

MINUTES
MEETING POLICE & FIRE COMMISSION
BERLIN, WISCONSIN
BERLIN CITY HALL – 2ND FLOOR COUNCIL CHAMBERS
July 14, 2021 -6:30pm

Vice President Ed Marks called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Present: Commissioners Ed Marks, Joanne Guden, Curt Olson, Chad Martin. Absent: Dan Johnson. Also present: Police Chief Engel, Fire Chief Paugels, Liaison Alderman James Lehr, City Administrator Jodie Olson, Berlin Journal Paul Wiegel, and Public appearance: None.

Commissioners would like to welcome Chad Martin to the Police and Fire commission.

Under approval of minutes, Guden moved to approve the open and closed P&F Commission minutes of June 02, 2021. Olson seconded the motion which carried by voice vote.

Guden moved to approve the fire department expenses. Olson seconded the motion which carried by voice vote.

Fire Chief Paugels stated that there were 10 fire calls last month; most of the calls were not too severe. Paugels stated that maintenance issues will be done on the ladder truck. On the 19th of this month it will be out of commission until it is back from repairs. Paugels stated there are upcoming events such as the car show. The fire department will also be receiving an award on the 21st of this month from NECES transpo. This group is from Iowa and is giving a green tube rescue award, which will consist of a new piece of equipment.

Olson moved to approve the Police Department expenses as presented. Guden seconded the motion which carried by voice vote.

Under Police fund 15 usage, Chief Engel stated the current rifle system is not working for the officers. Some of the issues with the rifles are the degrading materials such as the optics used on the rifles. When the rifles are used in trainings they are widely inaccurate and it makes it difficult for the officers to train. The proposal to use fund 15 to purchase new rifles and optics will provide the department with a much needed upgrade. Guden asked how often the department would use the rifles to justify spending the money. Engel stated that it would depend on the call type. The reason the current rifles are not being used now is due to the officers' lack of confidence with the rifle. They would often choose not to use it as they cannot rely on them. Olson stated that he would like to see each officer have their own rifle as all officers shoot differently. Only purchasing enough for the squads brings a challenge of use. Engel stated that the ultimate goal would be able to do that in the future but with the current budget it is not something that can be done at this time. With the approval of the use for fund 15, it can go to Common Counsel for approval. Olson asked if this company would provide the best price for the trade in on the rifles and purchasing new ones. Engel stated that Assistant Chief Pulvermacher put in a lot of time and has checked with many vendors to ensure this was the best price. Olson moved to approve the usage of fund 15 for the purchase of new rifles and optics to be sent to Common Counsel for approval. Guden seconded the motion which carried by voice vote.

Under Police department I-crime fighter software purchase, Chief Engel stated that there is a challenge of efficiency for sending digital evidence to the District Attorney (DA) office and other agencies. The current practice is to burn our evidence to CD/DVDs and transport those to

the DA office. This is an extremely large waste of time and very inefficient for the officers and staff. There are many times when duplicate efforts are made on cases to resend CD/DVDs to the DA office as technical issues may happen requiring the officers to make duplicates. The program I-crime fighter would help save time and money on sending digital evidence to agencies. All digital evidence could be sent via secured link and additionally be stored in a cloud based system. Guden asked if the department would still need to pay Green Lake for usage of their programs. Engel stated that yes we would still need to pay for the usage of Green Lake's programs for investigations as this program is just for sending, storing and receiving of digital evidence. This program would store all of the departments' digital evidence such as video, photos and other agencies video. Marks asked if redaction would still be the same as current practice. Engel stated that it would. Martin asked what the DA has thought of this possible switch. Engel stated the DA is okay with the switch. There may be some small issues to work out of how to label certain digital links but nothing too serious. Martin asked how it will work if the department ever discontinued the service with them. Engel stated in order to gain access to the departments evidence that would be stored in their cloud we would have to pay them a fee. At this time the department would be looking to do a one year contract with them. Olson stated the issue with going to a company like this is their ability to change the cost from year to year. The cost could go up so high that it may be too great of an expense and may cost the department more than it may be worth. Engel stated the future of digital evidence is changing and at some point the current practice will not work. The other issues will be if/when the department will be mandated to have body cams. All of the cloud based storage for digital evidence is expensive and unpredictable. Olson asked how we could possibly charge for discovery in order to gain money back for this expense. Engel stated that the department has not looked too closely into being able to charge other agencies on discovery but that is something that would like to be done. Guden asked if there could be more research done on the ability to get money back from other agencies on discovery and come back to this topic next month. Engel stated that he would contact the DA office and see what if anything can be done for charging.

Under Police department Valor of Blue training, Chief Engel stated that this program is put on by the justice department for the wellness and safety of officers. The program is free to use and gives training to officers on mental health and safety in the field. This program helps to break down the stigma of getting mental help for officers. Commissioners encourage all types of training and approve of the use.

Police Chief Engel stated that the chart provided to the commission shows last month's calls. The chart shows that welfare checks and emergency detentions have gone up. The additional chart also shows individual efforts of officers. Guden stated that the additional chart is nice to read and it is good to know individual stats.

Under police activity updates, Chief Engel explained, Officer Heider is doing very well on his own. Sworn in officers have completed 45 minutes of standardized field sobriety training. Corporal Schroeder and Officer Knetzger have completed a virtual DCI course for crime scene investigations. With that course they are able to show other officers what they have learned. The new squad, 62 is now in use and working out very well for the officers. Two other squads have been outfitted for cradle points which are in car routers. Since the switch the cellular coverage is much better and gives the officers the ability to do work within the car. There is still no ammunition from the order in 2020. There is no new update on when that might come in. Green Lake Sheriff office has been generous to help supply us with what we need for training. There continues to be a swap of shifts between the probationary officers. All of the feedback is continuing to be positive in this. Officer Krause is working with Lindsey Kemnitz on a google doc for sharing information on nuisance violations. This document will provide all the officers

and Lindsey the ability to know where any one person is at with their efforts to clean up any nuisance violations. Upcoming activities for the department are National Night out that is being held in Princeton this year.

Under new business: Closed session topic of SRO service weapon.

Under old business: I-Crime fighter software proposal.

At 7:45 p.m. Guden moved to convene into closed session pursuant to Wis. Stat §19.85(1)(c) to consider employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility (Discussion on police officer performance evaluations). Olson seconded the motion. A roll call vote resulted in 4 ayes, zero nays and 1 absent. Motion carried.

Olson moved to seat Chief Engel, Jim Lehr and Jodie Olson for the closed session discussion. Guden seconded the motion which carried by voice vote.

Discussion continued in closed session.

At 7:53 p.m. Guden moved to reconvene into open session. Olson seconded the motion which carried by voice vote. No action was taken as a result of the closed session discussion.

Olson moved to adjourn. Guden seconded the motion which carried by voice vote.

*Submitted by Stephanie Skivers
Administrative Assistant*

Next scheduled meeting will be Wednesday, August 04, 2021 at 6:30 pm at the Berlin City Hall