

CITY OF SPRINGVILLE
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MARCH 15, 2023

The City Council of the City of Springville met in a duly noticed called workshop session on Wednesday, March 15, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. at Springville City Hall to discuss police officer retention.

Those members answering present to roll call were as follows:

District 1	Councilmember Herbert Toles
District 2	Councilmember David Vinson
District 3	Councilmember Austin Phillips
District 5	Councilmember Tim Walker
District 6	Councilmember Marshall Parker
Mayor	Dave Thomas

Absent:	District 4	Councilmember Katrina Hennings
	District 7	Councilmember Sherry Reaves

Others present in official capacity: Attorney Jim Hill

Councilmember Toles opened the meeting, and asked Chief Walton to explain what is happening in the police department and how to address retention problems.

Chief Walton stated he has now lost five officers to other departments. He said he would like to hire a rookie officer and send them to the academy. He stated he has applications for several people who have no police experience.

Councilmember Walker asked how long the academy lasts and was told fourteen weeks.

Councilmember Phillips stated he and Chief Walton have previously discussed using part of the salaries for the officers who have left to offset the cost of the academy.

Chief Walton stated the cost of the academy including ammunition is \$4,500.

Councilmember Vinson asked can we ask for a three year contract?

Councilmember Toles verified that the pay scale provided was the one adopted in August.

Chief Walton stated he would like to offer a night shift differential and payment for special certifications. He suggested a 5% premium for Motor Scout, THI, SWAT, and K-9 officers.

Councilmember Phillips stated we cannot offer sign on bonuses, but we can possibly pay for training.

Councilmember Parker verified that he would not be able to work shifts for us while he is at the academy and was told this is correct.

Councilmember Walker asked what the attrition rate was at the academy, and was told around 20%.

Chief Walton stated candidates must pass four sections, physical fitness, legal, firearms, and CPR.

There is an academy in May and the next one is not until September. I would be difficult to get someone into the May session.

Councilmember Toles stated he would like to have the employee for six months before sending them to the academy to see if they work out.

Chief Walton stated this would not help because during that time they cannot ride alone and do not have arrest powers, thus cannot fill in on shifts. They could ride along to get experience, but that would be all they could do.

Mayor Thomas arrived at 1:20

Fire Chief Harvey stated they need to pass the PT test before they are hired.

Chief Walton stated they would do this. He also stated that we have an officer who is a firearms instructor and our Judge teaches the legal section at the academy, so we could start training before September.

Chief Walton stated we are getting officers, but we cannot keep them.

Sgt. Milazzo stated we cannot compete with the salaries being paid by larger municipalities, but she does not want to see us become the department that hires other department's problem employees. She said she did not blame the officers who left as they have to look out for themselves and their families.

Chief Walton said the Council approving pay increases and lowering insurance costs has helped, but we are down to two people per shift now. He said they have traffic overtime that is reimbursed by a grant, but we will be looking at an increase in overtime. Officers are required to do ongoing training. When an officer on one shift is gone to training, someone will have to be pulled from another shift to cover. He stated we need to put money in the uniform budget item. He stated he would like to give each officer a \$400 per year allowance. It costs \$1400 to outfit a

new officer. The officers furnish their own gun, handcuffs, and flashlight. There is a 50/50 match grant program for bulletproof vests that we can get every five years. We are in the third year now.

Chief Walton stated he would like to pay the night shift officers \$50 a pay period which would be \$100 per month as a shift differential.

Councilmember Phillips stated this comes to roughly sixty cents per hour.

Councilmember Phillips stated when they discussed the incentive pay for holding certain certifications, we said they could only be paid for one, not for three or four certifications.

Councilmember Parker stated he would recommend paying the hourly rate rather than a flat rate, as the hourly would be included in the overtime rate as well.

Councilmember Phillips asked was this enough to retain or attract officers.

Chief Walton stated yes, he felt the shift differential and paying for certain certifications would help.

Mayor Thomas asked, if we can get a contract if we send an employee to additional training, and was told the cost of paying for the additional training would probably not be a deterrent to an officer leaving, but could be detrimental to hiring.

Chief Walton asked if he could get this before the City Council on Monday.

Councilmember Walker stated he would like to know the cost. The City Clerk was directed to compute these figures and get them to the Council. Chief Walton will work with her to get the names of those with certification and those on night shift, so the proper pay rates can be determined.

Councilmember Phillips pointed out that this will not only affect our budget this year, but in subsequent years as well.

One of the officers we lost is the SRO at the elementary school. Councilmember Phillips asked could we get a retired officer to fill in for the remainder of the school year.

The workshop was concluded.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Porter
City Clerk