

PRESS RELEASE

July 2, 2021

There appears to be great public interest in certain recent changes at the Hawk Point Police Department. Therefore, the City is releasing this public statement in an effort to promote transparency with the public, foster good will with the law enforcement community and the City's citizens, and quell rumors, false hearsay, and irresponsible media.

Chief Bob Bone served the City of Hawk Point as its police chief for 10+ years. The City is extremely grateful for his dedication and service. As the City continues to grow and the City's law enforcement challenges evolve, it has struggled with finding and maintaining sufficient qualified police coverage. For many months, the Mayor, Board of Aldermen and Chief Bone have had discussions regarding possible solutions to this problem. This problem was not created by the Mayor, Board, nor Chief Bone. However, the Mayor, Board, nor Chief Bone, working together, have been able to solve it.

In June 2021, the Board made the decision to explore the possibility of a police chief with training and/or experience in recruiting qualified police officers, or experience in building a police force in a town similar to Hawk Point. As a courtesy to Chief Bone, he was informed at the regular Board meeting on June 7, 2021, that the Board would be exploring options for a new police chief. He was told that the Board wanted him to stay as a police officer for the City as it explored its options. The Board asked Chief Bone to let the City know as soon as possible what he decided as far as staying on as a police officer.

On June 11, 2021, a special meeting was held for further discussions with Chief Bone. He presented certain demands to the City in order to stay as a police officer. It was the Board's understanding that his demands were non-negotiable. He was fully within his rights to negotiate his employment as the City was fully within its rights to reject his demands. After discussion, the Board decided to reject his demands for staying on as a police officer. He was informed of this decision immediately after the meeting. As a courtesy to Chief Bone, he was given the option to resign, and he did so. Deputy Chief Wayne Mueller was appointed as Interim Chief Police while the City explores the options discussed herein. He has been kept fully apprised of the City's intentions as well.

The Board will be holding its regular meeting on Tuesday, July 6, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. The Board understands and appreciates that citizens have their own experiences, opinions, and input on these issues and the Board always encourages its citizens to attend its meetings and obtain information firsthand. To speak at a meeting, citizens should contact the clerk the Thursday before meetings in order to be included on the agenda. However, due to privacy concerns for individuals and Missouri Sunshine Law, personnel matters concerning specific employees will never be discussed by the Board of Aldermen in open portions of Board meetings and should not be discussed by employees or officials of the City outside of closed meetings noticed for such purpose.

Any further inquiry should be brought to the Board of Aldermen meeting or directed to City Attorney Cynthia Davenport at 636-528-1354.