

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE BRAHAM CITY COUNCIL
THURSDAY, SEPT. 14, 2017
4:45 P.M.

The meeting was called to order with the following present: Mayor Patricia Carlson; Council Members Lowell Jaques, Shawn Sullivan, Jeremy Kunshier, and Traci Leaf; and City Administrator Sally Hoy.

Delwayne Hahn was present from the Isanti County News.

Sullivan moved, and Leaf seconded to accept the agenda as printed. Motion carried 5-0.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION
ON HIRING OF A NEW POLICE CHIEF

Mayor Carlson from the Personnel Committee, gave the council the committee's recommendation to hire Eric Baumgart as the City's new police chief, effective 1/1/18, with a 12-month probationary period.

She brought two options to the council to decide upon for his pay:

- **Option 1**—Step 1 \$28.29/hr. (\$58,814) with the use of the squad car for commuting to and from home (74 mi/day round trip) in order for Baumgart to:
 - respond quicker to emergency calls that come in during his commute, that require an officer and one is not available,
 - easier attendance of pre-approved social functions as Chief with a focus on community-oriented policing, and
 - active response as Chief on call 24-7.

Carlson noted that if Option 1 is chosen, use of the squad would also be under the probationary period to be reviewed throughout the year to see if the reduction in pay is sufficient to cover the added gas, maintenance costs, & depreciation of the vehicle. She said if it turns out not to be cost effective, the council can adjust Baumgart's Step for the remainder of the year, with no further squad use for commuting.

- **Option 2**—Step 2 \$29.16/hr. (\$60,652) without the use of the squad car for commuting to and from home.

Along with the two options, were the following items:

\$30 Per Diem Pay for attending after-hour social events or meetings if pre-approved by the City Administrator. (The current per diem for the Administrator and Police Chief is \$30. No change.)

Cell phone— Under current practice, Chief Knowles purchased his own phone, and the City pays the \$37.41 monthly plan fee. Continue with this practice for new chief.

One long-sleeve and one short-sleeve white shirt for attending social events as Chief, focusing more on new image of the department and community-oriented policing. (Money to outfit a new chief is in the 2018 budget.)

Patches, badge, wallet. (New patches are already in the 2018 budget, and badge/wallet is covered in outfitting a new chief in the 2018 budget.)

Sullivan moved to go with Option 1, noting he likes the idea of having a 24-7 chief that would save time for responding to calls. Leaf said she agreed with Option 1. Jaques noted he personally felt that Option 2 was better because he didn't like seeing the squad car running down the road in Forest Lake. He said people would be wondering why Braham police are down in that area. He also questioned how taxes would be figured with commuting not being tax deductible, and noted he'd rather see the wear and tear of the vehicle being in Braham.

Sullivan noted that the change in pay takes into account the maintenance, and wear and tear on the vehicle. He said that for a 24-7 police chief, it is not necessarily a commute back and forth for work—that he's already working. Jaques noted that he would be establishing some set hours, and the majority of the days of the year would not be spent on extra calls.

Baumgart noted that he agreed there were some very useful points and disadvantages that were discussed with the Personnel Committee. He said the understanding is that this would be a trial period. He said he didn't want them to think he wanted to take the car for no reason. He said the City would get benefits from it. He said his benefit for it would be paid through his reduction of pay.

Leaf asked if fuel would also be included, and Baumgart answered that would be included in his reduction of pay. Baumgart said they should not pay for his gas for non police matters, and that was why he offered the reduction in pay. He said that he would also have to see if he can sustain the car in the mileage area of rotation for squad replacements. He noted he wouldn't ask if he didn't think he could do it. He said in a few months if they found it could not, there were other options.

Sullivan noted the fact that Baumgart is willing to pay for it said a lot, and that the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages. He said as far as the public was involved, he didn't think it was a bad thing to have a Braham cop cars seen outside of Braham.

Jaques said he gets questions all the time on why a car is seen here or there. Sullivan asked how he answers them, and Jaques said his answer is that they are supposed to be taking care of Braham.

Baumgart noted he would be happy to field those calls. He said often times they are headed to the BCA, and some of those trip times and overtime can be cut when he lives halfway there, and he won't get overtime.

Sullivan asked what Baumgart says to the concept that he should be in Braham and serving Braham, and he answered that he will be in Braham serving Braham on the hours that they agree he should be in Braham. He said if he has to return to Braham outside those hours, he would get

here quicker to provide that service. He said it is a value to him and increased his family time. He said attending a social event as part of community-oriented policing, it would relieve his having to take extra time to switch cars.

Sullivan asked what they would say about people seeing a Braham car down in Forest Lake. Leaf answered to tell them what it is, it's the chief and he's ready to go for emergency response as needed.

Baumgart noted that for any emergencies on the freeway he would come across, that would be an awesome PR that it was a Braham cop that helped. He said this is not a new concept. He said there are chiefs that do this, and they have greater distances than he does.

Carlson noted that if his car is going from point A to point B, and if the City received calls that it's not where it is supposed to be, the City will know it.

Baumgart noted that in the transition, communication is important so things aren't turned into rumors that he never heard about, so nothing gets resolved.

Sullivan asked Administrator Hoy if the personnel policy would need to be changed, and she answered that it would, and that the council would need to determine if this exception for commuting went for all officers or only the chief as more the 24-7 role.

Kunshier noted he would go with Option 1. Carlson said she would go with Option 1 also.

Sullivan repeated his motion to go with Option 1, Step 1, at the \$28.29 with everything attached to it, with the probationary period. Leaf seconded the motion. Ayes: Sullivan, Carlson, Kunshier, Leaf. Jaques abstained. Motion carried 4-0.

AUTHORIZING THE SENIOR FT OFFICER TO SERVE AS NEXT IN COMMAND/ INTERIM CHIEF DURING THE CURRENT CHIEF'S ABSENCE THROUGH 12/31/17

Administrator Hoy reported that Chief Knowles found he had more vacation time on the books than he'd expected, and will be using vacation time up now until the end of the year, and he'd asked the council to authorize the Senior FT Officer, Eric Baumgart, to serve as Next in Command/Interim Chief in his absence. Hoy noted that Baumgart has agreed to serve in this capacity with no change in pay through the end of the year to keep the department and working with area law enforcement agencies running smooth.

Leaf moved, and Kunshier seconded to appoint Eric Baumgart as acting chief through the end of the year, 12/31/17. Motion carried 5-0.

AUTHORIZE ADVERTISEMENT FOR POLICE OFFICERS

Jaques moved, and Leaf seconded to authorize the City to advertise for one full-time and a pool of part-time police officers. Motion carried 5-0.

Sullivan moved, and Leaf seconded to adjourn. Motion carried 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 5:04 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sally A. Hoy
City Administrator