


SOUTH LAKE MINNETONKA POLICE DEPARTMENT

M-E-M-O-R-A-N-D-U-M

TO: SLMPD Coordinating Committee

FROM: Mike Siitari, Chief of Police 

DATE: July 2, 2015

RE: 2016 Budget – Additional Officer

I realize the additional officer budget scenario for 2016 carries a hefty price tag – 6.1%. However, if at all possible I recommend that the cities choose this option to bring staffing to the proper level to better serve the communities. I was ready to delete this option due to the costs but after my five months serving as the police chief I feel it is necessary.

I reviewed the patrol schedules for the past two years and found that there was single officer coverage for 2,000 hours in 2013 and 2,285 hours in 2014. Although a significant portion of these hours are between 2:30 and 6:00 AM, which has the lowest call load, the majority of the times are during daytime hours when the call load dictates two officers.

The restructuring of sworn staff will add one officer to the patrol schedule. Subtracting holiday, vacation, comp and sick time, along with training days from the 2080 hour work schedule leaves approximately 1800 hours of additional coverage for the patrol schedule. Initially I thought this should address the schedule needs. Unfortunately one officer cannot cover the single coverage hours due to how the hours are spread throughout the work week. The additional officer would provide the scheduling flexibility to meet the goal of two officers scheduled during busier hours.

The reasons for the additional officer outlined in the department assessment:

Safety – community and officers.

Activity levels – the number and type of calls. Mutual aid is not a long term solution.

Officer burnout – trying to staff a 24 hour schedule with 11 officers can be challenging. The increased activity and special events in the summer threatens to overload the officers.

The elimination of one investigative and one command position will result in additional duties for existing patrol staff – officers and sergeants. Patrol time will be affected.

Service levels – we currently have requests for increased traffic enforcement at four locations. It is difficult to allocate patrol time to extra patrol requests with the call load and staffing level. In checking the daily call summary I regularly find calls that are held

due to the patrol car(s) being tied up. Examples are suspicious person/vehicle calls or driving complaints that are not emergencies, but community expectations are that we will respond to most calls in a timely manner.

In summary, I understand city budgeting and competing demands for limited resources. A 6.1% budget increase is significant. As the chief of police I feel it is my duty to highlight the need for an additional patrol officer and ask for your consideration of this option.