

**AGENDA
CITY OF HARTFORD
FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2020
6:00 P.M.**

1. Call to order.
2. Roll call.
3. Public comment period.
4. Discussion and consideration of creating a new position of Street Superintendent effective January 1, 2021 with the current crew leader being placed in this position at a wage increase of \$2.50 per hour more than the Equipment Operator's wage. (Executive Summary attached)
5. Discussion and consideration of increasing one regular part time Communications Officer position to full time. (Executive Summary attached)
6. Discussion and consideration of an extension of premises for the Schauer Arts and Activities Center for October 9th, 10th and 11th, 2020. (Sip and Fall in The Schauer – fundraiser)
7. Adjournment.

NOTE: "PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES REQUIRING SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS FOR ATTENDANCE AT THE MEETING SHOULD CONTACT THE CITY CLERK AT LEAST ONE (1) BUSINESS DAY PRIOR TO THE MEETING."

"MEMBERS OF THE COMMON COUNCIL MAY ATTEND THE ABOVE MEETING, PURSUANT TO STATE EX REL. BADKE V. GREENDALE VILLAGE BOARD, 173 WIS 2D 553, 494 N.W. 2D 408 (1993). SUCH ATTENDANCE MAY BE CONSIDERED A MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL. THIS NOTICE IS GIVEN SO THAT MEMBERS OF THE COMMON COUNCIL MAY ATTEND THE MEETING WITHOUT VIOLATING THE OPEN MEETING LAW."

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TITLE: Street Department Staff Reclassification proposal to have the Crew Leader Position upgraded to a newly created Street Superintendent position.

BACKGROUND: While preparing for the upcoming 2021 budget process and looking to the future, the Director of Public Works has identified the need for additional assistance. There has been a 12% increase in the City's population since 2010. With the pending retirement of the Director of Public works within the next two years, it will be important to have a Street Superintendent in place to assist the new Director.

The Street's division of the Public Works Department provides an efficient and safe traffic flow pattern in the City of Hartford by the reconstruction and preventive maintenance of 82.15 miles of streets and their respective storm drainage and lighting systems. Maintenance services include snow plowing, salting, seal coating, crack sealing, sweeping, patching, and signage. The City sweeps streets twice annually, and removes leaves from residential curbsides each autumn.

The Department of Public Works services need to be responsive and tailored to the specific needs of Hartford. Well trained and properly classified public employees provide needed services in a way desired by community members.

- Plow and de-ice streets and parking lots as necessary.
- Crack seal approximately 2 miles of streets annually.
- Sealcoat and thin asphalt approximately 60,000 square feet of streets annually.
- Reconstruct in a safe and timely manner those streets approved for reconstruction in the 2020 Capital Improvement Program.

Area of Increased Responsibility:

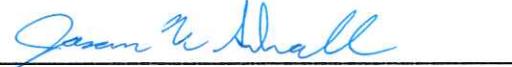
1. Assist with coordinating and assigning staff for City emergencies and snow removal.
2. Direct, coordinate, and schedule work assignments for Street Department staff, activities; assign and monitor routine street maintenance projects; meet with City Engineer to determine tasks that require attention.
3. Responsible to fill in when the Director of Public Works is out of the office.

FISCAL IMPACT: The total increase in labor costs would be **approximately \$3,036.80** for the budget year **2021**. The Crew Leader is currently earning \$1.04 more than the Equipment Operators so there would be an additional \$1.46 per hour in the labor budget. The increase in labor costs could be offset by the elimination of the current EAB program or, as the Administrator requested, a possible line item reduction under the Asphalt Account No. 100.301.533900.53825 in the amount of **\$1,500.00**, the Roadway Supplies Account No. 100.301.533900.53828 in the amount of **\$1,000.00**, and the Calcium Chloride Account No. 100.301.533900.53824 in the amount of **\$500.00**.

RECOMMENDATION: Appropriate City Officials are authorized to create the new position of Street Superintendent effective January 1, 2021 with the current crew leader being placed in this position at a wage increase which would be \$2.50 per hour more than the Equipment Operator's wage.

PREPARED BY:  9-16-2020
Darryl Kranz
Director of Public Works
Date

REVIEWED BY:  9-16-2020
Dawn Timm
Finance Director/Treasurer
Date

REVIEWED BY:  9-16-2020
Jason Schall
City Engineer
Date

APPROVED BY:  9-16-2020
Steve Volkert
City Administrator
Date

ROUTING: Finance Committee - September 22, 2020
Common Council -

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TITLE: REQUEST TO INCREASE ONE REGULAR PART-TIME (50%) COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER TO FULL TIME WITH BENEFITS

BACKGROUND:

The Hartford Police Department is requesting the addition of 20 hours per week, and a benefit package, to one of the 50% part-time Communications Officer positions. This move will allow us to schedule overlapping coverage during key times of day. In addition to that, it will solidify staffing by addressing issues with recruitment and retention of the part-time positions.

The Hartford Police Department currently staffs the Emergency Communications Center with three full-time, and three part-time 50%, Communications Officers (C.O.) positions. This staffing structure has been in place since I began my tour of duty in 1996. We utilize part-time 50% C.O.'s to supplement our full-time staff. This is unique. I am personally not aware of any other agencies that utilize this approach. Part-Time "Floater" type C.O.'s are generally utilized to supplement full-time staff when needed. While I do not know the original thinking behind the current structure, I can guess that it was done with the hopes of minimizing expense by avoiding having to pay full-time benefits to the people in those roles. Unfortunately, this has created a situation where we are having difficulty recruiting, and especially in retaining, individuals for those positions for a variety of reasons.

The first reason would be applicants for a C.O. position are usually looking to begin their careers or to relocate from another agency. We have repeatedly found that part-time 50% positions are not attractive to those individuals. Those that do apply either lack the skills or are looking for a "stepping stone" to a career as a police officer, probation officer, or some other position in law enforcement. Second, part-time 50% positions demand that the candidate works a regular fixed part-time schedule that makes it very difficult to work any full-time job elsewhere and only the most flexible of part-time jobs are even remotely possible to supplement their earning potential elsewhere. Third, part-time 50% require that they be available to be ordered in as needed. This further complicates the proposition of other employment for these candidates. Finally, by design we make it clear to our part-time 50% C.O.'s that we intend to keep them below the ¾ time level to avoid the added expense of full-time benefits. The security that benefits can provide for an employee are a key motivational factor in employee recruiting and retention.

From 2016, through the current year so far, the department has engaged in multiple hiring processes to hire an average of 1.6 part time communications officers per year (1.7 over 10 years) to address these staffing shortages. During this span, eight (8) communications officers were hired. Of the eight hired, five (5) left their positions seeking full time employment with benefits. The remaining three (3) resigned due to performance issues, forcing us to hire again. Most that left for full time, found positions with area law enforcement agencies. The most recent resignation was in 2018, and we finally filled that position as of September 14, 2020. To make matters worse, one of the part-time communications officers we currently have on staff, is submitting applications to other law enforcement agencies seeking full time employment. If hired, this will, again, drop the staffing levels of the Emergency Communications Center below authorized levels.

The average length of employment for full-time communications officers is 182 months versus 10 months for part time staff (9 leaving since 2016). The continuous process of recruiting impacts us not only financially, but also takes a toll on the certified training officers. They have expressed they

are becoming weary of the constant training. This process takes them away from their normal assigned duties and redirects them to an instructional role. As you know, training is important to us as the Hartford Police Emergency Communications Center was the first in the State of Wisconsin to achieve national accreditation of its training program. One of the reasons we have accomplished that distinction is because we ensure that all of our C.O.'s are highly trained to provide the best possible emergency services to our community. This has resulted in a thorough and demanding training program for all of our C.O.'s. These standards meet or exceed all nationally recognized training standards for emergency communications centers. Unfortunately, we have found that the level of training and capabilities we provide to our C.O.'s makes them a coveted commodity for other agencies. When these agencies are willing to offer full-time C.O. positions, complete with commensurate wages and benefits, to our part-time 50% C.O.'s, we simply cannot compete and we are losing these employees. The bottom line is, this position should be viewed as a career, not a part time job.

When the Emergency Communication Center has a constant stream of inexperienced trainees at the helm, our officers, fire fighters, emergency medical services, and the greater Hartford community, experience a decrease in the quality of service. The highly technical and complex multi-tasking nature of the Communications Officer position requires months, if not years, of training and on the job experience to become proficient at it. Anything short of proficient is unsatisfactory in this line of work. Transitioning to full-time positions will reduce the high job turnover rate that these part-time positions have experienced over the last few years and will generate higher quality in the applicant pool. The transition from three full-time and three part-time, to five full-time, will allow us to schedule overlapping coverage during key times of day when the volume of calls may be increased. This benefits the speed and efficiency of call handling, and aids in such functions as Emergency Medical Dispatch.

The department is requesting approval to increase one of the current part-time communication officer positions to full-time with benefits. This will be the first of two steps to address a staffing issue by transitioning all of the part-time communication officers to full time with benefits by the year 2022. Moreover, approval of this will allow the scheduling of double coverage during key times of day.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There would be additional salary and benefit of approximately \$60,289.24 required to increase the part-time 50% Communications Officer's position to full-time with benefits. That amount is included in the proposed 2021 personnel budgets.

RECOMMENDATION:

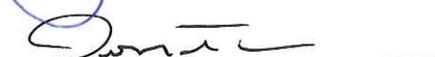
To authorize appropriate City Officials to increase one regular part time (50%) Communications Officer position to full time with benefits. This increase to full time Communications Officer's position would be contingent upon the City of Hartford Common Council's approval of the 2021 annual budget.

PREPARED BY:


Scott MacFarlan, Chief of Police

DATE: 9-16-2020

APPROVED BY:


Dawn Timm, Finance Director

DATE: 9-16-2020

APPROVED BY: 
Steve Volkert, City Administrator

DATE: 9-16-2020

Committee Routing: Finance and Personnel Committee

September 22, 2020



City of Hartford

Hartford Fire and Rescue
111 West Wisconsin Street, Hartford, WI 53027



September 14, 2020

Hartford Common Council Members
City of Hartford
109 N. Main Street
Hartford, WI 53027

Dear Hartford Common Council Members:

I am writing this letter as a formal endorsement by the Hartford Fire and Rescue Department of Police Chief Scott MacFarlan's proposal to transition to more full-time staffing in the Communications Officer (Dispatcher) position for the City of Hartford.

The highly technical and complex multi-tasking nature of the Communications Officer position requires months, if not years, of training and on the job experience to become proficient at it. Anything short of proficient is unsatisfactory in this line of work.

Staff is confident that transitioning to full-time positions will reduce the high job turnover rate that these part-time positions have experienced over the last few years and will indirectly create retention incentives for those that do work part-time and will generate higher quality in the applicant pool.

When it comes to 911 emergencies, seconds count. The Hartford Fire and Rescue Department fully supports this worthwhile enhancement. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this project.

Respectfully,

Paul J. Stephans
Chief
Hartford Fire and Rescue Department