



**DEPARTMENT OF POLICE**

**Patrick S. Mitchell**  
Chief of Police

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Deputy Chief of Police

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June 7, 2016

Common Council  
West Allis, Wisconsin

RE: Police - Increase of Part time Dispatcher Positions

Dear Council Members,

Our current allotted staffing for civilian dispatchers is set by the City of West Allis Police Department budget. We are currently allotted for (9) full time dispatcher positions and (5) part time dispatcher positions. In addition, we are allotted for (6) sworn desk/dispatch sergeant positions.

If the (9) full time dispatchers and (6) desk sergeants work all of their assigned days, there would be no open shifts for the (5) part time dispatchers to fill; however, since our full time personnel have vacations, time due, family leave, etc., openings are generated that need to be filled by part time personnel.

Dispatch schedules are completed approximately (1) month in advance. If there are known vacancies in the schedule due to open full time positions, vacations, family leave, or other extended leave, we attempt to utilize our part time positions to fill the open shifts. If our pool of part time dispatchers are unable to fill all of the hours available, then those open shifts are made available to full time dispatchers at an overtime rate of pay. If the shifts are still not filled, desk sergeants are then eligible to work open shifts at an overtime rate of pay.

Currently, the overtime rate of pay for a full time dispatcher at the top rate of pay is approximately \$33.91/hr. The overtime rate of pay for a full time desk sergeant is approximately \$55.32/hr. The top pay for a part time dispatcher is currently \$20.15/hr. (Due to their positions and the hours they work, part time dispatchers are not eligible for overtime.)

The following is the cost of each of the above working classifications to cover a (4) hour opening on the schedule:

Full Time Dispatcher - \$33.91 / hr (OT) x 4 hours = \$135.64

Desk Sergeant - \$55.32 / hr (OT) x 4 hours = \$221.28

Part time Dispatcher - \$20.15 / hrs x 4 hours = \$80.60

As is seen above, it is far more cost effective if we are able to utilize our part time dispatchers to fill openings on the schedule; however, the current pool of (5) part time dispatchers are not able to fill all of the openings on the schedule. All of our part time dispatchers have other obligations or other full time employment. Although they are valuable members of our team, and work when they are available, they are unable to fill all of our needs all of the time.

The information below outlines how many hours needed to be filled due to openings in the schedule each respective month, how many hours the part time dispatchers were able to work, and how many hours needed to be filled at the overtime rate of pay by a full time dispatcher or desk sergeant.

### **January of 2016**

120 hours of coverage needed  
92 hours covered by part time dispatchers  
28 hours filled though overtime (approx. \$1250.00)

### **February of 2016**

168 hours of coverage needed  
76 hours covered by part time dispatchers  
92 hours filled though overtime (approx. \$4050.00)

### **March of 2016**

344 hours of coverage needed  
108 hours covered by part time dispatchers  
236 hours filled though overtime (approx. \$10,000.00)

### **April of 2016**

368 hours of coverage needed  
132 hours covered by part time dispatchers  
236 hours filled though overtime (approx. \$10,000.00)

### **May of 2016**

176 hours of coverage needed  
68 hours covered by part time dispatchers  
108 hours filled through overtime (approx. \$4750.00)

**In the first (5) months of this year, approximately \$30,000 of overtime was generated due to open shifts in the dispatch center that were not filled by part time personnel. If these open shifts would have been filled by part time dispatchers, the cost would have been less than \$15,000.**

By increasing our number of part time dispatchers from (5) to (8), we believe we could mitigate some of the overtime costs each month. This would allow us to have a larger pool to draw from to fill vacancies in the schedule.

Once the initial training was completed, the cost to maintain the additional part time personnel would be limited to approximately 16 hours (approx. \$320.00) of in-service training along with a \$50.00 EMD certification fee for a total of approximately \$370.00 per year per additional part time dispatcher. Since they are paid only for hours worked, the cost to maintain the part time dispatchers would be minimal compared to the savings they would likely generate.

There is an initial cost to train (1) new part time dispatcher. During the training phase, part time dispatchers are compensated at \$10.00 hour. The training costs are outlined below:

80 hours classroom instruction - \$800.00  
384 hours of hands-on dispatching - \$3,840.00

Approximate cost to train (1) new dispatcher - \$4640.00.

For an initial investment of approximately \$13,920, we could hire (3) part time dispatchers to help mitigate the ongoing overtime costs in the Communications Center.

In addition to the desire for an ongoing cost savings, there is another reason to hire additional part time dispatch personnel. Many dispatch centers are staffed entirely by civilian personnel; whereas we have some sworn personnel assigned to our Communications Center. Should we decide to move in the direction of civilianizing our dispatch center, additional part time personnel would provide greater opportunity to make the transition. Historically we have offered open full time dispatch positions to our successful part time personnel. Assuming we have interested and viable part time dispatchers, this would help smooth the transition to an all civilian dispatch center.

On 05-19-16, this proposal was presented to the Police and Fire Commission to add (3) part time dispatch positions to our staffing allocation. The approval was granted by the PFC.

We are requesting your approval to formally change our staffing allocation in the police budget.

Sincerely,



Christopher Botsch  
Deputy Chief of Police – Support Services