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To: Safety and Licensing Committee
Human Resources and Information Technology Committee
From: Chief Polly Olson
Date: August 7, 2025
Subject: Staffing Study – Informational Item

At the conclusion of the last budget cycle, the Common Council provided approval to fund a staffing study for the police department. A competitive Request for Proposals process was conducted, and the project was awarded to Matrix Consulting Group (Matrix); a consultancy with extensive experience in law enforcement agency staffing analysis. This study commenced in December 2024, and the final draft was received in July 2025.

The Appleton Police Department (APD) has had a long history of being an innovative and progressive police agency. When I was hired 25 years ago, the APD was one of very few agencies seeking candidates with diverse backgrounds and experience. They placed value on a higher education, rewarding employees who obtain advanced degrees. This practice has not changed. Although the landscape of policing has evolved significantly, our standards and expectations remain high and consistent.

Because of the high expectations set for our employees, we have been able to cultivate a strong relationship with our community with existing resources. We employ police officers with a leadership mindset who take personal responsibility for ensuring transparency and collaboration with those we serve.

This staffing study brought to light the strengths of our agency. It also identified some areas where changes might help to positively address some of the “pain points” experienced by our staff. Regardless of the recommendations we ultimately implement, the actionable strategies illuminated in this study will help guide us in the right direction to ensure we continue our long-standing practice of excellence in policing.

The request for Matrix was to “provide essential insights to ensure adequate staffing levels, optimize service delivery throughout all divisions within the organization, and meet the needs of the evolving community.”

This process was data driven with a large emphasis placed on CAD data and case management information. It is difficult to capture the nuances within an agency when relying heavily on summative statistical data alone. When considered alongside departmental knowledge of the nuances and context behind said data, the report's recommendations have been found reasonable and are expected to further enhance our ability to effectively serve this community.

It is important to note that this study is a snapshot of where we are at as an organization using data primarily from 2024. It does not account for future city growth, the anticipated continued diversification of our community, and potentially changing safety demands. The growth on the north side of the city should be considered when evaluating future patrol needs. Additional needs for traffic enforcement and greater demands for response to community-generated calls for service can be expected with further growth. Additional operational needs, such as consideration of the use of sub-stations to improve response times and employee experience, may also be needed in the future.

It is also important to recognize the work we do in the police department is dependent on programming and other vital work happening across the City of Appleton. Our success as an agency hinges on continued positive collaboration across all city departments. For example, our partnership with the City Health Department to house the Basic Needs Social Worker and our work with CEDC to reimagine "Neighborhoods" and our "Neighborhood Watch" program. This report and its recommendations assume a steady state in all other areas of City operations and programming.

The full report is 135 pages. Here are the key highlights:

Pages 2-4 – Summary of recommendations:

- Administrative Services Department
 - Identifies the manager has a large span of control, therefore recommends converting both "Lead" positions into official supervisory roles. **This recommendation is based on a basic span-of-control formula that does not account for on-the-ground operational realities. We will continue to monitor unit performance with this recommendation in mind, however, we are not considering immediate action.**
- Patrol Division
 - Increase patrol staffing by 1 FTE – **Mayor Woodford intends to include a request for an additional patrol FTE for Council consideration in the 2026 Executive Budget and Service Plan.**
 - Deploy patrol personnel to optimize their service levels – **APD Command is exploring various schedules for patrol. Examples of potential changes include: shifting resources to earlier in the day; adjusting minimum staffing levels to better meet service demands; adjusting minimum staffing by the season.**
 - K9 Unit will establish their own schedule to maximize their deployments. **This could result in a potential estimate savings of \$25,000 in overtime costs which could offset some of the cost of an additional patrol officer position.**
 - Increase the traffic unit by 3 Full-Time Equivalent Positions (FTE) – **Adding additional traffic safety officers will be a future priority.**
 - Explore converting the Operations Coordinator to a non-sworn position – **As this is a complex role with interwoven responsibilities, APD Command finds that a sworn officer in this role is required. Recommendation will not be considered at this time.**

- Increase Professional Development by 2 full-time officers – We are exploring moving one patrol lieutenant into the Professional Development unit to share training and additional administrative duties. This could expand our capacity for Virtual Reality training, equipment management, and small group intensive training. We recognize we have an obligation to ensure we provide exceptional support and training for our staff. We feel we can accomplish this with reallocation of existing resources.
- Investigative Services
 - Add 1 FTE Lieutenant to both Investigative Services Unit (ISU) and the School Resource Officer (SRO) unit – This recommendation is based on a basic span-of-control formula that does not account for on-the-ground operational realities. We will continue to monitor unit performance with this recommendation in mind, however, we are not considering immediate action
 - Maintain current staffing of detectives but transfer caseload from SROs to ISU – We are evaluating caseloads for all investigators to ensure resources are properly managed. Our investigative services division is unique when compared to similar and larger-sized agencies. As we are situated in three counties, we work with three vastly different district attorneys. We expect high clearance rates from our investigators, who work tirelessly to develop relationships with victims and witnesses. This takes additional time and resources but is the cornerstone of our mission and values as an organization. Several of our investigators serve on federal-level taskforces, and this time was not captured in the study. It is not unusual for our investigators to get pulled into assisting SIU with warrants or to conduct unified tactics training – this time was also not accounted for in this study.
 - Add 1 FTE Forensic Evidence Specialist – We are prioritizing this recommendation for the 2027 budget cycle.
 - Create a Forensic Evidence Supervisor – We are prioritizing this recommendation for the 2027 budget cycle.
 - Add 1 FTE Sex Offender Registry Specialist (SORP) investigator, 1 FTE Lake Winnebago Area MEG – Drug Unit (LWAM) investigator, 1 FTE Special Investigations Unit (SIU) Investigator – These recommendations will be considered as a part of our future planning. We are prioritizing Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Investigations and seeking ways to better distribute the caseload of the current SORP investigator.

Pages 5 – 17 – Administrative Services

Pages 18 – 21 – Calls for service by Hour, Weekday, and by Month (2024)

- 27,713 community-generated calls for service
- Calls for service peak between 1500 and 1700 M-F, 1700 on Sunday, and between 1900 and 2100 on Saturday.
- Calls for service are lowest at 0400
- Calls for service are notably lower in the winter months, with a 13.2% decrease in February.
- Calls for service are predictably the highest in the summer months, with a 16.1% increase in August.

Pages 21-22 – Most common calls for service by type

Page 23 – Response times

- Excellent overall response times. Response times are calculated from the time of call creation to the time of arrival.

Pages 24 – 25 – Analysis of patrol resource needs

- Patrol Proactivity - the percentage of time in which an officer is available and on duty that is not spent responding to community-generated calls for service.
- Our agencies targeted patrol proactivity level was determined to be **50%**

Pages 25 – 34 – Patrol unit staffing, net availability, and proactivity

- APD was staffed with 48 patrol officers during 2024. This was our “average staffing level,” which excludes officers in training, light-duty assignments, and extended absences. This number also excludes the K9 and traffic officers.
- Work hours/FTE per year = 2015
- Average total leave hours/FTE = 211 (pulled from actual data for 2024)
- On-duty court time/FTE = 20 hours (this was an average based on the industry standard – our CAD system does not accurately track this metric)
- On-duty training time/FTE = 75 hours (calculated from APD data)
- Administrative time/FTE = 273 hours
- **Total net available hours = 1436 (2015-211-20-75-273=1436)**
- **Total net available hours per year are 68,928 (1436 hours x 48 officers)**
- **Total workload is 36,532 hours (total time taken to handle the community-generated calls for service)**

CALCULATION OF OVERALL PATROL PROACTIVITY

Total Patrol Net Available Hours		68,928
Total Patrol Workload Hours	–	36,532
Resulting # of Uncommitted Hours	=	32,396
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Divided by Total Net Available Hours	÷	68,928
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Overall Proactive Time Level	=	46.9%

- APD patrol units have a patrol proactive time of **46.9%**, a figure that falls short of the targeted levels of proactive capability (50%). This percentage indicates staffing levels are potentially capable of handling the calls for service workload in Appleton with sufficient proactive time available to address problems in the community.

PROACTIVITY BY HOUR AND WEEKDAY

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Overall
2am-6am	63%	79%	75%	74%	72%	66%	43%	69%
6am-10am	32%	24%	28%	26%	12%	22%	41%	28%
10am-2pm	26%	2%	-2%	6%	6%	-22%	15%	5%
2pm-6pm	29%	25%	28%	27%	27%	18%	37%	33%
6pm-10pm	47%	53%	46%	57%	53%	45%	45%	49%
10pm-2am	57%	74%	55%	69%	70%	62%	53%	63%
Overall	45%	48%	42%	48%	46%	37%	42%	47%

- These findings suggest that our department maintains strong proactive levels during the night and overnight hours, but there is limited flexibility during the daytime periods. For the community, this means that service levels are likely more responsive and enforcement-oriented at night, but more reactive and call-driven during the day. As such, any efforts to enhance visibility, conduct proactive enforcement, or address quality-of-life concerns during daylight hours may require additional staffing, strategic reallocation of resources, or a combination of approaches.

Pages 34 – 36 – Patrol unit staffing levels required to meet service level objectives

- The amount of “buffer” that an agency requires should be based on the historical rate of attrition in patrol.
- Turnover data was examined from 2022 – 2024
- Our turnover rate was determined to 9.3%. This means an additional 9.3% authorized positions should be added on top of the actual number currently filled to account for turnover.

CALCULATION OF PATROL UNIT STAFFING NEEDS

Total Workload Hours		36,532
Proactivity Target		50%
Staffed Hours Needed	=	73,065
Net Available Hours Per Officer	÷	1,436
Turnover Factor	+	9.3%
Patrol Officer FTEs Needed	=	56

- The data suggest our department needs to be staffed with **56 patrol officers** to reach the targeted proactivity rate of 50%.

Pages 36 – 39 – Analysis of self-initiated activity

Pages 39 – 42 – Recommended patrol staffing deployment

RECOMMENDED PATROL STAFFING AND DEPLOYMENT

Team	Shift	Start Time	End Time	# Rec.
Red	Days	0700	1900	9
	Swing 1	0900	2100	6
	Swing 2	1500	0300	6
	Nights	1900	0700	7
Blue	Days	0700	1900	9
	Swing 1	0900	2100	6
	Swing 2	1500	0300	6
	Nights	1900	0700	7
Total FTE (Recommended):				56

Pages 42 – 44 – Evaluation of minimum staffing levels

- When evaluating the minimum staffing levels of a police patrol division, it is critical to consider both the workload demands and the need to maintain continuous coverage across all shifts. Key factors include the volume and nature of calls for service, response time expectations, geographic coverage areas, and officer availability after accounting for leave, training, and other non-patrol duties. Ultimately, the goal is to maintain adequate staffing to ensure officer safety, public service levels, and operational flexibility at all hours of the day.

- To evaluate the minimum staffing levels for their effectiveness in their ability to handle the workload in Appleton across all hours of the day, project staff have assigned a **20% proactivity** floor and calculated hourly staffing needs based upon this proactive driver.
- The 20% proactivity level is the minimum number of officers needed to handle calls for service. This does not account for officer-safety factors, fatigue, etc.

Pages 44 – 47 – K9 Unit

**see above recommendations

Pages 47 – 49 – Traffic Safety Unit

- The expansion of the traffic safety unit will increase capacity for the patrol unit to handle calls for service by reducing the number of crashes and unsafe driving complaints generated by the community. This will be a future budget priority.

Pages 50 – 54 – CSO's

Pages 54 – 55 – Operations Coordination

- **see above recommendation

Pages 56 – 59 – Professional Development

- Education and training are critical components of police agencies. Advanced training technologies and techniques are essential for equipping officers with a necessary combination of knowledge and skills, enhancing the safety and effectiveness of law enforcement while benefiting communities.
- Increasing Professional Development staffing will enable our department to explore advanced training technologies and techniques and enhance the department's training program for both sworn and non-sworn employees. Although the department will need to continue relying on part-time trainers, adding an additional officer (potential achieved by moving a patrol lieutenant) will help alleviate staffing issues and overtime caused by depending on part-time trainers to fulfill these roles.
- Additional administrative responsibilities given to this position will free up time for patrol lieutenants to be present for additional field supervision.

Pages 60 – 63 – Investigator net availability calculation

- As previously mentioned above, the 2027 budget cycle will prioritize adding a civilian to the evidence unit. The creation of a supervisor for that unit is also a priority item.
- The evidence unit is one of the highest liabilities in the department. It is imperative we have adequate staffing to ensure the integrity of our evidence and property. We fill current gaps in service by assigning officers to this unit while they are operating in a modified duty capacity. While sufficient in the immediate term, this is not a sustainable plan moving forward.

Pages 77 – 80 – Crime analyst and School Resource Officer Unit

- Evaluate the handling of investigative caseload by SRO's – consider transferring some cases to ISU.
- Adding an additional SORP investigator will be considered in future planning exercises.

Pages 80 – 82 - Special Investigations Unit

- Matrix recommended adding an investigator to both SIU and the MEG unit. This recommendation was based on the high production of the unit with self-initiated activity and their measurable outcomes. Increasing capacity in this unit in the future will be a decision made after considering community priorities.

Pages 82 – 90 – Community Resource Unit

- The aggregate activity of this unit is difficult to quantify with limited mechanisms for measuring outcomes. The work of this unit was captured by detailing the expectations from each role.

Results of the Employee Survey

- The initial round of invitations was distributed on February 24, 2025, and the survey closed to responses on March 7, 2025. Of the 140 invitations sent to APD employees, the project team received 115 responses (either partial or complete), resulting in a response rate of 82%.

Highlights:

- APD respondents expressed high levels of satisfaction on several key topics, including:
 - General service levels to the City of Appleton
 - Training practices within the department
 - Patrol and other field services within the agency
- While respondents felt that the current alternative response services offered by APD are strong, respondents (notably civilian respondents) indicated that these personnel are fully utilized and that the need for these services is growing throughout the City of Appleton.
- Open-ended responses indicate that staffing is the most notable opportunity for improvement within APD, while the personnel within APD is the organization's greatest strength.

#	Statement	SD	D	A	SA	NO
1	The department provides a high level of service to the community.	1%	2%	44%	54%	0%
2	Community policing is a high priority for the department.	1%	7%	42%	49%	1%
3	In general, we have a good relationship with the community.	0%	0%	44%	55%	1%
4	I have the <u>technology necessary</u> to complete my job tasks adequately and efficiently.	5%	20%	51%	21%	3%
5	Appleton PD is a desirable place of employment for potential employees.	0%	5%	51%	38%	6%
6	There is clear communication from the top of the organization.	8%	31%	42%	15%	5%
7	Supervisory spans of control are adequate.	5%	11%	57%	17%	10%
8	We have the resources we need to complete our jobs effectively.	2%	21%	57%	18%	2%

Responding employees indicated high levels of agreement relating to all topics covered in the general topics' matrix above. This finding is extraordinary in the experience of Matrix project staff. The members of our Command Staff were pleased to see the level of overall alignment of these results in the survey. We would like to further explore questions #4 and #6 above to determine how and where to make improvements.

#	Statement	SD	D	A	SA	NO
1	I received enough initial training to be effective at my job.	1%	3%	69%	27%	0%
2	I received enough continual training to be effective at my job.	0%	19%	58%	21%	3%
3	Our training division has adequate resources to provide sufficient training for our department.	7%	24%	50%	13%	5%
4	There is sufficient specialized training offered through the department.	5%	33%	46%	11%	6%
5	The department <u>provide</u> sufficient opportunities to attend specialized <u>trainings</u> outside the department.	8%	36%	39%	10%	6%

The responses to these questions helped us prioritize growing our training unit to elevate our ability to facilitate good quality training and growth opportunities.

#	Statement	SD	D	A	SA	NO
1	We have sufficient proactive time available to address problems in the community.	5%	31%	53%	8%	3%
2	Most of the time, there are adequate backup units available.	7%	19%	63%	10%	2%
3	Our response times to lower-priority calls are adequate.	2%	15%	71%	12%	0%
4	Our response times to higher-priority calls are adequate.	0%	7%	54%	37%	2%
5	Our current shift schedule works well operationally.	2%	19%	59%	20%	0%
6	Our shift schedule allows for a good work / life balance.	7%	15%	59%	17%	2%
7	The amount of overtime I am required to work is reasonable.	2%	14%	58%	10%	17%
8	Patrol Lieutenants have sufficient presence in the field.	17%	29%	42%	8%	3%
9	The collateral duties that are assigned to me are manageable.	3%	22%	64%	5%	5%

Responding patrol employees indicated high levels of agreement relating to all topics covered in the patrol matrix above. **This finding is extraordinary in the experience of Matrix project staff.** These findings exhibit that APD patrol officers have favorable opinions on all these vital topics, including, but not limited to:

- Having sufficient proactive time to address problems throughout the community
- The presence of backup units
- Response times to high- and low-priority calls for service
- The feasibility of the current shift schedule and its ability to allow officers to perform an adequate number of tasks as well as provide a satisfactory work/life balance
- The manageable number of collateral duties assigned to personnel

While patrol employees expressed a high level of agreement with all topics above, statement number 8 regarding the adequate field presence of patrol Lieutenants only garnered 50% agreement compared to 46% disagreement. As a result, these findings are explored further below.

PATROL OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

As mentioned above, only 50% of patrol employees agreed that “patrol Lieutenants have sufficient presence in the field.” Project staff conducted crosstabulations on these findings and, as a result, discrepancies across patrol shifts were revealed, as shown below:

Patrol Shift	SD	D	A	SA	NO
Day Shift	35%	42%	23%	0%	0%
Afternoon Shift	0%	22%	67%	11%	0%
Night Shift	7%	13%	47%	20%	13%

Respondents assigned to the day shift disagree at a substantially higher rate with this statement compared to their counterparts assigned to the afternoon and night shifts. This finding likely correlates with an increased workload during daytime hours.

The remainder of the Matrix reports provides the results of the comparative study (pages 102 – 139).

The comparative study highlights the areas where Appleton Police Department stands out compared to other similar sized agencies. We strive to maintain our position in the Midwest as an agency that leads the field in recruitment and retainment along with delivering exceptional police services.

In conclusion, this Matrix Staffing Study is a tool to guide us in our strategic planning efforts in the next 5 – 10 years. It will be important to reassess some of these included metrics regularly to assess what additional changes/additions need to be made.