

August 20, 2021 Idaho Falls Police Department Organization

The City Council of the City of Idaho Falls met in Special Meeting, Friday, August 20, 2021, in the Council Chambers in the City Annex Building located at 680 Park Avenue in Idaho Falls, Idaho at 2:00 p.m.

Call to Order and Roll Call:

There were present:

Mayor Rebecca L. Noah Casper

Council President Michelle Ziel-Dingman

Councilor Thomas Hally

Councilor Jim Freeman

Councilor Jim Francis

Councilor Lisa Burtenshaw (via telephone until approximately 4:00 p.m.)

Councilor John Radford (arrived at 2:07)

Also present:

Bryce Johnson, Police Chief

Joel Tisdale, Police Captain

Bill Squires, Police Captain

Jeremy Galbreath, Police Captain

Jessica Clements, Police Public Information Officer (PIO)

Pamela Alexander, Municipal Services Director

Mark Hagedorn, Controller

Michael Kirkham, Assistant City Attorney

Kathy Hampton, City Clerk

Mayor Casper called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

Mayor Casper recommended all individuals in attendance observe social distancing per the recent higher numbers of Coronavirus (COVID-19) cases. She also noted, per the signage displayed by individuals in attendance, the council has been very supportive of the IFPD while being responsible of the budget.

Mayor Casper stated there were questions and concerns regarding the Idaho Falls Police Department (IFPD) that led to a request for a deep dive of the IFPD organization. She then turned the presentation to Chief Johnson.

Briefing and Discussion: Department Organization and Staffing:

Chief Johnson stated he has been with the IFPD for four (4) years, and it is his honor to work with the IFPD. He then presented the following with general comments and discussion throughout:

IFPD – 142 Total Full-time employees (FTE) (per the current date)

- Authorized Sworn Police Officers – 95 (there are currently 94 officers on staff)
- Dispatch/Emergency 911 – 23
- Animal Services – 3
- Code Enforcement – 3
- Support Personnel – 12

Traditional Police Department (PD) Command Structure includes Chief of Police, Assistant Chief, Captain, Lieutenant, Sergeant, Corporal, Detective, and Officer. The IFPD Command Structure includes Chief of Police (1),

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Captain (3), Lieutenant (5), Sergeant (11) (average of 7 officers/sergeant for span of control (this should be between 6-8), 24-hour coverage (not did occur prior to 2017)), Detective/Officer (75). Chief Johnson gave a brief history of the command structure for Captains, Lieutenants, and Sergeants stating he believes this is the most compressed command structure in the region and one of the most compressed command structures for an agency of this size. He noted the Lieutenants were made exempt employees in 2018. Chief Johnson briefly reviewed the tasks of Sergeants stating they are the most important layer of command in a police department.

Department Structure: Office of the Chief (Administration); Patrol Bureau; Investigations and Special Operations Bureau (includes Dispatch); and Professional Standards and Logistics Bureau (includes Animal Services).

Administration (1 sworn/4 total FTE) includes Office of the Chief, Executive Assistant, PIO, and Crime Analyst.

Department Bureau, Patrol:

Captain Tisdale reviewed the Patrol Bureau (67 sworn/70 total FTE) – Captain, 3 Lieutenants including 3 Code Enforcement, 8 Sergeants (24-hour coverage, oversees day-to-day operations, level of decision is highly important), 55 officers (24-hour coverage, their schedules were voted on by the officers per the parameters for the city) including 4 traffic officers (no round-the-clock coverage, main complaint is always traffic), 3 K-9 officers (must have time to care for the dog), and 2 airport officers. Captain Tisdale stated 42 officers are currently available to take calls due to training, unfilled positions, and light-duty training of other officers. Captain Tisdale indicated the number of the 55 officers is never accurate. He also noted retirements are expected in the coming year which will affect this number. Chief Johnson stated lateral officers are more valuable in the first year due to the extensive training. He also stated there is not currently a pool of individuals to hire in the upcoming year. Captain Tisdale briefly reviewed the overtime schedule. He also explained the Patrol Bureau: heavily subsidized by overtime; major impact from injuries, administrative leave, vacation, training, retirements, etc.; authorized vs. deployable; patrol dashboard (assigned vs. unassigned time (average of 6%)); and cannibalized services (neighborhood police officers, gang unit, intel unit, warrants team, traffic unit, STEP (driving under the influence (DUI) patrol), impact team, geographic policing). Captain Tisdale stated it's difficult to address complaint calls due to the lack of these services. Brief comments followed regarding the motorcycle officers. Chief Johnson stated the motorcycle officers are the most efficient and effective in traffic. He also stated per the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), there should be 60% of unassigned time. Per Mayor Casper, Captain Tisdale explained the services that were cannibalized. He believes community policing is a common goal throughout the IFPD. He also believes certain individuals need interaction with the IFPD in a positive way.

Department Bureau, Investigations and Special Operations:

Captain Squires reviewed Investigations and Special Operations Bureau (ISOB) (23 sworn/54 total FTE) – Captain, Administrative Assistant, Investigations, Dispatch, Records, and Special Teams. He stated this bureau also includes 1 Evidence Specialist (more than 19,000 pieces of evidence are currently in the IFPD possession, which are held in three (3) different locations). Unsworn personnel includes dispatch (Captain Squires commended the dispatchers as he believes this is a difficult position, he noted 11-12 individuals are needed to fill all positions in dispatch), records, and front-desk employees. Sworn personnel include 1 Lieutenant, 2 Sergeants, 4 School Resource Officers (SRO) (mostly funded by School District 91, one officer replaced the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) Program), 2 Special Investigation Detectives (these detectives try to work on more serious drug cases although this is dependent on unassigned time, and they are part of a task force throughout the region), 10 Major Crimes Detectives (these detectives are part of the Critical Incident Task Force), 1 Internet Crimes Against Children detective (salary is compensated by the state), 1 Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Detective (trying to alieve a patrol officer), and 1 Crime Scene Analysis Detective (the current lab is very small, this space will increase in the new Law

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Enforcement Complex (LEC)). Captain Squires briefly reviewed the work flow within investigations. Special Teams include Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT), Mobile Field Force (MFF), EOD (Bomb Squad, has the largest response area in this area with the smallest number of personnel), Crisis Negotiations Team (CNT), and Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS). Per Councilor Freeman, Captain Squires believes the new LEC will improve efficiency across the department due to the variety of locations of personnel.

Department Bureau, Professional Standards and Logistics:

Captain Galbreath reviewed major projects/Special Teams within the Professional Standards and Logistics Bureau including department training. Captain Galbreath stated all officers must have at least 40 hours of training every two (2) years, including an appropriate amount of training for the instructors. Training is also required per Idaho Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) (POST academies are located in Meridian and Pocatello). Per Councilor Radford, Captain Galbreath briefly explained allowed training. He stated the more training, the less liability. Other major projects/Special Teams include equipment, fleet, policy (has moved to Lexipol, the goal is to make the city's liability as low as possible), peer support, accreditation (prefers the Idaho Chiefs of Police Association (ICOPA)), internal affairs (50% of internal affair investigations are generated from an external source), hiring/recruitment/retention, building (includes collaboration with other city departments), Chaplains, career path, and instructor certification. Captain Galbreath reviewed Professional Standards and Logistics Bureau (4 sworn/14 total FTE) – Captain, 1 Lieutenant, 1 Logistic Officer, 1 Training Coordinator/Quartermaster, 1 sergeant* (serving as Animal Services Manager), 2 Animal Services Leads, and 7 Animal Control Officers (*part-time workers and volunteers).

Various Staffing Models:

Chief Johnson reviewed the Rule of 60, per a study by Professor James McCabe, stating 60% of staffing should be assigned to patrol, an average of 62 studied departments was 66.1%, and the IFPD is between 67-73%. He stated Professor McCabe disagrees with other models including minimum staffing, per capita, and affordability models.

Chief Johnson stated the IFPD needs by Work Load Analysis indicates Patrol needs an additional 16 officers (1 Lieutenant, 1 Sergeant, and 14 officers (highest priority)), ISOB needs an additional 7 officers (1 Sergeant, 2 Major Crimes Detectives (highest priority), 2 Cold Case Detectives (high priority), and 2 Special Investigations Detectives), and IFPD needs 1 Assistant Chief (lowest priority). Chief Johnson believes affordability matters the most. He noted, from 2017, a multi-year staffing plan was needed and approved. In 2018, a four-year staffing plan was requested and approved. In 2019, officers and dispatch were reduced from 98 to 94, with a position added mid-year. He reviewed 2020 staffing needs: per capita current is 95, recommendation is adding 34; work load current is 95, recommendation is adding 24; and similar city average current is 95, recommendation is adding 15. He indicated any analysis will recommend an increase. He noted this only includes sworn police officers, it does not include dispatch.

Other Department Personnel Topics:

Chief Johnson stated the most frequent question has been 'why now'. He indicated these requests have been presented each year although he did not anticipate the volume of major crimes during the COVID year. He noted the crime rates have significantly increased, and the local crime rate is slightly higher than the national crime rate. These major crimes take personnel from addressing other crimes. Chief Johnson briefly reviewed the increase in calls from 2010 stating he believes the work load model is unsustainable. Councilor Radford indicated the cost of requested officers equals the amount of the LEC. Per Councilor Radford, Mr. Kirkham stated a bond could be presented for additional officers. Mayor Casper noted a bond is not for on-going costs. Mr. Hagedorn stated a permanent over-ride would increase taxes. Discussion followed including responding to calls, utilizing the current

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staffing, and the command structure. Councilor Francis expressed his appreciation for this presentation. Mayor Casper stated the community is well-served by the IFPD. She concurred with Councilor Radford that this cannot be fixed in one year, it would require other cuts within the city. Councilor Freeman believes this issue needs to start now, it cannot wait for future years. Council President Dingman expressed her appreciation for the leadership in the department noting the requested information is needed to make long-term decisions. She believes the challenge will be to create a staffing plan which will take multiple years to accomplish. She does not believe waiting is beneficial.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:06 p.m.

s/ Kathy Hampton
Kathy Hampton, City Clerk

s/ Rebecca L. Noah Casper
Rebecca L. Noah Casper, Mayor