



**Patrick S. Mitchell**  
Chief of Police

**Christopher Botsch**  
Deputy Chief of Police

**Robert Fletcher**  
Deputy Chief of Police

## Memorandum

To: City Administrator Rebecca Grill

From: Chief Patrick S. Mitchell

Date: Monday, March 18, 2019

Re: Impact of Wisconsin Personal Protection Service Closure to West Allis Crossing Guard Program

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The City of West Allis has an annual contract with Wisconsin Personal Protection Service to provide crossing guard services for a variety of schools, as well as around the Wisconsin State Fair during the run of the annual fair. On a daily basis, 18 different locations are staffed by crossing guards employed by Wisconsin Personal Protection Service. The Wisconsin Personal Protection Service company performs similar functions for a number of other local municipalities in Wisconsin.

Approximately one week ago, the State of Wisconsin, Department of Workforce Development began to notify local municipalities to withhold payments to the Wisconsin Personal Protection Service because the company failed to pay substantial amounts of Unemployment Insurance Taxes to the State of Wisconsin. The City of West Allis has not yet received such a letter, however, a copy of a letter which another city received was shared with West Allis officials. Upon receipt of a copy of this letter, the West Allis Police Department immediately feared that this could lead to the closure of the company, so we began to work with the Finance Department to identify companies who could provide the same services.

Unfortunately, the research to date has only identified nationwide companies which would charge considerably more than Wisconsin Personal Protection Service. Wisconsin Personal Protection Service has a \$120,832 annual contract with the City of West Allis, which factors in a charged hourly rate of pay of \$18.44. In preliminary research, nation-wide companies charge approximately \$25 an hour. Additionally, when contacted, a nation-wide company stated that it would take a minimum of five weeks for them to begin to provide services once a contract has been signed. Based upon the hourly rates, a nation-wide company would increase the annual crossing guard contract by approximately 35%, or \$42,291, to a total contract of approximately \$163,123. Again, these numbers are merely estimates and are not based upon an actual bid.

On Sunday, March 17, 2019, various police departments began to hear from long time crossing guards that they were informed by Wisconsin Personal Protection Service that the company was going out of business, and the guards should not report to their corners on Monday, March 18, 2019. Police Department supervisors have attempted to contact the owner of Wisconsin Personal Protection Service by phone, and by visiting their office in West Allis, however, we have been unable to make contact. To date, the owner has not notified the Police Department that they were going out of business, however, on the morning of March 18<sup>th</sup>, the overwhelming majority of their employees did not report to their assigned West Allis street corners.



The West Allis Police Department immediately developed a plan to staff the corners with officers on overtime, and every corner was covered on March 18, 2019. The department will continue to explore ideas to mitigate this issue, however, a permanent solution may take some time. One possible solution, which other cities are considering is to hire crossing guards on a limited term basis. City Police 1402 (5)(4)(e) contains guidance on the policies which must be followed to hire individuals under an Emergency Appointment.

The City of West Allis will continue to work cooperatively with other local municipalities in this area to solve this issue.

