

**MINUTES OF POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSION
MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2023**

4:00 p.m.

Council Chambers (203 South Farwell Street)

MEMBERS PRESENT: Disa Wahlstrand, Stephanie Finn, Kimberly Cronk, Selika Ducksworth-Lawton, and David Anderson

STAFF PRESENT: Police Chief Matt Rokus
Fire Chief Matt Jaggar
Deputy Fire Chief Tony Biasi
Human Resources Director Colleen Schian
Deputy City Attorney Doug Hoffer

The Commission convened in open session at 4:01 p.m. Meeting was called to order by President Wahlstrand. President Wahlstrand asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the Police and Fire Commission meetings held on July 20, 2023 and August 30, 2023. No corrections or additions were noted, and the minutes stand approved as circulated.

Commissioner Anderson joined the meeting at 4:02 p.m.

Chief Rokus provided a personnel update. Since the Commission's July 2023 meeting, there has been one officer that has left for a job in the private sector. There are currently 11 Police Officer vacancies. Last week, seven Police Officer candidates on the eligibility list were interviewed by the Chief's staff, and six were moved forward to the background investigation. Chief Rokus asked if there were any questions about the personnel update and none were noted.

Chief Rokus also provided an operational update. A discussion was held regarding the changes to the Patrol Division's supervisory structure in 2024. The purpose of the changes is to better align the schedules of the Patrol Officers and the Sergeants that directly supervise them. The structure of the Lieutenant's schedules will also change to better reflect their work responsibilities. This will allow the Lieutenants to be more present for District related issues, the Department's specialized functions, and any special events they may oversee. In order to provide adequate supervision, this move will be backfilled with three additional Patrol Sergeants. One is from the referendum, one will move from Detectives, and one will move from special assignments. Chief Rokus asked if there were any questions about the operational update and none were noted.

Chief Jaggar provided a personnel update. Since the Commissions July 2023 meeting, there have been three separations. Two resigned for other positions and one retired. There are currently five openings within the Department and there are two forecasted retirements for the remainder of the year. The Department was also recently awarded the SAFER Grant. This will

provide the Department with additional personnel, both temporary and permanent. These additional personnel will help offset overtime costs and increase service delivery.

Chief Jaggar also provided an operational update. A discussion was held regarding the possibility of shifting to a County-wide EMS system. This would shift some operating costs to the County instead of the City. This is still in early stages of discussion and updates will be brought forward when possible. A discussion was also held regarding the City employee survey results. The results from 2023 show great improvement from 2022. The study from McGrath Human Resources Group, which was initiated due to 2022's results, is almost complete. The final document should be submitted soon, and the Department plans to use this study to create their operational goals for 2024 and beyond. Chief Jaggar also stated that they are getting a new ambulance. They expect it to be operational in October.

A discussion was held regarding the current recruitment efforts of the Fire Department. Deputy Chief Haller recently visited the VA Center to discuss current openings. Commissioner Ducksworth-Lawton asked if we are currently working with Tomah, Wisconsin, and suggested other resources to recruit individuals who used to be in the military. It was noted the Deputy Chief Haller will reach out to Commissioner Ducksworth-Lawton to discuss these opportunities. A discussion was held regarding the recent passing of a retired member of the Fire Department, and expanding the current peer support within the Department and for its retirees. Chief Jaggar asked if there were any questions. Commissioner Anderson asked when the SAFER Grant comes into effect. It begins in February of 2024 and is fully funded for three years. It was also noted that the deadline to propose the County-wide EMS system is this December.

A discussion was held regarding the updates to the current City of Eau Claire Police and Fire Commission Manual. The goal is to have the final updates completed by the end of the year. The draft was brought forward with updates and notes from the Human Resources staff, the Commission members and their requests, and the Police and Fire Chiefs. The manual's updates were discussed page by page, including the creation of a revision record and Code of Conduct. A brief overview of the updates was given by Human Resources Director Colleen Schian and any further feedback should be returned to Human Resources by October 19, 2023.

Chief Jaggar noted that a promotion was missed during his personnel update. Chief Jaggar brought forward the promotion of Fire Fighter Schuyler Townsend to Fire Engineer. The promotion to Engineer is from the promotional eligibility list established in May 2023 by the Police and Fire Commission and did not need additional approval.

At 5:32 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Finn, seconded by Commissioner Ducksworth-Lawton, and passed by unanimous roll call vote to go into closed session to conduct the informal performance review of the Police Chief, Matt Rokus.

At 6:02 p.m., motion was made by Commissioner Cronk, seconded by Commissioner Ducksworth-Lawton and passed unanimously to move into open session.

President Wahlstrand asked if there are any future agenda items and none were noted.

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Ducksworth-Lawton and the meeting was adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

The next regularly-scheduled Police and Fire Commission meeting is November 16, 2023 at 4:00 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Kelsey Brunner, Police and Fire Commission Secretary.