



# Wauwatosa Police Department

## Inter-Departmental Memo

DATE: 3/4/24

TO: Financial Affairs Committee

FROM: Capt. Luke Vetter, HR Dir. Beth Mbow, Finance Dir. John Ruggini

SUBJECT: Police Recruitment and Retention Task Force (RRTF)  
2023 Report & 2024 Proposal

ATTACHED: none

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### **Background**

In November of 2021 the Police Command Staff and HR Director proposed to Council the need for special funding to stand up a recruitment and retention task force for the challenges to maintain our Police staffing. As of this date, the department currently has 11 sworn vacancies (3/4/24). This number has been stubbornly persistent, but would be a much worse picture without the RRTF's efforts that have been funded by the City for the last 3-1/2 years.

The RRTF is made up of members from the Police, HR and Communications Departments. Regular assistance is also provided by the Finance and IT Departments. The main goals of the RRTF are clear: retain the current Officers we now have, and attract diverse candidates to our agency.

### **RRTF Accounting Summary**

RRTF spending for 2023 was divided into five main categories

1. Bonuses:
  - a. Signing bonuses for NEW hires
  - b. Referral bonuses for current employees
2. Housing costs for Appleton's summer Police Academy
3. Recruitment events
4. Marketing & media social media
5. Additional equipment to train new recruits

#### Summary of 2023 RRTF Efforts

- 15 Officers were hired in 2023 (13 were hired in 2022)
  - 12 separated in 2023 (12 separated in 2022)
- Positive balance of \$17,706.76 remains in the RRTF fund after paying future bonus obligations

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We are very thankful for the flexibility and resources the Council has provided the RRTF. We anticipate there still could be as many as 8-10 vacancies out of a total of 110 authorized sworn positions by Dec. 31, 2024. Future resignations and retirements will drive the need to continue RRTF efforts for the next several years. Forecasting shows that our ability to get to full staffing is years away.

### **2024 PROPOSAL**

We are proposing a level 3 transfer to fund RRTF efforts into 2024. The proposals again fall into similar categories and totals an estimated \$53,600.00.

1. Referral bonus for employees who attract a candidate who is hired as an Officer
2. Housing costs for Appleton's summer police academy
3. Recruitment events
4. Targeted marketing and social media ads
5. Equipment to train new recruits
6. Additional training for our Officers and Supervisors

To accommodate the initiatives described above, the total budget will need to be increased \$35,893.24 from \$230,425 to \$266,318.24. Similar to last year, this will be funded through police department salary savings and the Reserve for Contingencies if salary savings are insufficient. Approval of a level three fund transfer by the Common Council is also required for the equipment upgrades, marketing initiatives, and training funds.

On behalf of the entire RRTF team, we thank you for your continued support and for considering this proposal for our on-going hiring challenges.

Respectfully and for the RRTF team,

Capt. Luke Vetter, HR Dir. Beth Mbow, Finance Dir. John Ruggini