

MEETING MINUTES
Personnel Committee Meeting
Village of Palmyra
Wednesday July 29, 2026
100 W. Taft St.
Village Hall Meeting Room
6:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chairperson Tucker. Roll call: Tucker, Wallace 6:03, Pfahler-present. Also present: Fire Chief Mike Gartzke, Sgt. LePak, Public Safety Director Blount and Village President Gorseegner

Business

Discussion/possible action on the following:

1. Sergeant Lepak ~~Retirement~~ Transition. For the record the word Retirement on the agenda is an error it is just a role transition for Sgt. LePak

A. Sgt. Lepak does not intend to retire or collect WRS, she is simply wanting to transition to the administrative assistant. The current person can only give a couple of hours a week from home but can't come back in her past role. Blount stated that this could potentially become a full-time position, LePak wants to become a part-time with pro-rated benefits employee. The Village Board would have to agree to all of this as well. Blount said that she could continue to do some Sgt. Duties without being a sworn officer and continue to do fire and EMS duties. Salary and benefits would still be split to PD/FD. If she started Jan 1, 2027 it could be budgeted for. Another Officer would need to be hired to fill her position, and this may or may not be a Sgt's position. LePak and Tucker will work on a job description to bring to another personnel meeting on Aug. 6th at 6 pm. This would be a closed session to negotiate wages and benefits.

B. Review timeline, responsibilities, succession planning, and continuity of operations. Discussed in item A above.

2. Fire/EMS Division Personnel & Operational Concerns

A. They reviewed the employee survey feedback. Paul had sent out a survey to the public safety dept. near the end of 2025. It was an anonymous survey; they received a lot of positivity. About half of the staff participated. Chain of command concerns, communications and training were some of the concerns but that is due to budgetary issues. They are trained 4 times a year only due to funding. Probationary period is a year long, so they have training throughout that entire year. Unprofessional behavior happens rarely the employees stated in the survey. Tucker and Wallace want to continue this survey but coming from the Personnel committee and making it mandatory. Paul says that they might not respond as well if coming from elected officials. Agreed, the survey will continue to come from Paul and do it at least annually. Gartzke says if the employees see some sort of feedback, they might be more apt to do another one.

B. Promotional practices and organizational structure. Mike says they presented an org chart to the board at some point. He is looking to present something to the board, updated chart, even though they don't have enough people to fill all those positions right now. Tucker wants them to think outside of the box and try to come up with another type of org chart for what we can afford and other options. She also wants to go back to the PSO (public safety officers) structure. Paul's goal is to hire more PSO. Mike thinks it is very challenging, our PD is very busy and for the FD/EMS to rely on them as regular backup is unrealistic. They must have consistent firefighters/EMS for our community. The day Gartzke needs them, and they aren't available then this is not a reliable source. Closest mutual aid is Eagle or Sullivan, 20 minutes away and for example tonight Mike does not have crew available to go on a fire call, not guessing if he has a PSO available or on call that is a gamble. He knows that this costs money, but the board needs to know what they are working with. Volunteers are a dying breed. Tucker said this worked good for

many years. Tucker says there is a lot of resistance to the PSO model. Wallace asks if the on-call positions are scheduled, yes some are in the village says Gartzke. Then there are others that come in from home who are not on the schedule but come in if needed. Mike says when they schedule those people it still isn't enough for a fire call but only EMT helps. Talked about a hybrid model: still has designated responders but add in the PSO when needed. Mike will bring another org chart and see how it can work.

C. Appropriate use of ranks/titles on uniforms, helmets, and official communications. Some individuals were given titles, and they purchased, with their own funds, fire helmets and apparel with their titles printed on them. Then our attorney told the village we needed to remove those titles as the proper procedure for promoting these individuals was not followed. These people were given explanations as to why. So now when on a fire/scene this is causing confusion as to who is in charge. Should it cost those employees money to get a new helmet, shirts etc. Mike Gartzke will find out what the cost will be to put their uniforms/helmets back to what they should be and then we can decide if we will move forward with changing them.

D. Staffing concerns and operational coverage. Paul stated that the PD is staffed 6 days a week, 8 – 9 pm number of calls and traffic stops have increased. Mike says fire/EMS currently there are 7 paid on call that live in the village and respond from home. 6 full-time members, 3 shifts with 2 people per shift, 4 PSO's and 7 part-time staff. 1 is currently deployed and will be gone for 18 months. 1 person in school fulltime. and 1 is finishing EMT school. His goal is to increase paid on call to 10 or more, like to see full-time staff increase by 1 per shift from 6 to 9 people which is a huge ask and have PSO's increase as well especially during daytime. Highest call volume is from 7 am – 7 pm. Tucker has questions on scheduling. She and Mike will meet on this.

3. Wallace/Pfahler motion to convene into closed session pursuant to State Statute 19.85(1)(c) at 7:33 pm Considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility. Specifically, Personnel investigations and employee conduct, Personnel licensure and certification compliance, Employee performance, probationary status, and disciplinary matters, Recruitment, hiring, retention, and staffing of Fire/EMS paid-on-call personnel, fire chief and public safety EMTs, drivers, and other qualified applicants, and other personnel matters as permitted under Wis. Statute 19.85(1)(c). Roll call vote: Wallace, Pfahler, Tucker-aye. Motion carried.
4. Wallace/Pfahler motion to convene into open session at 8:58 pm pursuant to §19.85(2), Stats., for possible additional discussion and action concerning any matter discussed. Roll call vote: Wallace, Pfahler, Tucker-aye. Motion carried.

Wallace/Pfahler motion to adjourn at 8:58 pm. All ayes-motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Mueller,
Village Clerk/Treasurer

Minutes approved with/without corrections Aug. 3, 2026