



Watertown City Council
Work Session

Mayor Michael Walters
Fred McGuire
Adam Pawelk
Dan Schuette
Kay Thul

8/22/2023 - Minutes

1. Call To Order And Roll Call
2. New Business
 - 2.1. 2024 Policing Contract Discussion

Foster presented the background on the topic, the City has contracted for policing services with the Carver County Sheriff's Office for several years. At the March 28, 2023 City Council Meeting, Sheriff Jason Kamerud and Commander Mike Wollin provided an update on the current state of policing affairs for the City of Watertown and the future outlook for the 2024 contract and beyond.

Commander Wollin presented a desire for the Sheriff's Office to move all officers to 12-hour shifts for 2024. This is something the Sheriff's Office intends to implement County-wide. Given this desire, City staff and nearby communities have been looking for alternative approaches to lessen the impact of these proposed shift changes. City Administrator Jake Foster was approached by Mayer City Administrator Nick Johnson to discuss a potential for a regionalization of the cities policing efforts. Foster and Johnson then met with Commander Wollin to discuss this potential further, and contrast with other staffing models. Police staffing models could include, a regional 12-hour shift approach, the current "town cop model" with 12-hours shifts, or something that may look closer to the Monday through Friday "town cop model" the City implements now. More information on these approached is provided below.

12-hour shift "town cop model": The 12-hour shift "town cop model" is the model which was presented by Commander Wollin at the March 28th City Council meeting. This model would move Corporal Cripps to a 12-hour shift (Team 2 Day Shift) where he would be working Wednesday through Friday and every other Saturday. The night shift officers would split the Team 1/Team 2 shifts and the shifts would be filled Monday through Sunday nights. The timing of these shifts could be adjusted slightly based on Council direction (e.g. Corporal Cripps could work 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM, and the night officer could work 6:00 PM to 6:00 AM; or the night office could work from 4:00 PM to 4:00 AM to provide some overlap during the busier times, but then there would be "unscheduled hours" between 4:00 AM and 6:00 AM where the County North Car would respond to calls.

12-hour shift "regional model": An alternative to the "town cop model," is taking a regional approach to

policing services. Under this scenario, a regional composed of Watertown/Mayer/New Germany would pool officers to fill out a 24 hours 7 days-a-week schedule. Coverage would be scheduled around the clock, but the officer(s) on shift would be required to respond to calls in Mayer and New Germany. This is the approach the City of Mayer approves as this would eliminate the significant unscheduled shifts that have been proposed to them under their 12-hour shift town cop model. Furthermore, Mayer is also willing to "sell" additional hours (up to 10/week) to the City of Watertown. Although it is expected that the scheduled officer would respond to calls throughout the region, the thought would be that the on-shift officer would spend these additional hours in the City of Watertown. Under this proposal, the on schedule officer would be "officing" out of Watertown and all shift and car changes would be handled in Watertown; effectively making it the "home base" for all scheduled officers. The scheduled officer would spend time in Mayer and New Germany on general patrol commensurate with the cities' allocation in the contract while also considering administrative time.

Current model: Although the 12-hour shift model is preferred by the Sheriff's Office, City Council could request of the County that shifts remain the same as they are under the 2023 contract. This would keep Corporal Cripps on an approximate schedule of Monday through Friday 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, and the night officers covering the night shift from Monday through Sunday (4:30 PM to 4:30 AM).

Response Time Impacts: Attached are reports from Commander Wollin. The response time averages are as follows: Current Model – 4.93 minutes Regional Model Average Response Time – 5.77 minutes Not Scheduled Average Response Time (County North Car) - 14.32 minutes The regional model response numbers were taken from 2022 when there were significant staffing issues at the County and the regional approach was implemented on a temporary basis.

The regional approach increases the average response time by just under a minute. When an officer is not scheduled (e.g. the Monday and Tuesday days under the 12-hour shift town cop model), average response time increases by just under 10 minutes (nearly triple). These totals are found on the last line on the last page of each report.

Budget Impact: The cost increase for the 2024 contract for policing services as proposed is \$62,957.44, or a 21.3% increase from \$393,484 in 2023 to \$456,441.44 in 2024. The increase in contract cost is due to the further implementation of wage increases per their collective bargaining agreement negotiations and the addition of a second squad car. The County uses a "look back method" to contract costs, so the 2024 cost is reflective of the 2023 contract cost. The additional vehicle is something that was very briefly mentioned during the latter part of 2022, and will be implemented to address issues with car availability during shift change.

The regional model approach could be implemented at approximately the same cost, or even potentially a slight cost savings, if the cities of Mayer and New Germany were to cover the cost of "their" car. As stated previously, the City of Mayer has also expressed an interest in "selling" more hours to the City of Watertown if City Council is interested in doing so while also implementing the regional approach. Watertown could purchase up to approximately 10 contracted hours weekly for a total of \$35,303.89, for a total contract cost increase of \$98,261.33. City Council could elect to purchase all of these hours, none of these hours, or anything in between. There may also be an opportunity for the Watertown-Mayer School District to be approached to purchase these "additional" hours from the City of Mayer. Attached is a cost breakdown for all cities within the proposed regional model, as provided by Mayer City Administrator Nick Johnson.

The City will be receiving \$210,881 in one-time public safety aid which could be used to offset the cost increases for the 2024 contract. While this is just one-time aid, it is anticipated that the 2025 contract increase will be smaller than the 2024 increase due future wage.

Commander Wollin stated Norwood-Cologne-Hamburg have been in a contract policing partnership for 10+ years, there are 3 soon to be 4 Full time patrol staff in this area. Starting Quarter 3 of this year Carver & Victoria have gone to a pilot policing partnership and they have a total of 6 full time patrol staff.

McGuire asked for clarification of the proposed increase for next year. Commander Wollin stated this is for the minimum of adding 1 more vehicle. Foster Stated the public works is out of space currently, the vehicle will be kept out at a facility in Hollywood township but until then the car is being kept at city hall. The addition of a second patrol car would allow for overlapping of patrol officers and making it easier for staff to pickup a patrol vehicle. Foster stated if it decided to move forward with the 12 hour shifts it will make it easier to have the overlapping service during the more high volume call times. Commander Wollin stated the car would be owned by Carver County, the cost back the city is on a prorated bases including maintenance over the life of the vehicle.

Walters stated his is very concerned with the response times, he is concerned that some of the regional response times are not quite accurate since the patrol officer was already located in Watertown unlike what a actual regional officer would be not always located in city limits. He stated public safety is his number one concern. He feels moving forward to not having the police presents here might take away from public safety. He would like to stay the way it and or possibly adding a fourth full time so we could have 24/7 hour coverage again in Watertown.

3. Adjournment

309 Lewis Avenue South; P.O. Box 279, Watertown, MN 55388

Michael Walters, Mayor

ATTEST: _____

Jake Foster, City Administrator