

## **COUNCIL WORK SESSION May 9, 2022**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a Council Work Session of the North Mankato City Council was held in the Council Chambers on May 9, 2022. Mayor Dehen called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm. The following were present for roll call: Council Members Norland, Whitlock, Steiner, and Mayor Dehen, Interim City Administrator Fischer, Police Chief Gullickson and Fire Chief Zwaschka, and City Clerk Van Genderen.

### **North Mankato Police Department Report 2021**

Police Chief Gullickson appeared before the Council to present the Police Departments' Annual Report for 2021. He reported the 2021 budget of \$2,473,496 budget was 8.54% of the City's General Fund. The department has 15 sworn officers, 1.5 civilian staff, and 17 volunteer reserves. There are five marked squad cars, two unmarked investigator vehicles, and one unmarked chief vehicle. A review of the calls for service history shows an average of 8,000 calls for service over the past five years.

Police Chief Gullickson stated the department encourages continued training, with over 50 hours of training completed on average by each officer. The investigations unit consists of Lieutenant Adams and Detective Gangelhoff. The unit is responsible for criminal investigations from a felony to misdemeanors. The team also oversees local predatory offenders and coordinates local compliance checks. Police Chief Gullickson noted child protection reports are up.

The Administrative support services are overseen by Lieutenant Adams and include a full-time Senior Police Secretary and a part-time Police secretary. Chief Gullickson stated the team is responsible for administrative support, including record and citation processing, non-emergency dispatching, firearm-related background checks, receptionist duties, and customer service.

Lieutenant Forster and Morgan oversee the Patrol Division. It consists of 10 patrol officers. Patrol officers respond to calls for service and enforcement of traffic laws, conduct school patrols, and attend community events. The Patrol Division works 12-hour shifts and provides a minimum coverage of two officers per shift to serve the community 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Police Chief Gullickson reported a new hire in 2021 was officer Dillon Brashear, and in 2021, Officer Brad Schultz retired after 31 years in law enforcement. Police Chief Gullickson thanked the Police Reserve, which supports community events and provides service to the community.

Police Chief Gullickson reviewed the Crime Statistics, which are now reported in the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). The FBI required the change. NIBRS requires differing levels of detail in reporting Group A and Group B offenses. Group A offenses are more severe crimes, and Group B crimes tend to be minor in nature. Police Chief Gullickson reported a resident of North Mankato has a .05% chance of being a victim of a crime. Police Chief Gullickson stated the report also includes demographic information to help maintain transparency with the public.

Police Chief Gullickson reviewed the Police Department's use of force. He noted in 2021; there were 7,841 calls for service, with 25 incidents presenting a level of resistance requiring the use of force reports; these incidents represent 0.319% of the department calls for service.

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Police Chief Gullickson reported that the department strives to connect to the community. In 2021, the Police Department participated in 94 public relations and education events and documented 187 school patrols.

Police Chief Gullickson reported welfare checks and mental health calls have been increasing. There were 248 calls in 2019, 471 in 2020, 392 calls in 2021, and so far, in 2022, the call volume is set to meet or surpass. He noted that calls often take a significant amount of time and take officers away from other calls. Police Chief Gullickson mentioned the issue in relation to future staffing needs as the police force in North Mankato and around Minnesota is facing staffing and retention issues.

Police Chief Gullickson reported that the primary drug in North Mankato is methamphetamines, and the Regional Drug Task Force works to locate the distributors bringing the drug into the City.

Council Member Whitlock asked if the Police Department needed a different division or an offshoot of the police department to manage certain types of calls, but it would add a burden to the Police Department's budget. Police Chief Gullickson reported that the department is fortunate to work with Nicollet and Blue Earth County agencies designed to manage these types of calls. There are resources available, but it still draws on the current force.

Mayor Dehen requested clarification on budgeting needs as the City looks at squad cameras and body cameras. Police Chief Gullickson reported the department could staff 24/7 two-car patrols, but vacation or sickness can significantly impact staffing and indicated an interest in adding additional staff.

### **North Mankato Fire Department Report 2021**

Fire Chief Zwaschka reported the department has 33 members with Fire Fighters licensed as I and II, Hazardous Material Operations, and Certification by Minnesota Fire Certification Board. The team also has Incident Command System Certification members to ICS 400 and MBFTE Instructors, and Minnesota Fire Certification Evaluators.

Fire Chief Zwaschka reviewed the Mission statement, which is a commitment to protect the lives and property of the community through dedication to training, public education, and emergency preparedness.

In 2021 the department had over 1300 hours of training. The department utilizes the Minnesota Board of Fire Training and Education Fund for training reimbursement. The fund does not cover 100% of the training, but the department can request and receive a reimbursement for a portion of the training.

The Fire Department is involved in public education to reduce community risk through education efforts. The department spends time visiting schools, and daycare facilities and taking part in other educational opportunities.

Fire Chief Zwaschka reviewed the incident calls from May 2021 to May 2022. There were a total of 140 calls, with 25 calls (or 17.86%) fire calls, there were 36 (or 25.71%) of the calls were hazardous conditions such as gas leaks, and 64 (or 45.71%) of the calls were false alarms.

Fire Chief Zwaschka reviewed the proposed replacement schedule for equipment. He noted in 2023, a support van is scheduled for replacement; the current vehicle is a 1991 van. The estimated replacement cost is \$210,000. In 2024 the schedule includes replacing a 1997 Fire Engine for approximately \$750,000. Fire Chief Zwaschka reported that the department wants to stay updated with the replacement schedule to maintain the ISO rating. If the ISO rating drops,

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fire insurance for residents increases. Fire Chief Zwaschka reported the budget projections to include a regular replacement of radios, improved technology in the trucks, rebuilding the bay heaters in Fire Station #2, and replacing the large diameter hose.

Fire Chief Zwaschka reviewed the department's strengths, including a well-trained staff, staff trained as trainers, strong community support and respect for members, and good relationships with other local departments and associations. Threats to the department include turnover and retirements with a lack of applicants, cost to keep equipment up to date, training requirements, and the ability to support members with life challenges. Goals for the department include getting closer to the 35+ members to lighten the load on the group, increasing firefighter wages to match the area, community risk reduction in rental housing, and improved technology and healthy members that enjoy the job.

Mayor Dehen requested the department put together a wish list to allow the public to know opportunities to give directly to the department.

Interim City Administrator Fischer reported that in 2019 the inspection department partnered with several firefighters to conduct rental inspections. The program was suspended in 2020 due to the pandemic but resumed in 2022.

Council Member Norland moved, seconded by Council Member Steiner, to adjourn the Council Work Session at 12:54 pm.

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Mayor

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City Clerk