

County saves money in the form of a reduction of staffing costs due to call-ins, especially as they relate to our 24-hour operations. No one loses sick leave that they have accrued to date, but the convertibility of newly earned paid time off for retiree health insurance credits will end. This will go far, in my opinion, in maintaining the viability of our OPEB trust fund. I do not believe that future boards will be in the position to add millions of dollars to that fund as past boards have. We need to preserve and grow that fund not add to its liability.

### ***Public Works Reorganization***

With the assistance of our Public Works Director Eric Nitschke, a significant reorganization in our Public Works department is included. Eric has proceeded incrementally and logically in making organizational changes to his department. This began last year with our facilities and fleet divisions and is continuing this year with highway. The full plan is detailed in Appendix A.

### ***Improving Efficiency***

Given the current political environment, I do not anticipate that the tax levy cap will end anytime soon. Therefore, whenever possible, we need to make moves that will maximize the resources that we have. Just two examples of such programs that accomplish the budget goal are highlighted in the sidebars of this letter. They are the Sheriff's Substation Program and the Public Works brining proposal. The Sheriff's program will fully utilize the substations which he currently operates. These substations are strategically located in town halls in Darien, Lyons, Troy and Whitewater. These towns have made space available to the Sheriff's Office at no charge. The substations permit deputies to accomplish such tasks as writing reports and meeting with residents without the need to return to Elkhorn. The program will cost money to get off the ground. Rather than trading in our patrol fleet, as we do each year, the Sheriff will assign these cars to deputies working at substations. That will cost \$42,000 in trade-in proceeds. We will need to purchase additional squads and equipment which will cost \$456,940. We will burn more gasoline and we will have more cars to maintain. In the long run this program will justify the upfront costs. Research suggests that officer-assigned vehicles can actually be a better value for a municipality. Like a personal car, an assigned vehicle is often better cared for. Maintenance issues are identified and corrected. More importantly, the decentralization plan serves as a force multiplier. The direct drive to the substation bypasses the need to drive to and from Elkhorn at the beginning and end of each shift. It puts more squad cars on the road and puts deputies

### **Sheriff's Substation Program**



For several years, the Walworth County Sheriff has maintained a presence in a number of town halls throughout our County. The towns of Darien, Lyons, Troy and Whitewater have made parking and office space available for deputies. These towns were chosen, in part, because of their strategic locations in each of the four quadrants of the County. Rather than returning back to the Sheriff's Office in Elkhorn, a deputy can use the substation located in a town hall for such activities as interviewing witnesses, meeting with citizens, preparing reports, making telephone calls and shift change. This decentralization of patrol functions keeps the deputy in his or her assigned area, providing for a greater law enforcement presence and shortening response times.

As part of the 2018 budget, the Sheriff has proposed to enhance this program by assigning squad cars to the deputies working at the substations. Deputies would be afforded the opportunity to take these cars home and commute in them directly to the substation to which they are assigned. GPS technology now makes it possible for our 911 operators to view the location of the squads in real time. Computers make it possible for deputies to exchange information that, only a few years ago, needed to be done in person. While the deputy-assigned vehicle portion of the program will require an additional expenditure in 2018, research has shown that assigning vehicles to officers can actually save money in the long run. Fewer miles are put on squads each year and the cars are generally better maintained.

### **History of the substation and deputy assigned squad program:**

The Sheriff's Office has had a robust substation program for over 20 years. The substations provide the ability to work remotely out in the field reducing travel back and forth to Elkhorn as well as strengthening our relationships with the Town clerks and Boards. These substations also provide easier and more convenient access to our citizens and our deputies. Currently, our substations are in the following Town Halls: Lyons, Troy, Whitewater, Darien, and Walworth. In an effort to better serve the citizens of Walworth County, in 2016 we assigned deputies to report to and work full time from these substations, excluding Walworth. We re-allocated (8) marked squad cars from our pool fleet and assigned (2) to each of (4) substations. We immediately saw benefits and received many compliments from our citizens. Some of the benefits were squads in each of our patrol areas which were able to deploy very quickly to calls for service during shift changes. Before assigning deputies to work from substations, all deputies were at the Sheriff's Office in Elkhorn three times per day during shift changes. When a call would come in during these times, the response from Elkhorn to the outlying areas was lengthy. Assigning deputies to the substations again reduced response time. Additionally, deputies assigned to the substations live in those areas and patrol them daily. By assigning deputies to the same area every day, they build relationships with the citizens in those areas as well as understand the people in those areas, the places in those areas, and the normal things that occur in them. This built strong community relationships creating trust and support resulting in increased solve rates for many crimes. Prior to the substation assignments deputies were rotated to different parts of the County each day.

Despite the advantages, we also experienced some issues. There were numerous instances where the two deputies on the previous shift were on a late call and oncoming deputies had to wait at the substations for a squad to become available. Additionally, when squads needed to be maintained, we had to spend a lot of time shuttling squads back and forth between the substations and the Vehicle Maintenance Facility at DPW.

In 2017 we proposed the start of a full deputy assigned squad program for those assigned to the substation program for the 2018 budget. By adding 16 additional squads, each of the (24) deputies assigned to the substation

program were given their own squad. There were two deputies assigned to each of the four substations on each shift. There are three shifts per day equaling 24 deputies. These deputies were allowed to start and end their shifts from their homes which were in those same substation areas further enhancing response times when starting shifts. This was done in an effort to pilot the program and phase in full implementation.

We immediately saw benefits in reduction of response times to calls for service, more squads available in the event of an emergency, increased visibility, deterrence of crime when parked at deputy's residences, increased accountability and better care of equipment, reduction in call-in time, and reduction in manpower needed to shuttle substation squads for maintenance.

We are requesting approval to finish this program of full implementation of the deputy assigned squads to all members of the patrol division. In addition to the substation deputies, other deputies in the patrol division already have assigned squads which include the (3) K9 handlers, Commercial Motor Vehicle Inspector, and all six patrol sergeants as well as the patrol Captain. By assigning our current pool squads to deputies, we would need an additional (19) marked squads for full implementation which would include two squads to assign deputies temporarily when their squad is down for maintenance purposes. In order to accomplish this, we have worked with the Department of Public Works, Finance Department, and the County Administrator to phase in these squads over the next three budget cycles based on a 10-year comprehensive fleet plan.

As we look into the future, the deputy assigned squads will have a longer life cycle. Currently, we replace on average 10-12 marked squads annually as they normally accumulate 80k-100k miles per year. We do re-assign aging marked squads which may still have useful life to them within our agency to get the most use out of them as possible. It remains a priority to ensure our marked fleet is the most robust and call ready as emergency first responders.

### **Financial analysis and future planning:**

Currently, our pool fleet is comprised of marked patrol squads used by deputies on all three patrol shifts 24/7/365. Each deputy puts about 100 miles per shift on each squad for an average daily total of approximately

300 miles. As you can see mileage accumulates quickly requiring additional fuel and maintenance. Assigning each deputy their own marked squad car, the daily use is reduced by 1/3. An analysis was done in 2020 for deputies assigned their own squads and showed on average approximately 25,000 miles per year. Based on this information we would see a 5-7 year lifecycle on each squad as opposed to 1-2 years as pool squads.

As you may be aware, the only place we can fuel our squads is currently at DPW. This requires each squad to drive to Elkhorn once per shift to fuel up. We are working with DPW to implement a contract with local gas stations like Kwik Trip for example, where we could fuel up anywhere in our assigned areas saving time and fuel.

By assigning deputies their own squads we anticipate the same daily average mileage resulting in roughly the same fuel expenditures. Currently, each squad uses on average 1,321 gallons of fuel annually based on pool squad calculations being used 24/7. Deputy assigned squads would only be used for one shift and this figure would also be reduced by 2/3 or approximately 800 gallons for each squad annually. Although we anticipate fuel being cost-neutral, we would request an increase of \$25,000 for the first year in our fuel budget to be prepared for unforeseen circumstances and will re-adjust moving forward with more data.

We do anticipate by adding additional squads we will see additional costs in insurance, netMotion licenses for VPN connectivity with our mobile data computers, and cellular data. We anticipate this increase being approximately \$49,000 annually. This may be offset somewhat in terms of cost savings by not having to continually drive into Elkhorn at the start and end of each shift.

Currently, we replace on average 10 squads per year. Based on data from other Sheriff's Departments with deputy assigned squad programs (Dodge, Jefferson, Kenosha, Outagamie, Marinette, etc) the following rotational periods would be utilized:

Patrol marked squads – 5/6 years

Unmarked squads (detectives, civil process, admin, etc) – 7/8 years

We understand this is an investment upfront in terms of vehicle and equipment costs as well as an increase annually to our budget, but the return on the investment will be felt by the below advantages.

**Additional advantages of completing this deputy assigned squad program:**

- Only one deputy assigned a car and not sharing with all three shifts will prevent cross-contamination of germs and viruses (COVID19) keeping our first responders healthy.
- With additional squads, deputies can work out of all (5) substations which will include the Town of Walworth.
- Deputies will be more in tune with needed maintenance and take pride in an assigned car which will be better cared for/washed/cleaned.
- Visibility of Patrol Cars within neighborhoods and substations to act as a general deterrent to reduce crime - citizens report they like this and we have received letters of support.
- Visibility of patrol cars while traveling to and from duty assignments is a visual deterrent.
- Increases the daily time spent on active patrol at the start and end of each shift.
- Reduces time spent by deputies loading and unloading daily equipment into the patrol vehicle.
- Provides an overlap in available deputies available to respond to emergencies at shift changes (3x per day).
- Provides for the rapid response of deputies assigned to; DIVE, CRASH/DRONE, SWAT, CROWD CONTROL - Can keep all equipment in vehicles and prepared for immediate deployment.
- Reduction of changeover time on all three shifts, elimination of non-productive hours.
- Maintenance completed only removes a vehicle from 1 deputy, not from the other 2 duty shifts.

- Deputies take better care of the patrol car and maintenance guidelines - savings on tires/breaks/transmission.
- Wisconsin State Patrol, Kenosha, Dodge, and Jefferson counties have these programs and others are adding as well - will help with recruiting deputies. Recent hires shared they applied here because we have a deputy assigned squad program.
- Decreased response times to all levels of service requested.
- Patrol vehicle retention will increase from 1-2 years to multiple years, up to 5-7 years.
- Retention of vehicles will maintain the annual budget impact to equip redesigned models, install equipment and decal the vehicle.
- National research indicates annual vehicle maintenance costs decrease.
- Quick response to un-duty status at overtime call-in.
- Disaster mitigation, the fleet is not in jeopardy to succumb to a critical situation.
- Disaster response, patrol vehicles distributed throughout the county can respond quickly despite natural hazards (Flooding several years ago).
- Assigned vehicles to the substations throughout the County could see cost savings in fuel if able to do remote fueling at local gas stations.
- An assigned car will eliminate the wait times for the previous shift coming back to the office or substation with the car when on a late call.
- Assigned cars available to all in patrol will allow for overlapping shifts as needed for complete coverage.

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The Take Home Car Advantage Chris Williamson • Conway Police Department February 5, 2016

Kenosha, Jefferson, Dodge and Sauk County Sheriff's Office