



VILLAGE BOARD
31 West Quincy Street, Westmont, Illinois 60559
Tel: 630-981-6200
westmont.illinois.gov | villageboard@westmont.il.gov



POLICE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Westmont Village Hall - 31 West Quincy Street

Meeting Minutes - January 27, 2022

[Draft to be Approved - May 5, 2022](#)

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** - Trustee Simonovich called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm
- II. **ROLL CALL**

<u>Committee</u> Trustee Simonovich (as chair) Mayor Gunter (via zoom) Trustee Liddle Trustee Nero Trustee Brady Trustee Barker Trustee Guzzo (via zoom)	<u>Staff</u> Village Manager May Assistant Village Manager Parker Police Chief Gunther Deputy Chief Gruen Deputy Chief Thompson Sergeant Gomorczak Detective Kozielski Detective Newton Officer Arndt Officer Rooney Detective Durst Communications Director McIntyre Assistant to the Chief Olsson
<u>Visitors</u> Kozielski family Bob Kovanda Vince Musial	

- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- IV. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** - None
- V. **APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 22, 2021 POLICE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES** - Trustee Liddle made a motion to approve and Trustee Nero seconded the motion.
- VI. **NEW BUSINESS**

1. 2021 Summary of Accomplishments

Chief Gunther shared his screen and reviewed the presentation prepared by Deputy Chief Gruen (attached) highlighting the department's major achievements and activities for 2021.



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- a) 2021 was another year of addressing and mitigating the spread of COVID within the department.
- b) Chief Gunther became the Chairman of MERIT Task Force through April 2023 and President of DuPage County Chiefs of Police Association through September 2022. He briefly described the components of MERIT. A fundraiser for MERIT was held last November which resulted in securing two BearCats and one mobile command vehicle from DuPage County and private donations. He cited examples of incidents where mutual aid from the task force helped in solving threats against public safety officers.
- c) Operating budget chart showed actual expenditures were well below budget for the last ten years.
- d) Summary of members by tenure was discussed showing a breakdown of current staff of 44 with 17 members having less than five years of service. There were five retirements in 2021: Maggie Bjur, Sgt. Gabreleski, Ofc. Opelt, Ofc. Malamis, and Detective Schneider. There were two promotions: Sgt. Mantooth and Sgt. Ryan. There was one transfer into the department and seven new hires, however one resigned leaving three open patrol officer positions. The swearing in ceremony for the four recent academy graduates will be scheduled once COVID restrictions are lifted.
- e) Chief Gunther adjusted the agenda to present the Employee of the Year award.
 - Chief Gunther presented the Police Department Employee of the Year Award to Detective Tom Kozielski. Chief Gunther highlighted Detective Kozielski's exemplary customer service to the community and his outstanding contributions to the department in 2021.
- f) Chief Gunther adjusted the agenda to summarize several noteworthy investigations:
 - February 3, 2021: Cordia Senior Living Center resident was left in a transport van and froze to death. Charges were brought against two individuals on July 1, 2021.
 - August 1, 2021: Head-on fatal collision on the corner of Chicago Avenue and Linden Avenue where the offending driver was charged with driving with a blood alcohol concentration twice the legal limit. The driver also had cocaine and cannabis in her system. MERIT's accident reconstruction team was called out for the incident.
 - Throughout the year, there were a series of motor vehicle thefts from car dealerships. Manager May added that catalytic converter thefts also increased. After meeting with managers from dealerships, our detectives developed a text thread notification system which has been successful in deterring attempted thefts from dealerships. There were approximately 29 vehicles stolen at the time of the report.
 - December 23, 2021: MERIT assisted in the Oak Brook mall shooting event



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MERIT teams assisted in safely evacuating 10,000 holiday shoppers and searched for the subject. The case is still under investigation.

- December 29, 2021: Oak Brook Hilton hotel shooting, which is still under investigation.
 - December 31, 2021: Officer involved shooting at a dealership, which is still under investigation. Many task force teams were involved including the Public Integrity Team and the State's Attorney's Office.
 - January 4, 2022: Carjacking incident at 63rd St., which is still under investigation. MERIT was also called out for this incident.
- g) Activities from the Patrol and Records Divisions were summarized. Crime statistics reported to the FBI from the past three years were discussed. In addition, the department implemented new software called Frontline, which tracks and organizes state mandated training.
- h) Community outreach events which were organized by Sgt. Gomorczak and Sgt. Weibler collected \$18,768 in fundraising for the Special Olympics. Special Events included Open House/National Night Out in August and Squad Car Night in September were well attended. Citizens' Police Academy and Junior Citizens' Police Academy programs were successful even though participation was limited due to COVID precautions.
- i) Chief Gunther volunteered to assist in the clean up effort at Mayfield, KY after an EF-4 tornado devastated the area.
- j) 2022 department goals were discussed.
- k) Manager May suggested scheduling a tour of the Police Department building.

2. Department Awards - Chief Gunther recognized the following officers with departmental awards for the outstanding service and accomplishments:

- a) Officer Rooney received Felony Arrest Commendation from an incident in March 2021.
- b) Officer Newton received Chief's Recognition Commendation from an incident in July 2021.
- c) Officer Arndt received Chief's Recognition Commendation for his service in the Illinois National Guard in 2021.

3. Staffing Update

Deputy Chief Gruen provided an update that the department currently has 38 sworn officers, but is authorized to have 41, and six civilian staff. As Chief Gunther mentioned, five recently hired officers graduated from the Cook County Police Academy in December, with one resigning in January. The graduates have started the field training program. There are currently six in probationary status.



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4. Probationary Officer Hiring / Testing

Deputy Chief Gruen stated that the department hired a probationary officer starting in mid February and will attend the police academy in May, with the power test scheduled for mid April.

Probationary Officer Testing will be held in mid March to hire two officers. There are currently 38 applications, which has already exceeded the number of applicants from the July test. This is likely due to the incentives for certified officers.

5. Axon Body Worn Camera Grant and Other Grants

Deputy Chief Thompson stated that Sgt. Gomorczak has started drafting a Body Worn Camera (BWC) policy, which is required for the Small Rural Tribal (SRT) grant. The policy needs to be approved by SRT before grant funds can be released. Another requirement for the grant is for the previously approved contract with Axon to be dated in the current year, which Axon agreed to modify. The SRT grant is \$82,000 which will offset the cost of the equipment. Implementation should be completed by the end of this year even though our deadline for implementation is in 2025. Manager May clarified that the contract with Axon was approved in November 2021, however, the purchase order that will be presented to the Village Board meeting will be dated in 2022 in order to qualify for the grant.

A second grant application has been submitted to obtain a utility vehicle worth approximately \$40,000 which will be used for special events. Manager May suggested that an electric utility vehicle be considered if the grant is approved.

6. Impact of Recent Safety Act Trailer Bill

Deputy Chief Thompson provided updates on the Safety Act:

- a) January 1, 2022 - implement the requirement of three phone calls within the first three hours of detention; if the person did not make any calls a statement of the reason or reasons why no calls were made must be included. Since personal phones can be considered evidence, we can give them access to contacts but not their own phone.
- b) Many sections of the Safety Act were pushed back such as qualified immunity. The committee has agreed to discuss this section further but there is currently no date for a recommendation.
- c) Effective July 1, 2022 - waiting on language related to mental health screenings for officers; need a panel for certification and decertification for officers that can provide direction; training requirements which are already in progress, but we need a system to track training hours.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS

1. Bob Kovanda, Chairman of the Fire & Police Commission, commented that it was



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business as usual for the commissioners.

2. Trustee Nero thanked the Police and Fire Departments for their efforts.

VIII. ADJOURN Motion to adjourn by Trustee Nero, seconded by Trustee Liddle at 5:24 pm.