

## ELM GROVE POLICE DEPARTMENT

March 13, 2017

TO: David DeAngelis, Village Manager

FROM: James P. Gage, Chief of Police

SUBJECT: Request for temporary staffing increase to 18 officers.

Sir:

I request the authority to increase staffing temporarily to 18 officers. An officer recently announced plans to retire on November 22, 2017. We are currently in a hiring process to replace Officer Townsend, who resigned in October 2016 (approximately 5 months ago). During the Townsend hiring process, the Police and Fire Commission presented two separate candidates with job offers and both candidates refused the offer, causing us to start the hiring process over, due to a lack of qualified candidates. The hiring process, on average, takes approximately 4 months. The training of a new hire, before they are available to independently handle a shift, is an additional 3 months. Such temporary staffing requests are supported in the third 2000 Hale follow-up study of the police department and by past board action:

“Staffing levels continue to be a source of concern in the department. **At one time, high attrition rates made it very difficult to field a sufficient number of officers to ensure officer safety and response to citizen demands without incurring a great deal of overtime.** While this problem seems to have been curtailed, the department continues to play catch up whenever a vacancy does occur. In recognition of this fact, the Village Board recently approved the hiring of one additional officer in anticipation of the retirement of the investigator. This was a good move of the Board and will allow the officer who is to be assigned to this position sufficient time to become acquainted with the nature of the job before the incumbent’s retirement.” (Pages 3 &4) [Emphasis added]

“Having set such precedence, the Village Board should consider making such appointments a matter of practice at anytime a retirement becomes a virtual certainty. **Due to the fact that it may take as long as one year to hire and train a new officer, the department can ill-afford to begin this process on the day the retirement takes effect.**” (Page 4) [Emphasis added]

“The Village Board should adopt a policy of filling anticipated vacancies as soon as reasonably certain that they will become vacant rather than wait until after they have become vacant.” (page 4).

Support for this staffing request can be found in reviewing the following studies, previously sanctioned by the Village Board:

- The 1976, *Fire and Police Committee Study of the Police Department*, (Borden, Farrow and Vetter, November 30, 1976).
- The 1994, *Resource Management Associates (known as the Hale study)*, (Hale, 1994).

- The 1996, Hale study revisit.
- The 2000, Hale study revisit.
- The 2003, village staff self-study analysis.
- The 2005, Personnel Committee re-evaluation of police department structure.
- The 2008, Police Officer Position Justification and staffing update.
- The 2009, Request for temporary officer approval.

The police department at full strength is currently authorized at seventeen sworn police officers. Since, April 2008, the actual trained police staff has been between fourteen and sixteen officers, inclusive of sworn administrative staff. This trend of operating below authorized strength is well documented. History shows staffing of trained and available officers is consistently at one to three positions under the authorized full strength allotment for the reasons described in previous studies.

**Current overview:**

The police department staffing includes the following administrative/investigative personnel, working a Monday through Friday schedule rotation (2080 annual hours):

- One Chief
- One Assistant Chief
- One Lieutenant
- One Detective

As outlined in the three Hale studies (1996, 1998 and 2000) and the 2005 position justification, the above personnel are assigned Monday through Friday, daytime hours and are not considered part of the twenty four hour – seven day a week patrol staffing coverage.

Although, any one of the above personnel may provide backfill for training, court appearances, etc., for daytime patrol schedule conflicts, the reality is that they are not considered part of the regular patrol force. This leaves thirteen positions to cover the twenty four hour patrol responsibilities on a five two – four two schedule rotation (2021.5 annual hours), as indicated below:

Days:	One sergeant – three patrol officers = 4
Early:	One sergeant – three patrol officers =4
Late:	One sergeant – three patrol officers =4

This leaves one non-permanent patrol officer position – with eventual assignment to days or early watch, per employment agreement.

**Scheduling factors:**

Typical off time considerations include;

- Contractual vacation time.
- Sick hour to vacation time conversion.
- Sick time used.
- Compensation time used.

Variable off time considerations include;

- Duty disability.
- Training during shift.
- Open positions.
- New employee training time.

Exacerbating factors:

- Scheduling of fixed programs (community services and special events) eliminates existing personnel for patrol coverage (i.e. an officer assigned to DARE or other programs cannot be used for vacation or sick time, duty disability coverage).
- Court appearances or investigative overtime may conflict with fixed programs and unscheduled absences (sick time and FMLA).
- Certain contractual elements eliminate desired personnel movement due to potential overtime considerations.

Effect of losing additional positions:

- The loss of one position causes approximately three to five open shifts per month, or a minimum of 288 to 480 hours lost annually, before any other schedule factors are applied.
- The loss of additional positions causes an increase in overtime expenditures to cover the loss.
- The loss of an officer causes a reduction in production and revenues.

**Financial impact:**

Bottom line, if we stay at current operational staffing, we will functionally operate at a patrol force 11 out of 13 officers with the need to cover the scheduling items addressed above. Any resignations or additional long-term absences such as FMLA or disability will force the department to work at about 10 officers.

Reduction of the patrol force to ten officers, places us in critical staffing mode, when facing contractual vacation liability and other leaves. This staffing level increases the “burn-out” rate and continually places us at minimum staffing. Past studies tell us to expect overtime to go up and community satisfaction with police services to decline.