

City of Watseka
201 Brianna Dr
PO Box 338
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PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
APRIL 11, 2023
6:30 PM

PRESENT: Aldermen Barragree, Cahoe, Marcier, Garfield, Miller (at 7:15), Alderwoman Rohlfs, and Mayor Allhands

ABSENT: Alderwoman Musk

GUESTS: Scott Anderson, Kevin Hack with Riverside, Fire Chief Ken Baier, Police Chief Jeremy Douglas

Alderman Barragree opened the meeting at 6:30 pm. Scott Anderson spoke during public comment by saying thanks to Fire Chief Ken Baier and the fire department for a job well done getting the new ambulances up and running.

Auxiliary Officer Mark Garfield stated his department introduced the new members to the rest of the department. He stated they have Anthony Medina on the roster now and believes he would be a suitable candidate for the police department as a full-time officer. The department is planning for the Little League Parade, and the 4th of July Parade and the Watseka Family Festival being held in August. The department has gone over their equipment, and it is all in good working order. The new uniforms are in, and the new badges should be here next month.

Kevin Hack with Riverside spoke next, he gave the committee an update on the ambulance numbers for the previous year. He stated even though they only have one ambulance in town now they are fully staffed. Mr. Hack stated during the day Gilman comes to Watseka to cover when Riverside ambulance goes out and at night St. Anne covers.

Fire Chief Ken Baier stated his department had two fires, nine lift assists, nine ambulance calls, 1 MVA, four automatic alarms and eight other gas leaks/down lines for the month of March. Training for March consisted of fire behavior, hose load and deployments, pump training and training update with Vector solutions. Chief reported Matthew Stichnoth has joined the reserve roster. The new Tahoe has been delivered and is in the process of getting it road ready. The Chief also stated three homes have had smoke detectors installed. The department now has the black over red ambulance in service. Some of the department went to career day at the high school and they had about thirty kids that stopped by and two of them have been showing up to the meetings.

Chief Baier stated he would like to offer his department step pay incentives. Right now, everyone in the department is paid a flat \$18/hour. Some of the department members have gone to the fire academy and put in 240 hours. To be an EMT B you are required to put in 206 hours and for a paramedic 950 hours plus clinicals. Chief Baier is proposing to pay an additional \$2.00 per hour (\$20.00) (for two certificates and if you get all three certificates, he is proposing \$24.00/hr.) he also reported continuing education is required for all of these certificates. He will keep track of all of the classes, if they lose a certificate then the hourly wage will go down.

Chief Baier is also proposing a pay increase for him of \$24/hr. or \$1920 per month. These pay rates are in the new budget and the rates will be effective on 5/1/23. These will be on the agenda for full council.

Chief Baier also reported the air packs are 18 years old and its time to get new ones. The cost for 25 air packs is \$200,000.00. It was discussed to take this out of capital equipment. Chief Baier stated he is going to talk to area departments to see if they want the used packs. It was stated after ordering the new packs they are 6-8 months out before receiving them.

Dawn Turcany with the Police and Fire Commission spoke next. She stated they had a meeting to go over the 11 applications and 9 have moved on to the next step. 7 of these are new and 2 of them are lateral entries. May 6th interviews will be done.

Police Chief Jeremy Douglas stated his department had 345 calls for service during the month of March. Corey Hamlin is now on full time and is doing his FTO training. He will be attending the academy next month, and Officer Corriveau has completed his full-time school. The Chief reported the car cams are installed now the wait is for Ruder Communications to finish up. Chief stated he would like to discuss the S 3rd St parking. The trouble is only during school hours, and he has talked to the principal at the school, and he has asked the teachers to please park in the parking lot as there are empty spaces, but some are still not parking there. The street is for public parking and the school cannot make the teachers park in their parking lot. The Chief stated there really is no simple solution, so this is tabled for now. The Chief stated the flock cameras are up in the city and these cameras are a license plate readers that are used for notifying the proper agency if a stolen or wanted vehicle would pass through. The Chief stated there are 9 of them in Iroquois County. Chief Douglas stated Officer Douglas and Corriveau have to go mobile team taskforce schooling and they will have there training in May and June. Chief also reported Officers Spears, Josh Douglas and Marcott went to career day at the high school. Chief Douglas stated he would like to ask for the following pay increases for the non-union employees: Chief Douglas from \$53.72 to \$59.09, **Alderman Garfield makes a motion to recommend to the Council to increase Chief Douglas pay rate to \$59.09 and Alderman Barragree seconded. Roll call carried 7-0**, Deputy Chief King from \$41.47 to \$45.62, **Alderman Garfield makes a motion to recommend to the Council to increase Deputy Chief King to \$45.62 and Alderman Barragree seconded. Roll call carried 7-0**, Secretary Kendra Warner from \$20.00 to \$21.00, **Alderman Garfield makes a motion to recommend to the Council to increase Kendra Warner to \$21.00 and Alderman Barragree seconded. Roll call carried 7-0**. Chief Douglas stated these pay raises are in his budget.

There was a short discussion about the portable speed signs and Chief stated he has been talking to the Miner Foundation for a donation, there will be more discussion on this at another meeting.

Mayor Allhands stated the committee has information from Lexi Pol for grant writing for \$10,000.00 for 2 years.

Alderman Barragree makes a motion to adjourn at 7:30 and Alderman Garfield seconded. Roll call carried 6-0.

Brandon Barragree, Chairman