



CITY OF WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS City Council Agenda Communication

Meeting Date: February 17, 2025

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Agenda Item: New Personnel Proposals (Police Department)

Explanation: The challenges facing law enforcement, like other areas of work, continually evolve. While the number of investigations has remained steady, cases have become more complex, requiring expertise in digital forensics, cryptocurrency-related financial crimes, and sensitive investigations such as sex offenses.

The Investigations Unit consists of one Detective, a Community Resource Officer, and a School Resource Officer, with a Sergeant balancing investigative and administrative duties. Sergeant Smith and Detective Hinken also serve on a Homeland Security Task Force, protecting children from exploitation. Our partnership with HSI provides valuable resources and expertise that directly benefit our investigations at the local level. Detective Hinken's additional roles on CIERT and as a range instructor further stretch investigative resources. Again, the benefits those roles provide outweigh the time invested, but there is time invested that sometimes comes from investigative resources.

Modern financial crimes and digital forensic cases demand specialized skills, extensive analysis, and coordination with multiple agencies. Sex offense investigations require time and precision. Without proper staffing, these cases take longer to resolve, impacting victims and prosecutions, which is to say impacting justice.

To address this, we reassigned a patrol officer to Investigations to focus on financial crimes, particularly those involving cryptocurrency. While this improves investigative capacity, it leaves a gap in patrol, affecting response times and coverage.

To maintain both patrol strength and investigative effectiveness, we require one additional full-time sworn officer. This is intended to provide proper patrol coverage, prevent investigative delays, and maintain our ability to handle complex cases. A proactive, cost-effective solution, this investment supports both public safety and the department's ability to meet evolving demands. Reassigning an officer to investigations is essential, regardless of whether the patrol position is backfilled. We have focused on the reasoning behind that step, trusting in your understanding of the basic protection provided by the availability of sufficient patrol officers to respond to unpredictable daily demands.

We appreciate your consideration and welcome the opportunity to discuss how this benefits the community.

Fiscal Impact: Adjustments to personnel costs vary based on individual hire for a police officer (depending on lateral entry or training requirements) but are generally budgeted at \$95,486. This budgetary figure includes base salary, benefits, and initial personal uniform and equipment issue.

Action Requested: Council consideration and input for a consensus Public Safety budget consistent with Public Safety needs.