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MEMORANDUM

To: Stakeholders of the City of Whitewater
From: Dan Meyer, Chief of Police; John Weidl, City Manager
Date: 12/1/2023
Re: Strengthening Community Safety and Service Diversity: A Joint Commitment from the Whitewater Police Department and City Management

To the Members of the Whitewater Community,

We, Chief of Police Dan Meyer and City Manager John Weidl, are jointly writing to express our deep gratitude to the elected officials of the Whitewater Common Council and the larger Whitewater community for the recent decision to invest an additional \$120,000 in the Whitewater Police Department for the year 2024. This specific investment is earmarked to fully fund our staffing study strategy and make immediate technological improvements that seek to alleviate pressure on our existing workforce until we can thoroughly assess the staffing needs of the entire police department next year.

This investment comes at a critical juncture, as we are witnessing significant demographic changes within our city, alongside escalating pressures on our existing law enforcement resources. We want to assure you that this augmentation of resources is not something we take lightly. Together, we are committed to ensuring that these resources are utilized strategically and effectively to address these emerging challenges.

One of our primary objectives is to enhance our department's ability to proactively police and adapt to changes in our community. We are dedicated to achieving this in a manner that is objective, measurable, and sustainable over the long term. Nothing is more important to us than the safety and welfare of the residents, students, businesses, employees, and visitors in our community. In line with this, we are introducing new levels of accountability, objectivity, and follow-through in our operational planning.

Part of our strategy includes improving our technological capabilities. We have already invested in three Flock automated license plate reader (ALPR) cameras, which are proving to be invaluable investigative tools. With the additional funding, we plan to add nine more cameras, ensuring comprehensive coverage throughout the city. Additionally, future our investments will include advancements in language translation, mental health, and new arrival-related services, enhancing our ability to communicate and effectively serve all community members. This is a critical step in ensuring inclusivity and accessibility in our law enforcement efforts, matching the diversity in needs of the community.

Furthermore, we are taking steps to bridge the gap created by reduced revenues coming from the State of Wisconsin and University in relation to the police and dispatch services we provide (reductions totaling over \$400,000 in FY 2024). This is an essential part of our strategy to maintain high-quality services without compromising our commitment to community safety or reducing our ability to serve and protect State owned property and the University population.

Understanding the necessity of proper staffing, we have initiated the Request for Proposals (RFP) process for a law enforcement staffing study with an outside firm, funded in advance by the Common Council. The findings of this study, expected by the first quarter of 2024, will guide our future steps, including the possibility of a referendum for law enforcement services. We are also financially prepared to go through the referendum process if the recommended staffing measures exceed the governing body's ability to implement solutions. This demonstrates our strategic foresight and readiness to follow through with the likely outcomes as well as our commitment to engage the taxpayers of the community in the process.

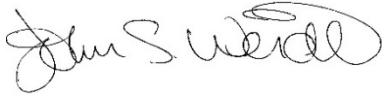
Bottom line: our staff remains dedicated to providing proactive and efficient law enforcement services based on objectively assessed needs and embracing the diversity of services required across the City of Whitewater. We are thankful for the Common Council's support in this endeavor and deeply appreciate the ongoing support from our residents as we strive to meet the evolving needs of our community. We ask for your patience and understanding as we work to build a Whitewater that everyone is proud to call home.

Most importantly, together, we pledge to bring about a safer, more secure Whitewater.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Meyer".

Dan Meyer, Chief of Police

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John S. Weidl".

John S. Weidl, City Manager