



City of Palos Heights
Public Safety Committee
Tuesday, May 23, 2023
MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The Public Safety Committee meeting was held on May 23, 2023 at the Palos Heights City Hall. Chairman Basso called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm. In attendance were Chairman Basso, Alderman McGovern, Alderman Clifford, Alderman Lewandowski. Also in attendance were Chief Czajkowski, Deputy Chief Yott, Kenny Winslow from the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police, Detective Sergeant Parnitzke, Sergeant Wodka, City Administrator David Strohl, 4 members of the public and Recording Secretary Morgan Pukula.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Alderman Basso moved to approve the minutes of the February 28, 2023 Public Safety meeting, seconded by Alderman McGovern. All in favor. **Motion Carried.**

RECOGNITION FROM IACP

Chief Czajkowski introduced Kenny Winslow from the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police to present Detective Sergeant John Parnitzke and Sergeant Gerard Wodka with the designation of certified eligible certificates. This certification is designated to officers who aspire to be Deputy Chiefs and Chiefs in their future careers. Both sergeants have established a high level of competence, professional excellence and community service and have achieved the standards of performance in the areas of leadership, management and public relations said for by the Association of Chiefs of Police.

Kenny Winslow stated the association was started in the 90s and was established to help communities locate their next leader; from there the Chiefs Certification Process was created and became the Chiefs Eligible Process, which is called Certified Eligible today. In order to become Certified Eligible, you have to meet the standards of ethics, community service, involvement, skills, knowledge and abilities shown through advanced leadership skills through the FBI Academy, Northwestern or Southern Police Institute. Certified Eligible is possessing the basic knowledge and skills that we expect every Police Chief candidate to have. Since the program began, there has been 160 people who have been certified. Of the 90 who were certified eligible, 36 have went on to become Police Chiefs.

Sergeant Wodka joined the Palos Heights Police Department in 2006 and has been a sergeant since 2018 and a police officer since 2000. He possesses a Bachelor's Degree from Western Illinois University and a Master's Degree from Lewis University in Criminal Justice. He also graduated the FBI Academy in 2019. Sergeant Parnitzke joined the Palos Heights Police Department in 2011 and has been a sergeant since 2020 and a police officer since 2011. He possesses a Bachelor's Degree from Eastern Illinois University and a Master's Degree in Science from Lewis University Public Safety and Administration.

Chief Czajkowski reported as follows:

POLICE ACTIVITY REPORT

711 total calls for service

TRAFFIC CRASH REPORT

Hit & Run	7
Property Damage	28
Personal Injury	1
TOTAL	36

MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS

- a) Within the packet can be found, the Police Department Budget Report
- b) Red Light Report – 130 violations issued
- c) MSI Report— 68 citations issued
- d) Training – 315 hours

YEAR TO DATE DUI SUMMARY – 19 Arrests

YEAR TO DATE TRAFFIC STOP SUMMARY – 1348 Traffic Stops

CORRESPONDENCE/EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

- A resident complimented Officer Ashley Vinson for escorting her to a local bank where she had business to do. She was very appreciative for the Officer’s kindness and professionalism.
- Deputy Special Agent, Chris Watkins, from Homeland Security Investigations thanked a team of HSI Officers, which included Eric Czajkowski on their efforts in seizing dangerous drugs and narcotics during this HSI-led OCDETF investigation. The investigation included seizing 9 pounds of fentanyl.
- On Friday, April 28, 2023, Greg Castor from the PHPD retired after 28 years of dedicated service to the men and women and citizens of Palos Heights. While with the department, Greg served as a Truck Enforcement Officer, Officer in Charge, Range Instructor, and Task Force Officer, for both Homeland Security Investigations and the United States Drug Enforcement Administration. We wish Greg a happy, healthy, and prosperous retirement.

NEW BUSINESS

A meeting was held with Chairman Basso, Chief Czajkowski and Deputy Chief Yott to discuss state mandated body cameras for the department. Chief stated body cameras will be mandatory by 2025 for a municipality our size. The department has been testing several different options and have narrowed our search to Axon, who is the industry leader. We made the decision to start this process sooner than later because departments around the state will be frantically looking to purchase to meet the mandate in 2025. We have budgeted money for the cameras using asset forfeiture funds and will be purchasing 30 cameras. Axon will provide us with another due to our 30 camera purchase so total, we will have 31 body cameras. The initial purchase, we will be using the drug asset forfeiture money but in the future, it will become more difficult to pull from this fund.

As for our in-car cameras, they are becoming obsolete. In terms of storage, the server we have at the station will not be capable to hold the amount of footage we will be taking in. On average, we make 10,000 traffic stops a year and every encounter with a citizen will now be recorded on our in-car cameras and body cameras. Replacing the in-car cameras to Axon as well, and sharing the same data format to transfer everything to the cloud, will create for an easier process to pull video for FOIA

requests, states attorney's requests and subpoenas. Centralizing the video will create for a more productive work environment for staff. In terms of ordering, the in-car cameras are 10-12 months out. The assumption is to receive a grant from Illinois Law Enforcement Training Board for the body cameras because they are offering one currently until June of this year. The grants are reimbursable, so we will have to make the purchase initially in order to receive the grant. While we prepare for the expenses of the cameras this year, we anticipate the state may offer more grants in 2024 as the state mandate approaches.

The drug asset forfeiture money is obtained when there is a seizure of currency or narcotics. The government takes a cut of the seize and the department will also get a cut. Each seizure is different depending on the value of what the agents obtain.

Alderman McGovern asked if there was an estimated cost for the body cameras, in which Chief Czajkowski responded, for the 31 body cameras, storage and all, over a 5-year period, the total would be \$291,824.00. The 10 in-car cameras that need to be replaced come to a total of \$67,978.56, which will be paid for with asset forfeiture money in 2024. Over a 5-year period we will have to pay \$22,690.00 a year until the total is reached of \$155,742.00, in April 2028.

Lastly, Chief Czajkowski stated the department has another license plate reader up and running on Southwest Highway and Route 83. The camera has only been up for about a week and the officers were already able to grab a stolen auto hit from the camera. Total we are looking to have nine flock cameras, and then the existing two red light cameras.

Alderman Clifford stated he notified Chief Czajkowski about the stop sign that was down at 120th Street and Harlem Avenue. Public Works has also been notified about the sign.

OLD BUSINESS

Alderman Lewandowski stated one of the residents who lives in Lake Katherine noticed vandalism on the bike trail. Alderman Lewandowski notified Chief Czajkowski and the issue was discussed with the resident.

Deputy Chief Yott stated the Recreation Center is looking at installing cameras on their land for the pool and the bathrooms at the fields to monitor vandalism as well.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, Chairman Basso made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Alderman Clifford. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

Meeting adjourned at 6:58 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Morgan Pukula, Recording Secretary