tuesday, September 1, 2020  
Stevens Point Police Department  
933 Michigan Avenue**

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

**Also Present:** Fire Chief Finn, Interim Chief Zenner, Assistant Chief Rottier, Interim Assistant Chief Kussow, Assistant Chief Moody, Scott Beduhn, Corey Ladick  
Alderson Kneebone, Brandi – SP Metro Wire

**2. Approval of minutes**

Commissioner Carlson moved, seconded by Commissioner Kirschling to approve the August 4, 2020 minutes.

Ayes, all; nays, none. Motion carried.

**3. Confirmation of bills**

Commissioner Wescott moved, seconded by Commissioner Ostrowski, to approve the confirmation of the August 2020 bills.

Ayes, all; nays, none. Motion carried.

**4. COVID 19 update – Fire Department and Police Department**

Chief Finn:

- Continue to update policies and procedures based on CDC guidelines.
- Currently working with Portage County Health, Medical Director and UWSP to have a plan in place for when the students return for the fall semester.
- Chief Gemza was asked by Portage County Health Officer Gary Garske to be a part of a strike force team.
- The FD is working on locating a place to provide a one day flu clinic for the public.

Chief Zenner:

- Patrol continues to work a modified schedule to limit shift change interactions.
- Investigation Bureau has returned to normal scheduling hours.
- With UWSP back in session officers are using the SAFER grant as an educational tool to educate when responding to college house parties.
- Lt. Jeremy Mueller remains the Department point of contact for all COVID 19 related communication and FEMA data collection.

## **12. Update on new bike lanes**

At the request of the commission, Public Works Director Scott Beduhn was present to provide some clarification regarding the new bicycle lanes that have been installed within the last several weeks.

Director Beduhn stated "we're trying to retrofit these streets, so, arguably, we have to think of it as a remodeling job. In doing so, we're finding that not everything fits the way we thought it would, so we're making some changes on the fly. We've opted to work through the issues in the field, then make changes to the ordinances to officially designate bike lanes and change the parking."

The city has been in communication with those institutions most affected by the bike lanes to include UWSP, Schmeckle Reserve and Pacelli High School. Since roadway features vary from street to street the new markings don't always have the consistency of the white fog line that people are used to seeing. There are some areas that have only enough room for on-street parking and a traditional motorist lane. There are some roadways that have a dedicated bike lane close to the curb while others have an urban shoulder that can be utilized for both on-street parking and a bicycle lane. Bicyclists are encouraged to stay on the right-hand side of the road whenever possible even though they are able to utilize the full lane just like a regular vehicle.

Beduhn said in areas where parking is permitted motorists can expect to see chevrons and other bicycle related stencils further away from the curb. This is a reminder that motorists and bicyclists will share the roadway. This feature is often called a "sharrow."

Commissioners asked about the long time effects the bike lanes would have for on street parking and the number of spaces that would be lost, specifically around the university area and Pacelli High School. The most strongly affected areas will be much of Maria Drive, the north end of Michigan Avenue, and Second Street North by SPASH. He said the most heavily hit area will be by Schmeckle Reserve.

## **5. Request for out of state travel (Indiana) for K9 Officer Jeremiah Ballew – "Train the Trainer" opportunity**

Acting Assistant Chief Kussow is asking permission for K9 Officer Jeremiah Ballew to attend a nine week Trainers Dual Purpose Police Dog course at Vohne Liche Kennels in Denver, Indiana beginning October 19, 2020.

This training will give Sergeant Ballew qualifications to annually re-certify our K9s and K9s from other agencies near our jurisdiction at a cost of \$500 per K9. The cost of the training is \$11,410.00 (which includes housing for the nine week course) but Sgt. Ballew reached out to a private donor in Portage County, an anonymous donor, who committed to cover \$10,000.00 of the cost. Sgt. Ballew will be placed on administrative leave for the nine weeks of training and will return to his normal duty on December 21, 2020.

Commissioner Wescott moved, seconded by Commissioner Carlson to approve the out of state training for K9 officer Ballew.

Ayes, all; nays, none. Motion carried.

**6. Update on training officer – Fire Department**

The training officer position was posted internally and one candidate applied for the position. The candidate presented before an interview panel, followed by an interview with Chief Finn. The Internal candidate was offered the job and Firefighter/Paramedic Trevor Howard will be promoted to Division Chief of Training on September 8, 2020.

**7. Status of 2021 capital budgets**

Comptroller Corey Ladick was asked to give an update on the status of the 2021 capital budget requests. He reported the capital requests will be presented to the Finance Committee on September 14, 2020. Once approved by the Finance Committee the requests will be forwarded to the Common Council for final approval. The Comptroller and the Mayor are still working on the recommended capital requests.

**8. 2021 operational budget planning**

Comptroller Ladick was also asked to give an update on the 2021 operational budget process. He reported the 2021 budget is more difficult than in recent years because the net new construction number is down. The ability to increase property taxes for operations is based on the amount of net new construction.

Last year net new construction was at 3.99 % which is why the city was able to see an increase in employee staffing. Going into 2021 the net new construction number to work with is 1.2%. This number is significantly down compared to last year.

For discretionary line items the department heads were told there would be a zero percent net increase in operating budgets.

**9. Fire Chief's Report/EMS report**

**Significant Events:**

- Tech Rescue – Water call @ 8025 Isherwood
- Working on doing virtual station tours for Fire Prevention Month coming up due to COVID 19
- Metro Fire calls (4)
- Structure fires (4)
- Vehicle fires (1)
- Brush, grass, wildland fires (1)
- Cooking fire contained (0)
- Overheated cooking (0)
- Other fires (9)
- Rescue (4)
- EMS assist calls (49)
- False alarm responses (18)
- Hazardous materials responses (4)
- Other responses (4)
- Total fire losses (\$3,500)
- Total Property saved (\$322,150)
- Total responses (94)
- Training: BLS CPR renewal; FF I wildland fire training; Water supply systems; FF I rescue carries and drags; Salvage and overhaul. Total training hours: 55.

- Fire inspections: Certificate of occupancy (2); fire alarm inspections (4); general fire inspection (111); general/liquor license inspection (0); re-inspection/liquor license inspection (1); re-inspection (14); sprinkler system (2); complaint inspection (0); special event permit (0); ANSUL/Hood inspections (0); self-certification (0); tent inspection (0); consultation (27); re-inspection certificate of occupancy (0)  
Total inspections: 161
- Public Activities: No public activities due to COVID-19. Number of attendees: 0

Commissioner Wescott moved, seconded by Commissioner Ostrowski to accept the Fire Chief's Report for August 2020.

Ayes, all; nays, none. Motion carried.

#### **10. Approval of Officer Chi Yang to regular police officer status**

Commissioner Wescott moved, seconded by Commissioner Carlson, to approve Officer Chi Yang to regular police officer status.

Ayes, all; nays, none. Motion carried.

#### **11. Discussion, with possible action, authorization to hire a police officer**

Commissioner Carlson moved, seconded by Commissioner Moore, to extend a conditional offer of employment to Cody Stankowski upon the successful completion of all hiring protocols and testing. Cody's first day of employment would be September 21, 2020.

Ayes, all; nays, none. Motion carried.

#### **13. Police Chief's Report**

##### **COVID-19 related:**

- Auxiliary Unit operating in limited capacity.
- Fingerprinting services remain suspended until further notice.
- Patrol continue to work a modified schedule to limit shift change interactions.
- Investigations Bureau, Records Bureau and Administrative personnel operating normal scheduling hours.
- All Department personnel have been issued a cloth mask for use. The Department continues to maintain an appropriate supply of protective equipment.
- Lieutenant Jeremy Mueller remains the Department Point of Contact for all COVID 19 related communication and FEMA data collection.

##### **Notes of interest:**

- On August 21<sup>st</sup>, the Police Department received an attempt to locate request from Clark County concerning an assault, including strangulation, which took place within its jurisdiction. Information identified suspect was at a residence on Main Street without our city. A search warrant was obtained and SWAT was deployed. After a breach and hold, three individuals surrendered while the suspect remained barricaded within the building. After approximately five hours the suspect surrendered without incident and was transported to Clark County.

- On August 25<sup>th</sup> officers responded to a garage fire at 457 Washington Avenue. Initial reports by tenant indicated the source of the fire was unknown. Investigation eventually led to tenant admitting he accidentally started the fire by lighting a homemade torch used for beehives.
- On August 18<sup>th</sup> officers responded to a bomb threat at Ascension Emergency Room. Call indicated a bomb would detonate in thirty minutes. Officers worked with hospital personnel and security who searched the building. It was determined the call was made from Jamaica.
- On August 26<sup>th</sup> Officers Roser and Zingler volunteered for mutual aid request from Kenosha County. Both were assigned to scene protection and traffic control from August 26<sup>th</sup> through August 27<sup>th</sup>.

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

**Number of Use of Force incidents 4 (31)**

- August 3<sup>rd</sup> officers displayed handguns during the execution of a search warrant on a residence until residence was secured. No injuries.
- On August 4<sup>th</sup> suspect, juvenile male, was highly out of control and needed to be transported by officers in a squad. Suspect kicked officer in the shin and attempted to bite. One officer used pressure points (under the jaw line) which stopped the resistive tension and officers were able to gain compliance for transport. No injuries were identified by suspect or officers.
- On August 7<sup>th</sup> officers displayed handguns and one less lethal shotgun during the execution of a search warrant on a residence until residence was secured. No injuries.
- On August 11<sup>th</sup> officers were dealing with an intoxicated juvenile male at the emergency room. Individual was also possibly under the influence of unknown drugs as well. Suspect resisted officer's attempt to handcuff him, which resulted in officers delivering knee strikes (active countermeasures) and applying pressure to wrists (compliance holds). No injuries were identified by suspect or officers.

**Mental health related incidents:**

- 51 welfare checks
- Six emergency commitments
- 13 voluntary commitments

**K-9 Unit**

- Fourteen (14) deployments including:
  - Mutual aid assist Portage County and Plover PD
  - Assisting Central Wisconsin Drug Task Force with large property search in Town of Plover consisting of several vehicles.
  - K9 Fala deployed on three occasions by the Department's Investigations Bureau
  - K9 Barry deployed on SWAT for search warrant on Main Street

**Staffing:**

- Officers Kim DesRosier and Zach Gartmann have begun their field training process.
- The Department has identified Cody Stankowski for PFC consideration for the vacant officer opening (letter submitted in packet).
- Community Resource Officer Position offered to Andrew Hensel, with start date of September 8, 2020.

- Officer Chi Yang will be completing his probationary status on September 25, 2020.

**Training:**

- Firearms range/prequalification completed mid-August. Range instruction consisted of force on force traffic stop scenarios.

**Auxiliary Unit:**

- No events scheduled.

**Facilities:**

- The Community Media Division, managed by John Quirk, has begun relocating at 933 Michigan Avenue. Community Media will occupy Room 125, which is located adjacent to the Community Overflow Room.

Commissioner Wescott moved, seconded by Commissioner Moore to accept the Police Chief's Report for August 2020.

Ayes, all; nays, none. Motion carried.

**14. Update on police chief search**

Commissioner Carlson is asked to work with Lee Ann and Tom to finalize the job description. Any changes are to be forwarded to Ron by September 4, 2020.

**15. Consideration of motion to adjourn into closed session pursuant to Wis. Stats. Section 19.85 (1) (g) for the purpose of conferring with legal counsel who is rendering advice concerning strategy to be adopted by the Commission with respect to litigation it is likely to become involved in, including discussion regarding responses to public records requests.**

Commissioner Wescott moved, seconded by Commissioner Carlson to adjourn into closed session.

Ayes, all; nays, none. Motion carried.

**16. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:28 p.m.