

**MINUTES**  
**MEETING POLICE & FIRE COMMISSION**  
**BERLIN, WISCONSIN**  
**BERLIN CITY HALL – 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR COUNCIL CHAMBERS**  
**November 03, 2021 -6:30pm**

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

Gregory Blaskowski spoke on last month's agenda item of optional powers. He stated that the commission for Police and Fire should not give up their optional powers. He would like to see politics stay out of the commission. He stated that the optional powers can give checks and balance to the commission as opposed to without them.

Under approval of minutes, Guden moved to approve the open and closed P&F Commission minutes of October 07, 2021. Olson seconded the motion which carried by voice vote.

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

Fire Chief Paugels stated that there were only 7 fire calls last month. Paugels stated that Red Power will do annual checks on the trucks this month. Other than routine checks there are no major maintenance issues. Paugels stated that training for the new drivers has been completed. The meetings are back in person with the option of virtual. Paugels stated last month's events went well. There were over 300 people for the drive thru pig roast. To help balance out family time and department time there were no trucks around for Halloween. Some upcoming events are the Christmas parade.

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

Police Chief Engel stated that the chart provided to the commission shows last month's calls. The chart shows that there was a slight decrease in crashes and traffic enforcement went up about 22%. The overall production of the department has held steady from last month to this month.

Under Police department recruitment and hiring, Chief Engel stated that in 2021 there were about 8 certified applicants and about 4 non certified applicants for the job postings put out by the police department. Out of those there were only 3 interviewed for the job and no success has happened yet. Chief Engel stated the police department is looking into other avenues for hiring such as sponsoring an individual to go to the police academy. The state can reimburse a department for sending someone to the academy so long as they meet all the requirements. If they don't then the city is on the hook to pay for the bill. If this avenue is taken by the city there would likely be some type of agreement with the city and the individual to stay with the city for a number of years. This would help to ensure the person is serious in staying with the department and it wouldn't be a waste of efforts on the cities behalf. Another option is to go to the academies that are close by and see if there are any individuals who do not have jobs and may be a good fit for the department. Marks asked to really look into the sponsoring avenue and to put that on next

month's agenda for further discussion. Guden stated that it would be a good idea to be able to send someone but to also have that agreement in place. Martin asked what type of barriers we are seeing in candidates. Chief stated that there are so many openings in many departments that the candidates are able to be choosier in where they wanted to go. Olson stated that it may not be a bad idea to look within the city at the local students and see if they are interested in becoming police officers that they could maybe sponsor.

Under police activity updates, Chief Engel explained, the interview process is completed for this round and the position will be reposted again. There were two officers that completed a tactical emergency casualty care course. Sgt. Strahan has completed and graduated from the three week Leadership course. Two officers have completed 16hrs of operation rush training. All sworn staff has completed the WI state firearms qualifications. The ammunition ordered in July of 2020 has finally arrived. The 2022 shift picks are complete and the officers will start their new shifts next week. With Act 75 passed the Use of Force policy that is already posted on the webpage will need to be revamped again. It will have better detail and outline more of the policies foundations.

Under Police Department grants, Chief Engel stated the department is looking into two different grants. One is from Fire house subs which would give \$25,000 to go toward lifesaving enforcement. This could help with sponsoring a person to go to the academy as well as purchasing new shield equipment, AEDs, and Tasers. The other grant that is being looked at is called Shields 616. This is a nonprofit for ballistic protection. If we got this grant it would give us the ability to purchase external ballistic vests for the officers and new ballistic helmets. Marks asked if this was just research or if the grants are ready to be applied for. Chief stated that the grants are not ready to be applied for yet but when the deadlines come up it will be brought to the commission in more detail.

Liaison Alderman Lehr made a statement in regards to the comments made from Greg on optional powers. He stated that this is a good commission and would like to point out that the gentleman is not a citizen. At times there may be rouge Mayors or even Chiefs but the people have a right to vote on moving away from optional powers as they had the right to vote when they brought them in.

Under new business: Discussion on optional powers.

Under old business: Police Department recruitment and hire issue.

At 7:20 p.m. Marks 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 (Chief of Police performance evaluation). Olson seconded the motion. A roll call vote resulted in five (5) ayes, zero (0) nays, and zero (0) absent. Motion carried.

Marks moved to seat Jodie Olson, Sara Rutkowski, Jim Lehr and Chief Engel. Guden seconded the motion. A roll call vote resulted in five ayes, zero nays and zero absent. Motion carried.

Discussion continued in closed session.

Marks moved to reconvene into open session. Martin seconded the motion which carried by voice vote. No action was taken as a result of closed session discussion.

President Johnson adjourned the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

*Submitted by Stephanie Skivers  
Administrative Assistant*

Next scheduled meeting will be Wednesday, December 01, 2021 at 6:30 pm at the Berlin City Hall