Special Common Council Meeting Agenda

August 14, 2025 - 6:15 PM
(Following the Committee of the Whole Meeting)
City Hall Council Chambers

Published: 8/6/2025

AGENDA

1. **PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR**
   Each speaker will be limited to three (3) minutes. The Privilege of the Floor session shall not exceed a total of thirty (30) minutes, unless extended by the Common Council.
2. **CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
3. **ROLL CALL; DECLARATION OF QUORUM; PUBLIC NOTICE**
4. **REPORTS**
   - **A.** City Clerk
   - **B.** Council President
   - **C.** Mayor
5. **ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA, if any**
6. **CONSENT AGENDA--**
   Items under the Consent Agenda have passed unanimously by the Committee of the Whole. Items not passed by a unanimous vote will be removed from consent agenda and will be considered separately.
7. **MISCELLANEOUS**
   - **A.** Discussion and possible recommendation to the Common Council regarding approval of a Public Safety Levy Limit Referendum, a funding option authorized under Wisconsin State law.
8. **END CONSENT AGENDA--**
9. **ADJOURN**

Additional Information

- The agenda packet with supplemental information related to the agenda items is available online at www.NewBerlinWi.gov. Once finalized by the governing body, approved meeting minutes are also posted online.
- The governing body may consider agenda items out of order
- Members, and potentially a quorum of other governmental bodies of the municipality, may be present at the meeting to gather information. No action will be taken by any governmental body other than the one referenced in this notice.
- With reasonable notice, accommodations will be provided under the Americans with Disabilities Act to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities through appropriate aids and services. For more information or to request assistance, please contact the Office of the City Clerk at (262) 786-8610.

New Berlin

Fire Department

Organization and Deployment Succession Plan for Fire Suppression and EMS Operations

January 2025
Fire Administration

New Berlin Fire Department
16300 W. National Ave.
New Berlin, WI 53151

City of New Berlin

New Berlin Fire Department

Fire Chief Mark Polzin

Succession & Reorganization Plan Contributors

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Documentation Validation Tracker

Description	Author	Version	Date
Published	Chief Polzin	1.0	1/12020
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Published	Chief Polzin	3.0	8/6/2025


NEW BERLIN
FIRE
EMS
EST. 1954
FIRE DEPT.
MISSION
To provide exceptional services while committed to building a safer community.
VISION
To continually strive to be a caring, understanding, people first organization committed to excellence in all we do.

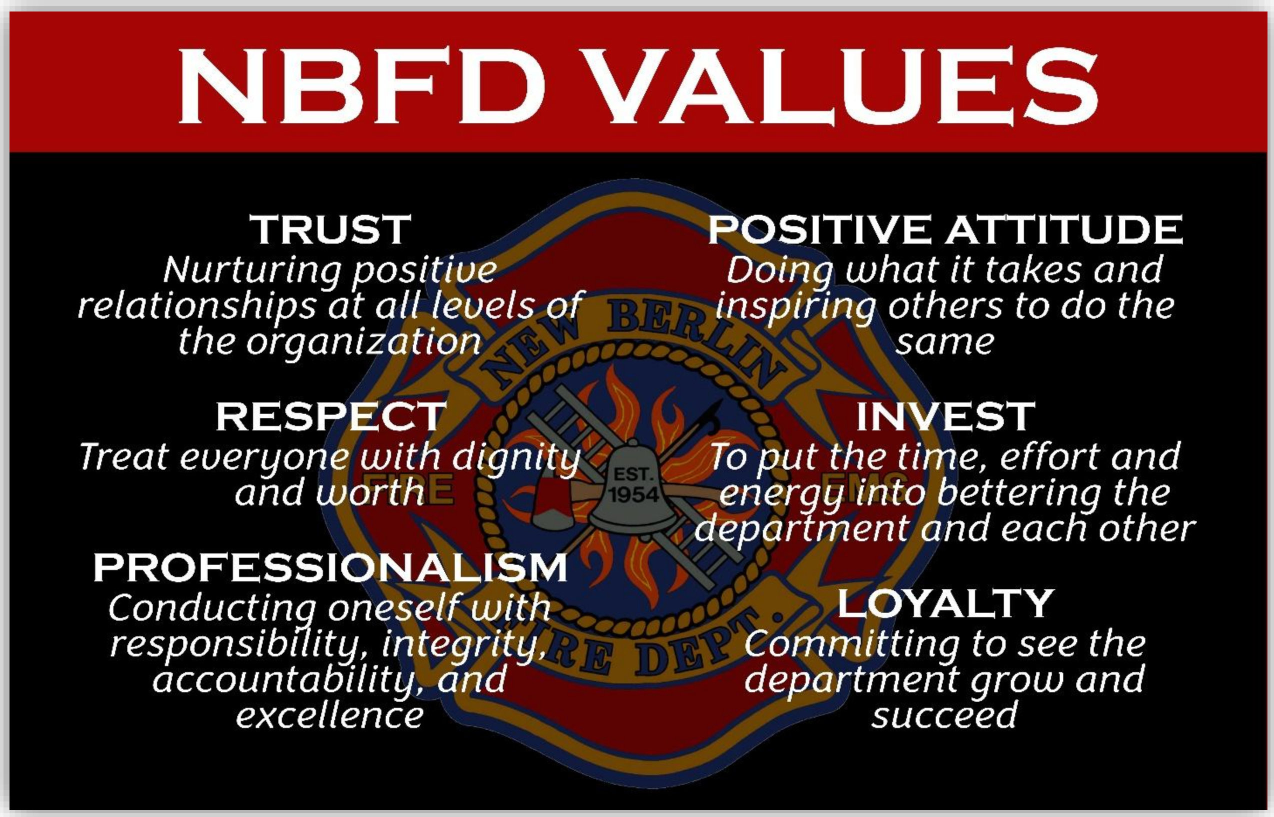

NBFD VALUES
TRUST
Nurturing positive relationships at all levels of the organization
RESPECT
Treat everyone with dignity and worth
PROFESSIONALISM
Conducting oneself with responsibility, integrity, accountability, and excellence
POSITIVE ATTITUDE
Doing what it takes and inspiring others to do the same
INVEST
To put the time, effort and energy into bettering the department and each other
LOYALTY
Committing to see the department grow and succeed

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

A change in leadership, management and supervisory positions are inevitable for all organizations, including the government. With the departure of an employee in a promoted position, it is imperative to ensure continuous coverage of duties critical to the ongoing operations of our department. The transition of an individual into one of these promoted positions often is delayed because of an orientation and training program; and once appointed, a developmental period. These changes are often difficult and can be a very challenging time for any organization. The New Berlin Fire Department is preparing to overcome these challenges through a proactive professional development program and implementation of a reorganization plan.

This proposed succession/reorganization plan would assist the department by lessening the impact of both expected and non-expected vacancies in the next 10 years. The succession plan will develop a program to make certain that personnel are trained, worked in the position on a temporary basis, and can fill these positions prior to a vacancy occurring. Open positions can and should be filled by personnel who have been previously trained and periodically worked in those promoted positions. This will minimize the impact on the department, our customers, and the services that we provide. The development of these future supervisors, managers and leaders will take years to complete. Succession planning is an ongoing project and will need to be continually reviewed and updated.

Planning Assumptions

As this plan is developed, there are several assumptions that are understood.

1. The Fire Department and city desire to retain, develop, and promote personnel from within the organization and believe that their employees are its greatest asset.
2. The plan will require an ongoing commitment by the Fire Department and the city.
3. Only a limited number of employees desire to become a supervisor, or work in a management or administrative position.
4. Many of the employees will complete their careers with the New Berlin Fire Department; however, there will be employees that will leave for other public and private positions.
5. The plan will focus on preparing all employees with an emphasis on those with greater than 10 years of service remaining with the Fire Department.

New Berlin Fire Department Problem

The New Berlin Fire Department looks to recruit and retain highly skilled personnel. Due to the development of the department and lack of opportunities for advancement, many quality employees, part-time and full-time, have left the organization for opportunities elsewhere. More recently the fire service and the fire department have experienced difficulty in attracting and retaining entry level firefighter positions. Recruitment and retention appear as though it will be a challenge for the foreseeable future. *National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) US Fire Department Profile 2020 Supporting Tables & Appendix Tab B: NFPA The Fifth Needs Assessment of the US Fire Service: Staffing & Operations 2021*

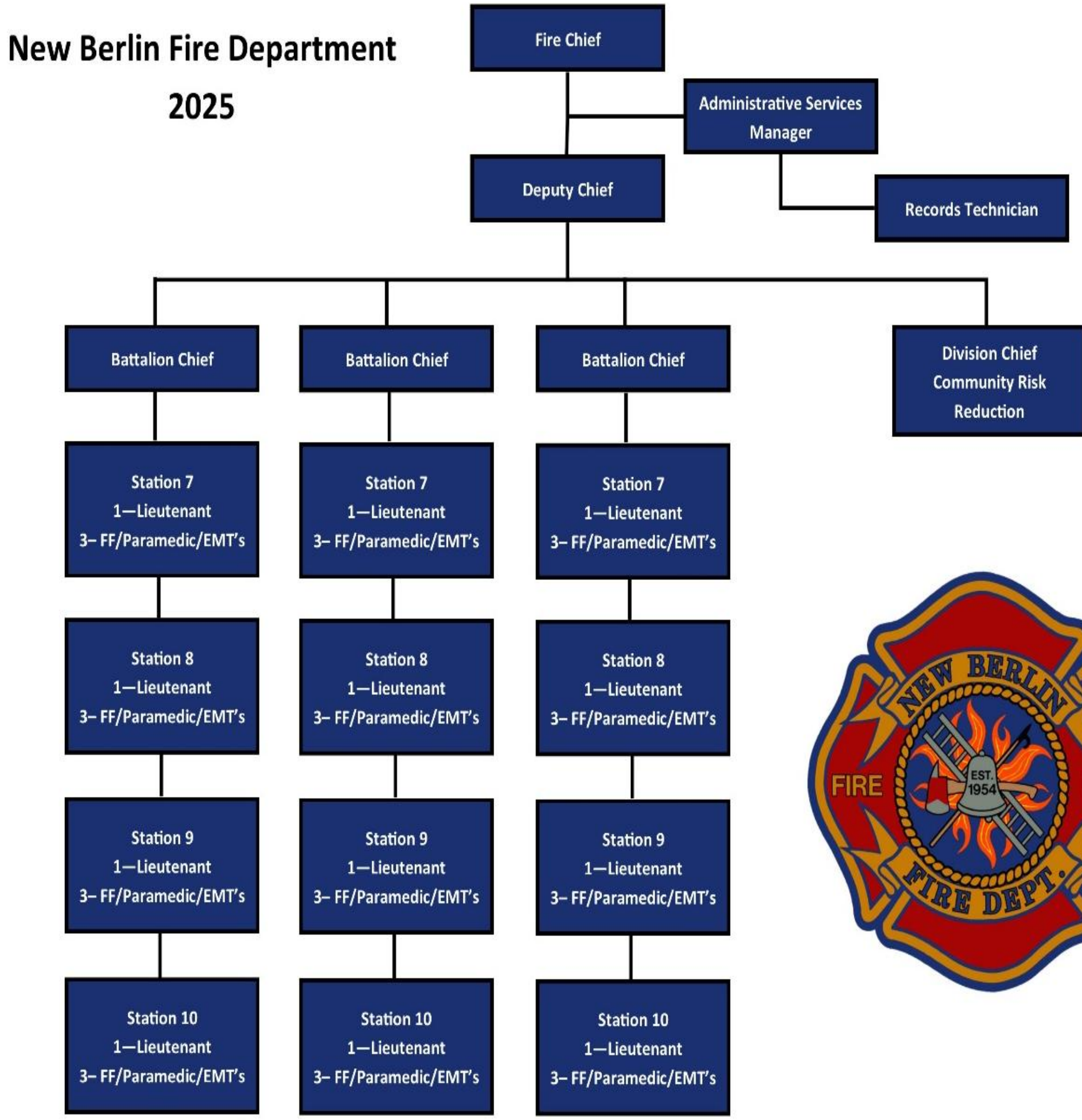
The Fire Department and city are experiencing the need to grow to meet current and future demands. Dependency and reliability on auto-aid and the mutual aid box alarm system (MABAS) will pose a problem in the future as staffing and reliability on external resources becomes more challenging. With the addition of full-time personnel, new supervisory and management positions, and the expectation of retirements, now is the time for the Fire Department to reorganize and develop a Succession Plan.

A continuous improvement plan is vital to ensure operational excellence and organizational success for those we serve as well as current and future fire department personnel.

Respectfully,

Mark Polzin
Fire Chief

Current Organizational Chart



Current EMS/Cross-Staffing Operations

The New Berlin Fire Department employs a response model that deviates from industry standards and raises concerns regarding compliance with Wisconsin DSPS 330. To supplement staffing during simultaneous incidents, the department utilizes "chase" (Utility) vehicles, typically operated by an officer, alongside standard apparatus.

Under the current model, EMS calls are handled by an ambulance staffed with two paramedics, with the chase vehicle responding as additional support. Since most EMS calls require only two personnel for transport, the officer remains in the station's primary response area. However, this practice presents a potential inconsistency with DSPS 330.14, which emphasizes the need for officers to stay with their assigned crews to provide supervision, maintain accountability, and uphold crew integrity. *Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services Chapter 330*

		New Berlin	South Shore	Brookfield
Population Served		40,302	34,462	41,268
Geographic Size		40 sq. miles	40 sq. miles	27.7 sq. miles
Maximum/Minimum Staffing		17 Max/12 Min.	21 Max./17 Min.	21 Max./17 Min.
5-Year Call Volume	**2024**	5,201	6,402	5,111
	2023	4,593	5,755	4,707
	2022	4,951	5,337	4,820
	2021	4,965	5,308	4,757
	2020	4,614	4,609	3,847

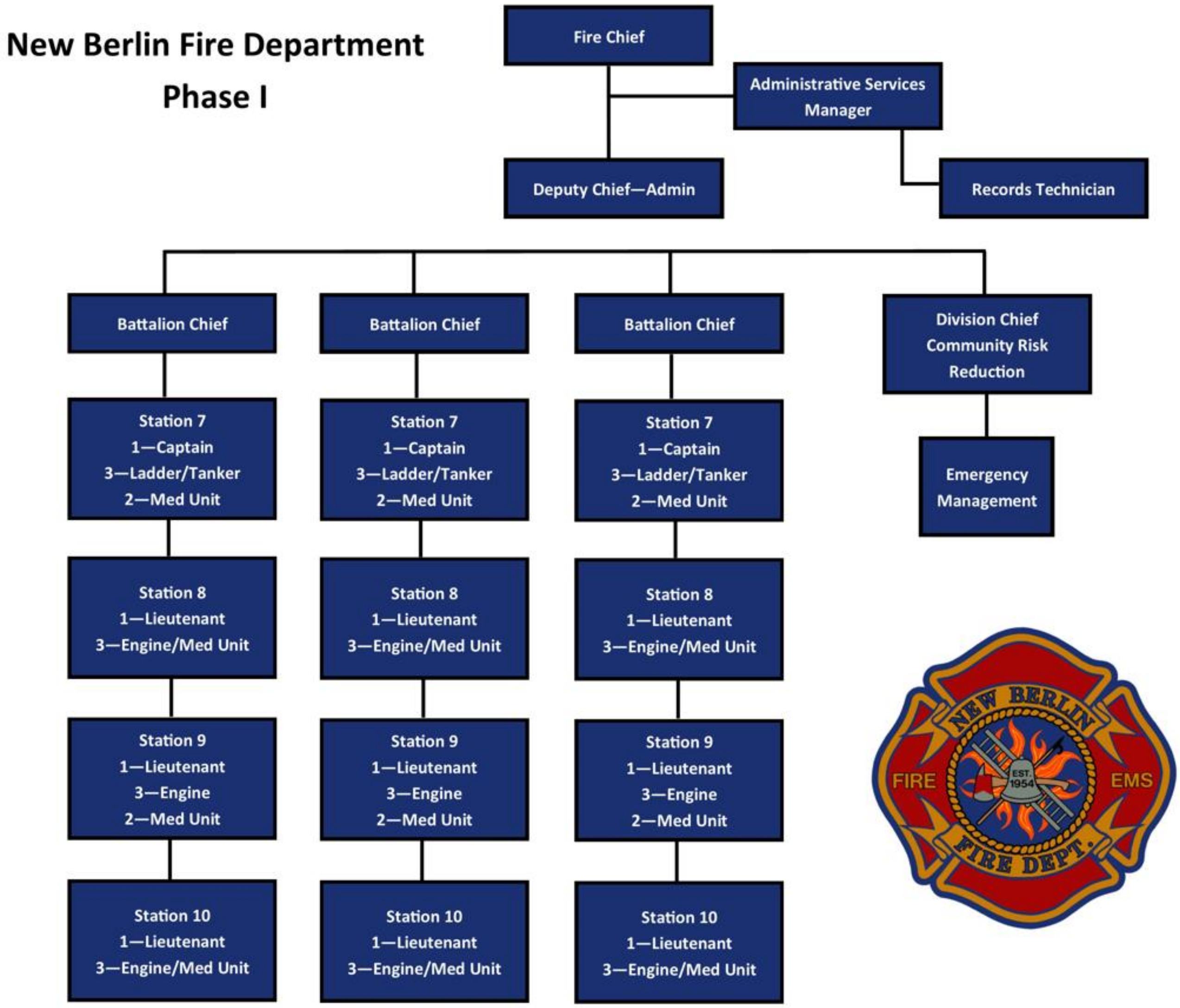
Impact on Fire Responses

A more significant operational concern arises when a secondary call for service involves a fire response. In such cases, the officer operating the chase vehicle is unable to respond on the fire apparatus, limiting their ability to provide oversight and command on the scene. Most fire departments adhere to the industry standard of having an officer assigned to an engine company to oversee operations, ensure firefighter safety, and make critical tactical decisions. The absence of an officer on the responding fire apparatus contradicts best practices for effective emergency management and could impact both safety and operational efficiency. *National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST): Report on Residential Fireground Field Experiments 2010 & International Fire Service Journal of Leadership and Management Volume 13 2021*

Current Apparatus Assigned Staffing

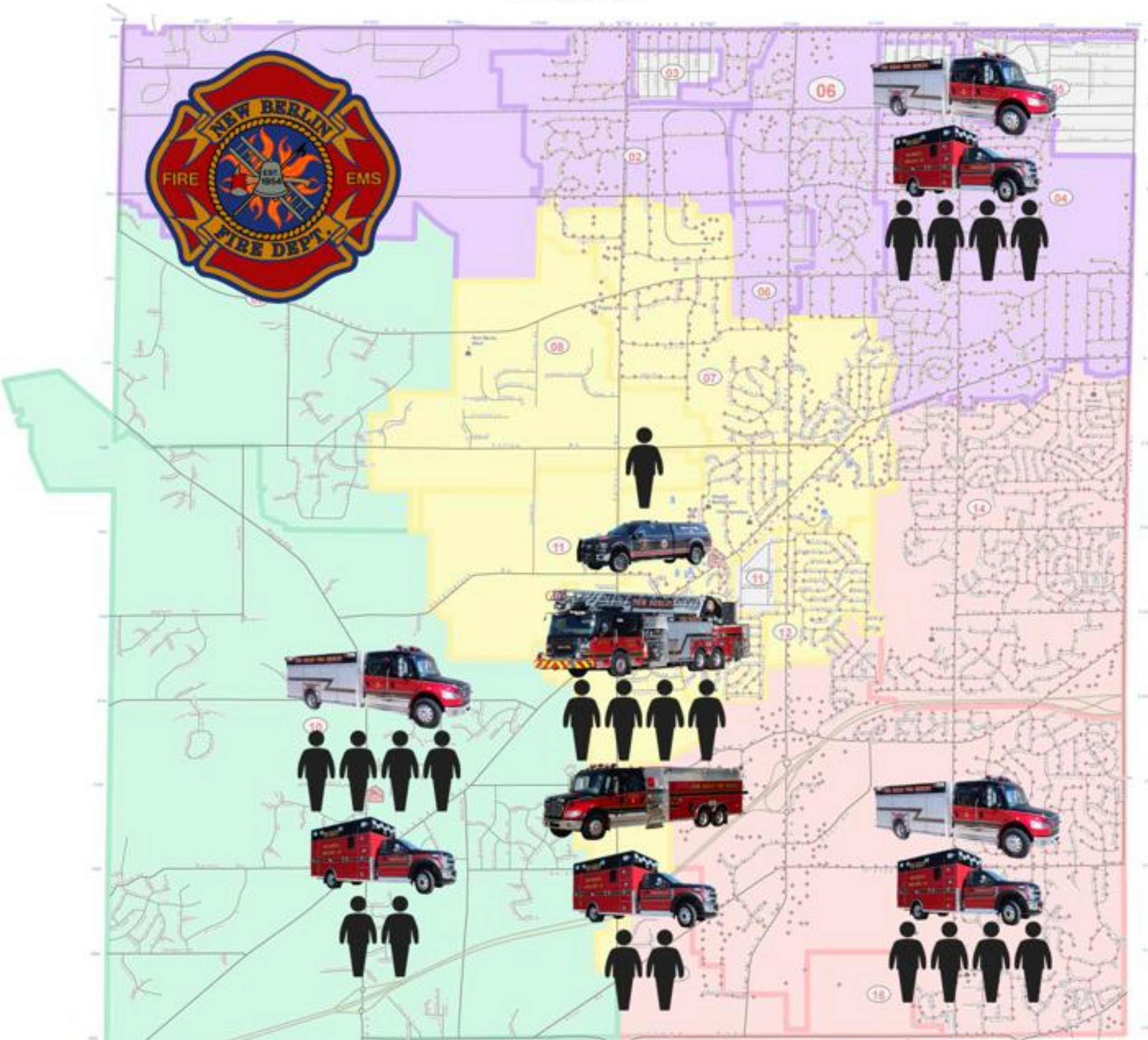
Number of Units	Unit Type	Staffing Level	Adaptive Staffing	Total on Duty Max/Min	NFPA 1710 Standard Staffing
1	Battalion	1		1	**1 = Incident Command**
1	Truck	3/4		3/4	**1 Truck = 4 Personnel**
1	Tender		3/4		
1	Command Post		1		
1	Brush Truck		1		
3	Engine		2/4		**3 Engines = 12 Personnel**
3	Ambulances	2/3		6/9	
3	Utility Vehicles	3		3	
			Total:	17/12	**17 Personnel**

Phase I Reorganization



New Berlin Fire Department

Phase I

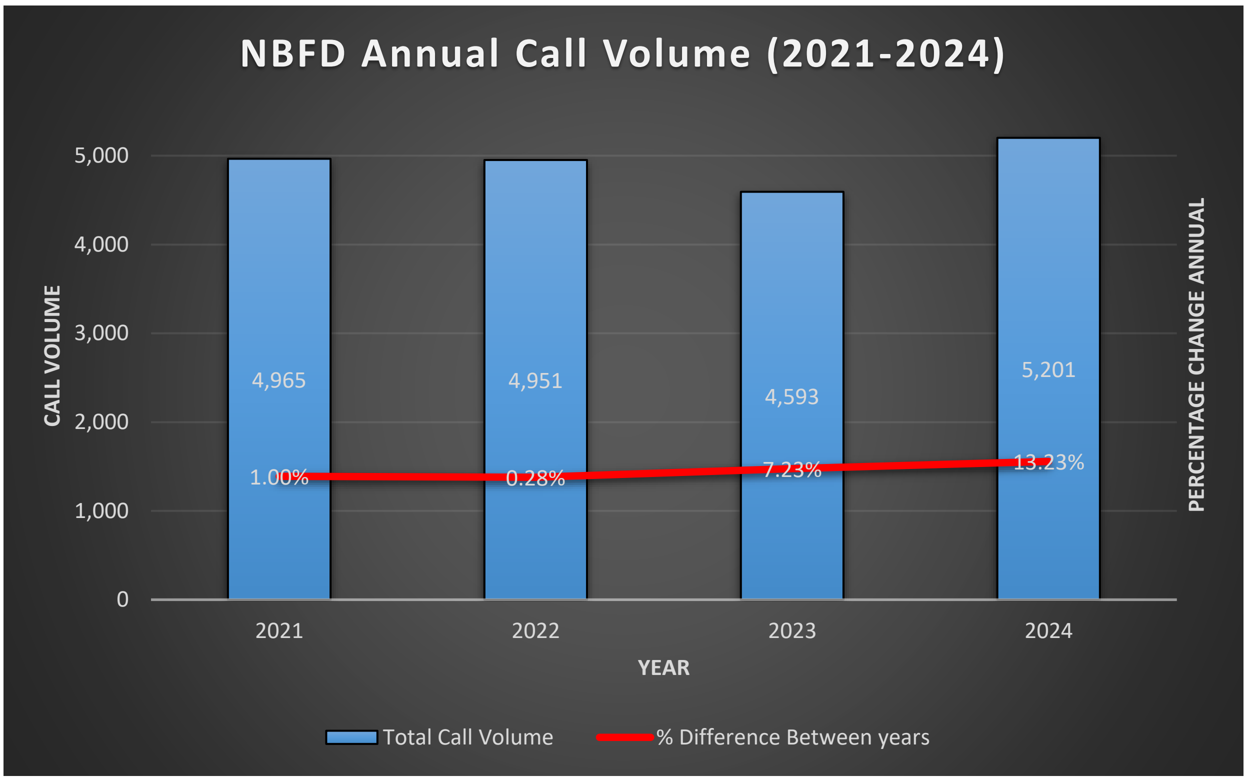


Maximum Daily Staffing: 21 Personnel
Minimum Daily Staffing: 17 Personnel

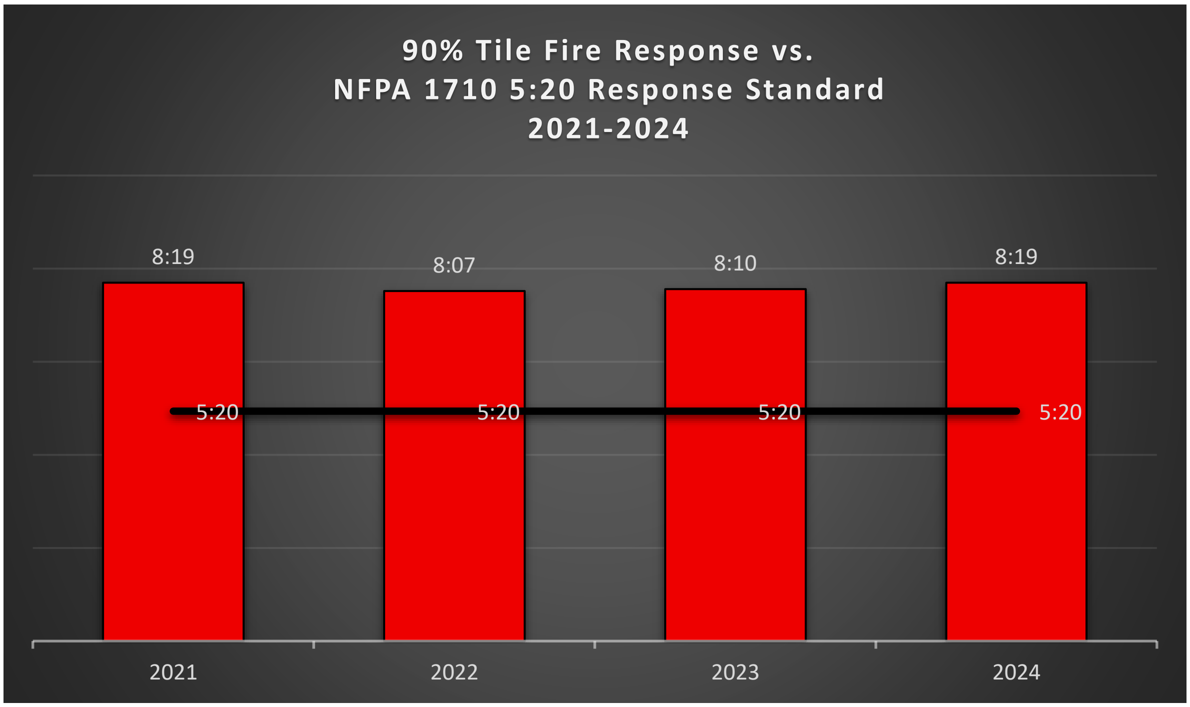
Stations 7 and 9 would have a dedicated med unit. Stations 8 and 10 would continue to be cross staffed.

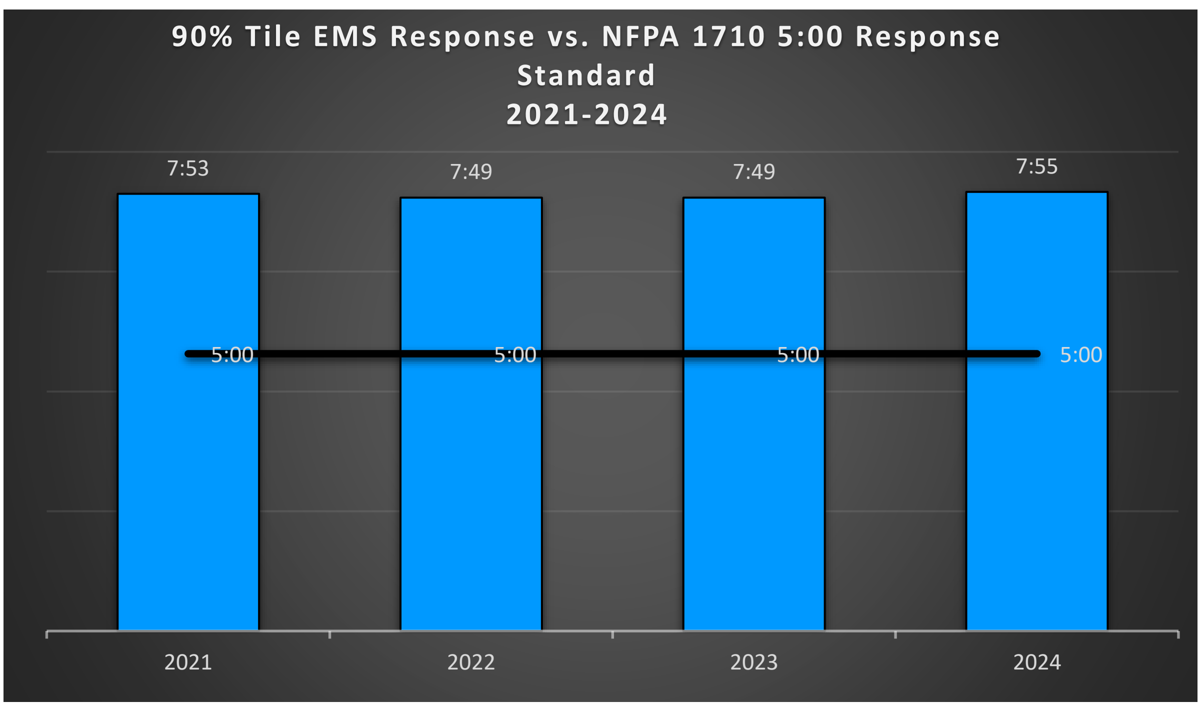
Phase I: Addressing Increased Call Volume and Response Times

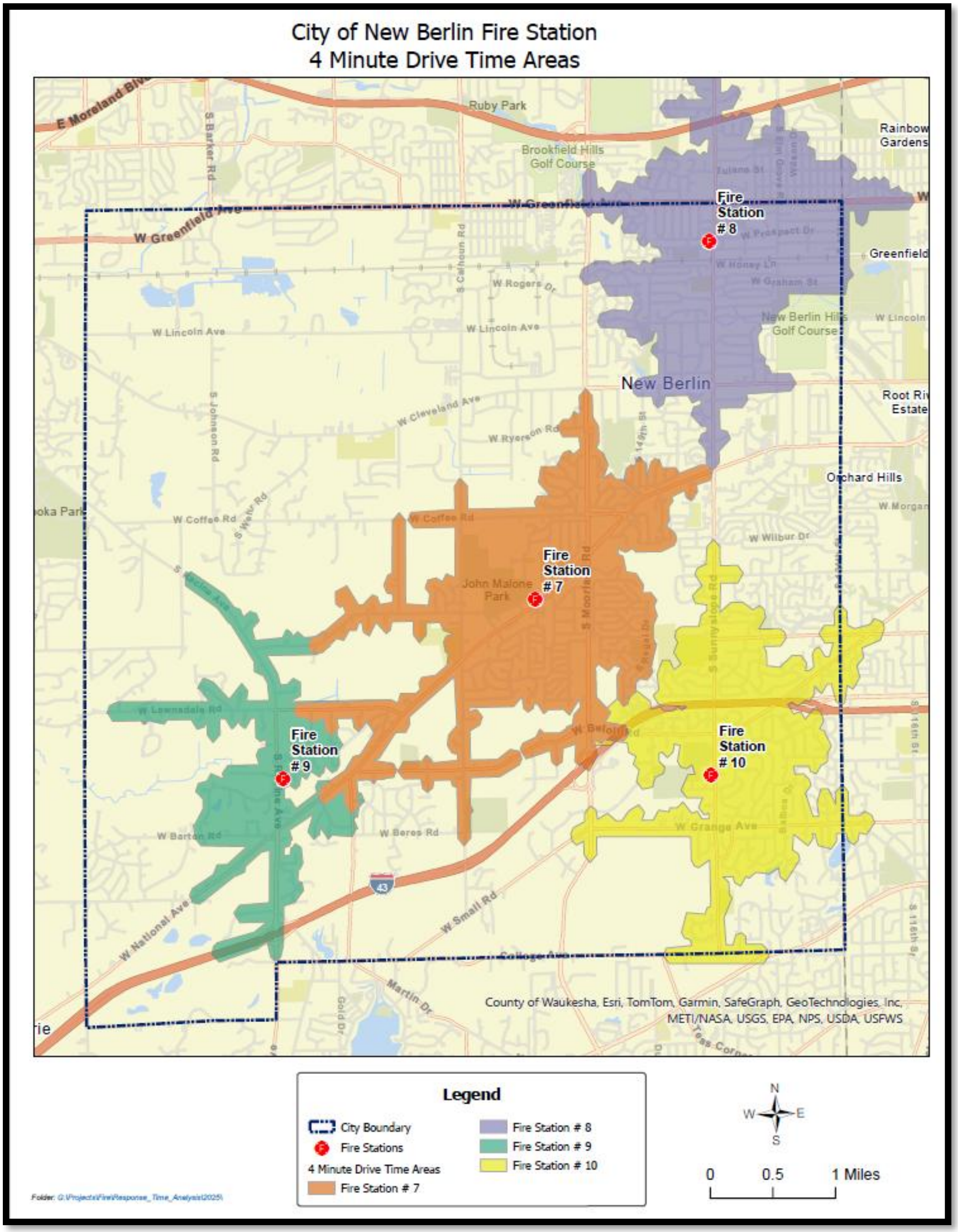
The first phase of this plan aims to improve emergency response capabilities in response to the growing 911 call volume, particularly for EMS incidents. The increasing number of emergency medical calls, along with the presence of multiple healthcare facilities—including emergency departments, urgent care clinics, and long-term care facilities—within the New Berlin city limits, underscores the urgent need for additional EMS staffing. To meet this demand, the department proposes adding 12 firefighter/paramedics. The addition of fully staffed ambulances at Station 7 and Station 9 will accommodate both current and projected call growth while enhancing the department's ability to meet increasing EMS needs.



Fire departments use the 90th percentile to measure response times because it provides a more accurate reflection of overall performance and reliability. While averages can be skewed by unusually fast or slow responses, the 90th percentile shows the time within which 90% of all responses occur. This method highlights consistency and helps identify outliers or systemic delays, ensuring agencies are meeting expectations for timely service in the vast majority of incidents. It's a more meaningful and accountable metric for evaluating emergency response effectiveness.






City of New Berlin Fire Station
4 Minute Drive Time Areas
Fire Station # 8
Fire Station # 7
Fire Station # 9
Fire Station # 10
New Berlin
Legend
City Boundary
Fire Stations
4 Minute Drive Time Areas
Fire Station # 7
Fire Station # 8
Fire Station # 9
Fire Station # 10
0 0.5 1 Miles
County of Waukesha, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA, USFWS

Furthermore, with the dedicated staffing of an ambulance and fire apparatus at Station 7 and Station 9, a full-time fire apparatus will also be in service in the western half of the city. This addition aligns with NFPA 1710, which establishes minimum response times and staffing levels for career fire departments, ensuring improved coverage and significantly reducing response times for both EMS and fire-related incidents. *National Fire Protection Association 1710 Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments 2020*

Phase I: Reducing Dependence on External Aid

Upon completion of Phase I, the department anticipates a reduction in resources for automatic aid, mutual aid, and MABAS requests into the city. Expanding New Berlin Fire Department's resources ensures the safety and well-being of city residents while preventing undue reliance on outside agencies. The current average response time for auto-aid/mutual aid EMS services from outside agencies is 6.6 minutes.

Additionally, Wisconsin DSPS 330 mandates that fire department operations maintain adequate staffing and response capabilities to ensure firefighter safety and operational effectiveness. Expanding local resources aligns these standards by reducing the department's dependency on outside assistance and ensuring that personnel are not operating at unsafe staffing levels. It is essential that the department's growth focuses on maintaining service levels within New Berlin rather than unintentionally subsidizing emergency response for other municipalities struggling with similar staffing challenges.

Phase I: Potential Insurance Services Office (ISO) Impact

The ISO rating is a critical measure of the New Berlin Fire Department's effectiveness and directly impacts both the community and department operations. A strong ISO rating can lower insurance premiums for residents and businesses, reducing financial burdens while ensuring cost-effective resource allocation. It also serves as a key performance metric, demonstrating the department's commitment to safety, training, and operational excellence.

Why the ISO rating is so important:

1. **Insurance Premium Benefits**
   Maintaining a high ISO rating can significantly lower insurance premiums for both the fire department and the community it serves. Insurers view well-rated departments as less risky, rewarding them with cost reductions, which helps optimize budget allocation and reduce expenses for departments and residents.

2. **Safety Performance Metrics**
   High ISO ratings of fire departments directly reflect a department's commitment to safety and performance. It ensures that essential resources, training, and equipment are consistently up to standard, ultimately improving a department's effectiveness in protecting lives and property and minimizing emergency response times.

3. **Ensure Fair and Unbiased Evaluations**
   Use standardized evaluation criteria to minimize bias and establish expectations. Fair appraisals foster trust and help accurately measure firefighter competencies.

4. **Resource Optimization**
   High fire department ISO ratings often mean the department is utilizing resources effectively. Meeting ISO benchmarks helps departments prioritize investments in personnel, equipment, and technology, ensuring that resources are allocated efficiently, and firefighters have the tools needed to be safe and effective during emergencies.

5. **Operational Benchmarking**
   ISO ratings serve as a benchmark for fire department operations. Meeting ISO rating requirements to earn a high rating demonstrates that the department is operating at an exceptional level in key areas such as staffing, training, and response protocols, offering insight into areas for continuous improvement and achieving long-term strategic goals.

6. **Community Impact**
   A high ISO rating fosters greater trust between the fire department and the community it serves. It signals a department's commitment to providing fast and reliable service, which can enhance public confidence, attract funding support, and improve relationships with local stakeholders, ultimately leading to safer communities. *Insurance Services Office (ISO) Public Protection Classification (PPC) Summary Report 2021*

Phase I Checklist

□ **(PRIORITY 1) 6 personnel to St 9**

□ **(PRIORITY 2) 6 personnel to St 7**

- Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (SPS) Chapter 330
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 1710
- NFPA US Fire Department Profile 2020 Supporting Tables 2022
- NFPA The Fifth Needs Assessment of the US Fire Service: Staffing & Operations 2021
- National Institute of Safety and Technology (NIST) Report on Fireground Field Experiments
- Insurance Service Office (ISO) Public Protection Classification (PPC) 2021

Current & Future Considerations

As the fire department and the community continue to grow, ongoing analysis and evaluation are critical to ensure that emergency response capabilities align with NFPA 1710 response time standards and Insurance Services Office (ISO) deployment criteria. NFPA 1710 establishes benchmarks for fire and EMS response times, staffing levels, and resource deployment to maximize effectiveness and safety. Regular review of response data, unit availability, and call volume trends allows the department to assess whether current station locations, staffing levels, and apparatus distribution meet these standards. As call volumes increase and new developments expand the community's geographic footprint, maintaining compliance with NFPA 1710 requires proactive planning to avoid delayed response times and potential service gaps.

Additionally, adherence to ISO deployment analysis is essential for maintaining or improving the community's ISO Public Protection Classification (PPC), which directly impacts local insurance rates. ISO evaluates factors such as fire station distribution, staffing, water supply, and communications infrastructure to determine the department's effectiveness in protecting life and property. Growth in population, commercial and residential development, and road infrastructure changes can impact ISO ratings if fire department resources are not scaled accordingly. Conducting regular evaluations ensures that fire department capabilities evolve with community needs, supporting both emergency response performance and favorable insurance ratings for residents and businesses.

Future consideration should be data driven based on call volume and response times as well as additional staffing or station locations to best serve the citizens of New Berlin and provide the exceptional services they have come to expect and deserve.

Fire Department Image

The Fire Department image emphasizes the internal and external representation of the department. This is important in a succession plan through the facilitation of pride in the individual, the department and the city. Additionally, this image allows the department to keep outstanding employees and to hire quality new employees. Much of the development of the department's image comes from the dedicated employees who work here. The development of our personnel leads to the development of the organization and a positive public image. The department has taken steps to highlight the work we have been doing; it is believed that the image of the department will continue to improve.

The department is taking steps to further improve our image. Changes have been made to enhance our opportunity to pursue Accreditation through the formation of committees, the department's commitment to continuous improvement, and focus on documentation and record keeping. Our department is in the process of considering pursuing Accreditation through the Center for Public Safety Excellence. The Accreditation process would ultimately allow our department to be reviewed by peer assessors to determine if the organization is credible and meets the established guidelines to better serve the citizens of New Berlin. Accredited agencies are often described as being community-focused, data-driven, outcome-focused, strategic-minded, well organized, properly equipped, and properly staffed and trained. To date, 313 agencies internationally have been accredited. The final area to promote the image and development of our personnel is through employee recognition. We are currently in the process of finalizing an employee recognition program as our members do many outstanding acts in support of the Fire Department's vision, mission and values.

Physical Infrastructure

The final component of this Succession/Reorganization Plan is the development of an infrastructure to support the plan. This includes the promotion and preparation of the department's future, by providing facilities, tools, systems and processes to support the personnel for the foreseeable future. Department facilities will need to be expanded, remodeled or built for training of personnel, and the housing of positions.

Information systems will need to be updated with a focus on streamlining to make more effective and efficient use of time.

Finally, the organization's strategic and succession plans will need to be continuously used and updated to support the vision of the department. Modifications will need to be made as necessary to meet the current and future challenges the organization faces and to provide the services the citizens of New Berlin should expect and deserve.

City of New Berlin Fire Department
Organization and Deployment for Fire Suppression & EMS Operations: Current Status

5,201 calls for service in 2024.

- 13% increase from 2023
- 14 calls for service per day
- Cross-staffing Engine/Med Unit

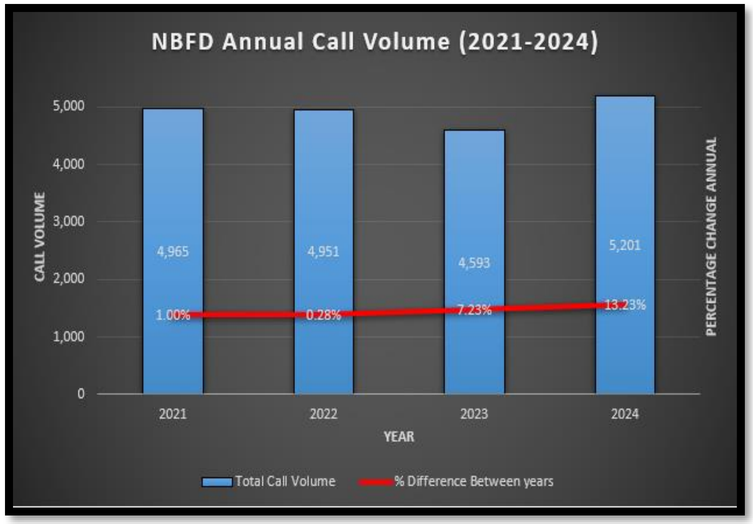
- Max staffing 17 per day
- Minimum staffing 12/13 per day
- Average 14 personnel per day

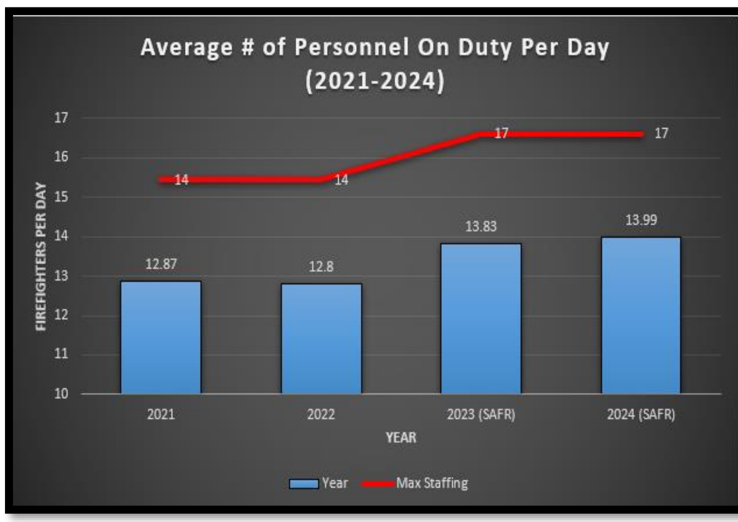
Effective Response force for residential structure fires percentages:

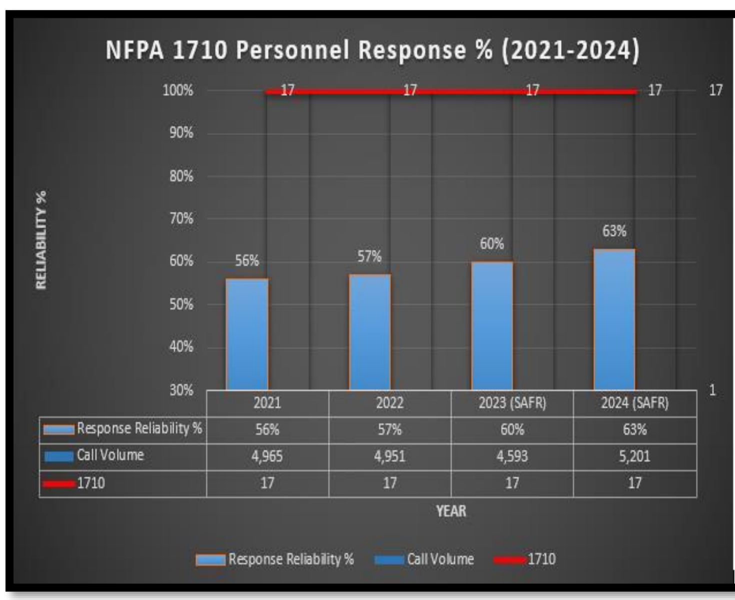
- **2024 – 63% of the day**
- **2023 – 60% of the day**

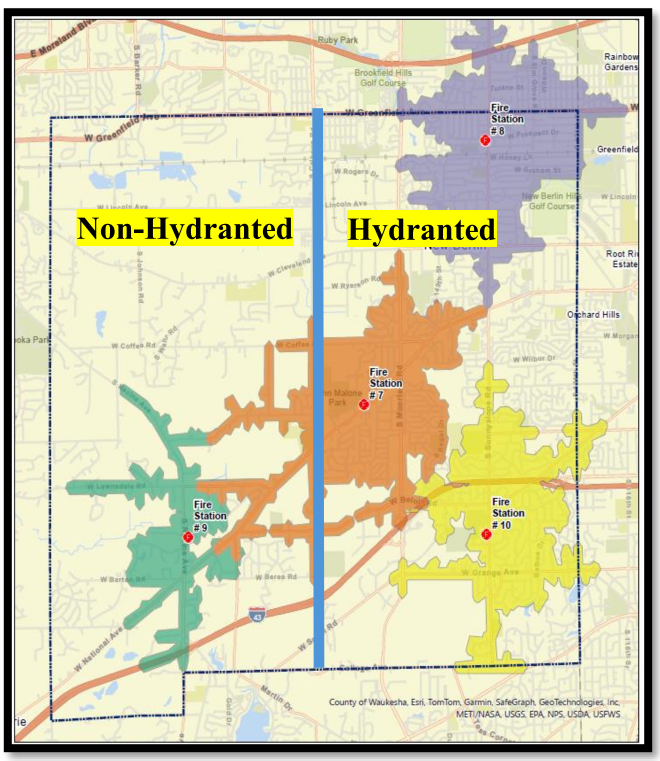
Response times from neighboring departments, 90% tile:

- **10.8 Minutes response into New Berlin**









City of New Berlin Fire Department

Organization and Deployment for Fire Suppression & EMS Operations: Industry Standards

NFPA
National Fire Protection Association

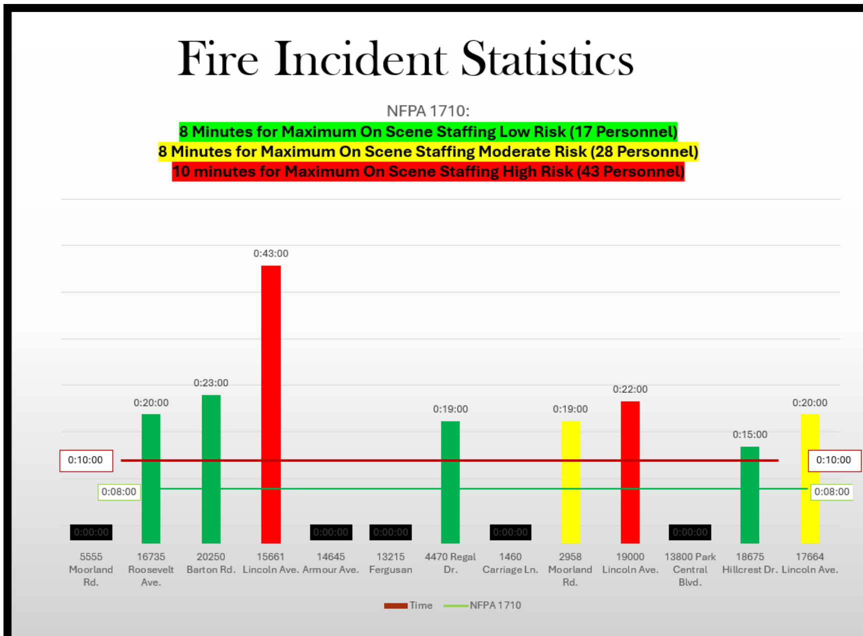
NFPA 1710 Staffing/response requirement's residential structure fire

- First arriving unit in 5:20 minutes
- 17 personnel on scene in 8 minutes

- Low/Medium Hazard in 8 minutes
- High Hazard 10 minutes

US Fire Department Profile 2020 Supporting Tables (p.6)

- Population 40,000, 56hr work week = 1.62 firefighters per capita = 21.6 per day
- **NBFD = 1.275 firefighters per capita. 13.99 firefighters per day**



Population Protected	40-45 Hours	46-51 Hours	52-60 Hours
1,000,000 or more	*	1.41	0.86
500,000 to 999,999	1.70	1.79	1.14
250,000 to 499,999	1.89	1.56	1.16
100,000 to 249,999	1.98	1.47	1.28
50,000 to 99,999	2.06	1.49	1.37
25,000 to 49,999	2.01	1.61	1.62

NIST
National Institute of Standards and Technology

NIST Report on Residential Fireground Field Experiments 2010 (p.52)

- 4-person heavy apparatus crews/task completion 5.1 minutes faster (15 minutes 13 seconds) than 3-person crews at (20 minutes 30 seconds)

FSRS Feature	Earned Credit	Credit Available
Emergency Communications		
414. Credit for Emergency Reporting	3.00	3
422. Credit for Telecommunicators	4.00	4
432. Credit for Dispatch Circuits	3.00	3
440. Credit for Emergency Communications	10.00	10
Fire Department		
513. Credit for Engine Companies	5.71	6
523. Credit for Reserve Pumpers	0.50	0.50
532. Credit for Pump Capacity	3.00	3
549. Credit for Ladder Service	0.97	4
553. Credit for Reserve Ladder and Service Trucks	0.00	0.50
561. Credit for Deployment Analysis	4.26	10
571. Credit for Company Personnel	6.53	15
581. Credit for Training	6.76	9
730. Credit for Operational Considerations	2.00	2
590. Credit for Fire Department	29.73	50
Water Supply		
616. Credit for Supply System	26.76	30
621. Credit for Hydrants	3.00	3
631. Credit for Inspection and Flow Testing	6.40	7
640. Credit for Water Supply	36.16	40
Divergence	-6.19	--
1050. Community Risk Reduction	4.34	5.50
Total Credit	74.04	105.50

ISO

Public Protection Classification Summary Report (ISO) 2022 (p.16)

- **Personnel: 6.53/15 points**
- **Fire Department Credit: 29.73/50**

KEY REQUIREMENTS FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES IN NFPA 1710

The minimum requirements for provision of emergency services by career fire departments can be found in NFPA 1710, *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments*.

NFPA 1710 addresses the structure and operation of organizations providing such services, which include fire suppression and other assigned emergency response responsibilities such as EMS and special operations.

The requirements intend to provide effective, efficient, and safe protective services to help prevent fires, reduce risk to lives and property, deal with incidents that occur, and help prepare for anticipated incidents.

The requirements are listed in NFPA 1710 for fire department service deployment based on the type of occupancy, along with the appropriate response staffing levels for each. The minimum staffing level for each occupancy is listed below. For the full breakdown of staffing requirements by position, refer to the subsections specific to each occupancy in 5.2.4.

KEY REQUIREMENTS

Occupancy Type: Single-Family Dwelling
Deployment: Minimum of 16 members or 17 if aerial device is used

The initial full alarm assignment to a structure fire in a typical 2000 ft^2 (186 m^2), two-story, single-family dwelling without a basement and with no exposures must provide for a minimum of 16 members (17 if an aerial device is used).

Occupancy Type: Open-Air Strip Mall
Deployment: Minimum of 27 members or 28 if aerial device is used

The initial full alarm assignment to a structure fire in a typical open-air strip shopping center ranging from 13,000 ft^2 to 196,000 ft^2 (1203 m^2 to 18,209 m^2) in size must provide for a minimum of 27 members (28 if an aerial device is used).

Occupancy Type: Garden-Style Apartment
Deployment: Minimum of 27 members or 28 if aerial device is used

The initial full alarm assignment to a structure fire in a typical 1200 ft^2 (111 m^2) apartment within a three-story, garden-style apartment building must provide for a minimum of 27 members (28 if an aerial device is used).

Occupancy Type: High-Rise
Deployment: Minimum of 42 members or 43 if building is equipped with fire pump

The initial full alarm assignment to a fire in a building with the highest floor greater than 75 ft (23 m) above the lowest level of fire department vehicle access must provide for a minimum of 42 members (43 if the building is equipped with a fire pump).

KEY REQUIREMENTS FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES IN NFPA 1710 *CONTINUED*

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Fire departments that respond to fires in occupancies that present hazards greater than those found in 5.2.4 must deploy additional resources on the initial alarm as described in 5.2.4.6.

Even though fireground staffing levels have changed, NFPA 1710 continues to require that engine companies be staffed with a minimum of four on-duty members, as stated in 5.2.3. In addition, 5.2.2.2.1 requires that the fire department identify minimum company staffing levels as necessary to meet the deployment criteria required in 5.2.4 to ensure that a sufficient number of members are assigned, on duty, and available to safely and effectively respond with each company.

Additional changes to the 2020 edition of the standard include an update to the definition for *career fire department* and a clarification of how to determine if the department would fall under either NFPA 1710 or NFPA 1720, *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments*.

Several new definitions relating to geographic areas based on population density have been added and the number of responders needed based on the type of incident and tasks to accomplish has been included. New requirements have been added for mobile water supply tankers/tenders and deployment and training of incident safety officers. Also, material on wildland fire suppression has been expanded.

RESPONSE OBJECTIVES

Documenting the benchmarks and response objectives that make up NFPA 1710 is crucial to capturing and tracking data that would be helpful in ensuring the necessary allocation of resources.

Benchmarks	Response Objectives
Alarm answer	15 sec 95% of the time or 40 sec 99% of the time
Alarm processing	64 sec 95% of the time or 106 sec 99% of the time
Turnout - Fire	80 sec
Turnout - EMS	60 sec
First-due engine	240 sec (4 min) 90% of the time
Second-due engine	360 sec (6 min) 90% of the time
Initial full alarm - Low/ medium hazard	480 sec (8 min) 90% of the time
Initial full alarm - High hazard	610 sec (10 min 10 sec) 90% of the time

Learn More

- Visit nfpa.org/1710 for free digital access to the standard.
- Sign up on nfpa.org/NFPA-Membership to:
  - Get one-on-one help with your technical questions at nfpa.org/tqs
  - Access exclusive content
  - Search content and connect with your peers to share information and answer questions on NFPA's online community at nfpa.org/xchange

Jeffrey Hingiss
Chief of Police

Phone: (262) 782-6640
Fax: (262) 782-9033

PUBLIC SAFETY REFERENDUM: Police Department

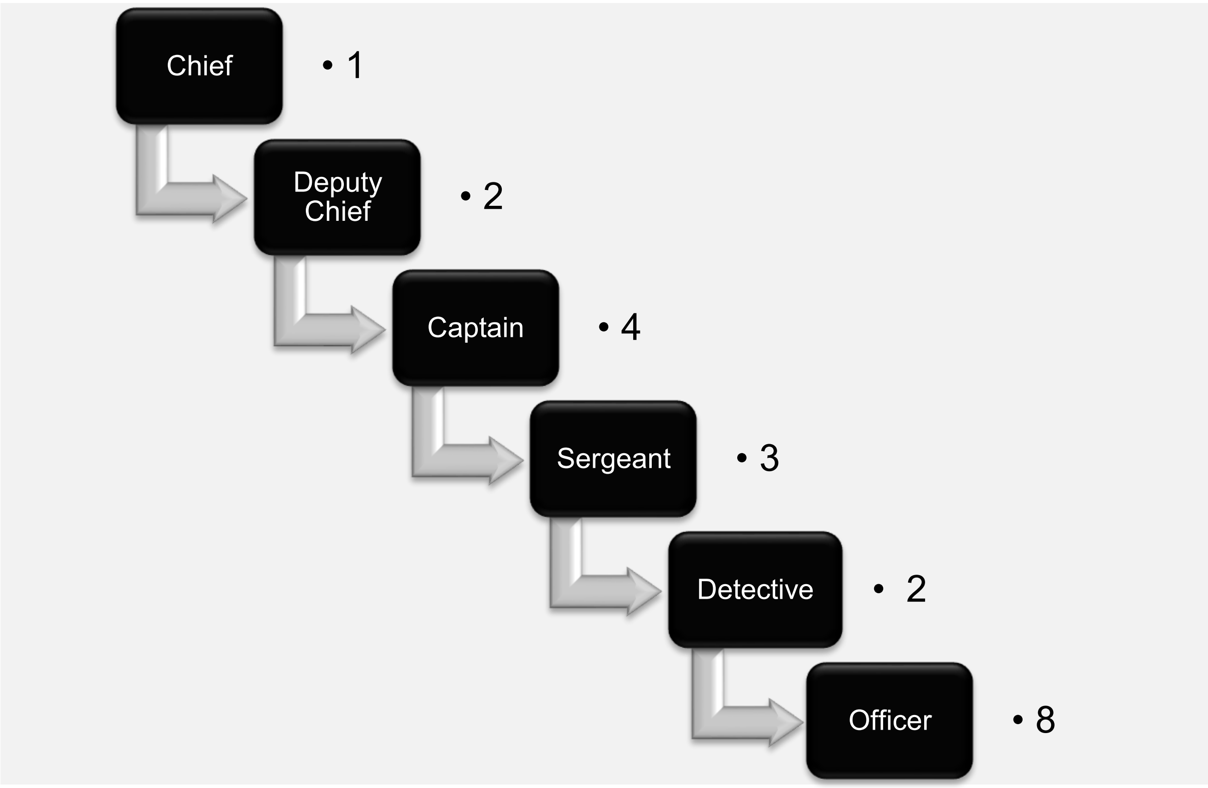
- New Position Request
- Rationale

CONCERN #1:

Anticipated vacancies and/or other required time off within the police department will result in staffing shortages. The following graph illustrates the number of sworn personnel who are eligible to retire by 2030. ***Note that not every officer eligible to retire will retire by 2030. ***

REQUEST:

Increase police department sworn staff by three from seventy (70) to seventy-three (73) police officers.



RATIONALE:

Prior to the previous decade's economic challenges, the department had an authorized sworn staff of seventy-four (74) officers. That number was reduced through attrition and restructuring. The department currently has an authorized sworn staff of seventy (70) police officers. Sick leave, injuries, retirements, and other staffing challenges significantly impact our ability to maintain a healthy "counting" staff. Staffing shortages stemming from sick leave and injuries cannot be forecasted, but some shortages related to retirement or federal medical leave benefits can be anticipated. Since 2020, twenty-eight (28) of the current sworn New Berlin officers have been hired. This has resulted in a younger police force with growing families and additional FMLA benefits. The number of new officers joining the department will continue based on the anticipated retirements depicted above.

As explained in recent years, replacing a retired officer with a newly trained officer is difficult to manage. With the number of hours required to complete the police recruit training and department field training, most newly hired officers do not count toward minimum staffing for at least ten months. Although we have attempted to account for retirements through "pre-hires," the hiring timeline, in conjunction with the academy schedule, continues to leave us behind the staffing curve by five or more months.

Why would raising our sworn staffing help?

- If we were to raise our authorized sworn staff by three police officers to seventy-three (73), we would have the staffing necessary to overcome anticipated retirements, unanticipated resignations and other medical related challenges. In addition, it will help to reduce the number of extended shifts and then the amount of overtime required to maintain minimum daily staffing levels. As a result, the ongoing stress of long shifts will decrease.

- In addition, when staffing levels are low, the department is forced to prioritize the staffing of specialty units. In recent years, the department has been unable to fully staff both federal and local narcotic task force positions. Increasing our staffing would allow us to get back to staffing both positions or the flexibility to shift staffing to meet other regional challenges that ultimately have an impact on crime in New Berlin.

Lastly, the demands on law enforcement continue to rise due to professional, technological, and training related expectations. Maintaining a sworn staff of seventy-three (73) would allow the department to dedicate resources to traffic enforcement. We currently address traffic enforcement needs within our shift staffing or through grant funding. When shifts are at minimum staffing, front line supervisors are required to address calls for service and are less likely to dedicate an officer to traffic enforcement.

CONCERN #2:

Ongoing/Increased mental health services and other related challenges require attention.

REQUEST:

Request to contract with Waukesha County Health and Human Services for one full-time embedded Crisis Worker.

RATIONALE:

Prior to 2010, the New Berlin Police Department staffed one full-time and one part-time police social worker to assist with a myriad of mental health concerns, sensitive crimes, critical incidents, and other related challenges. Their work bridged the gap between the patrol officers' initial response until long-term solutions were put in place by county or private resources. We found that a police social worker helped identify resources for the individual and in return reduced the number of times a police officer had contact with the same person.

The police department spends a great deal of time and resources checking on the wellbeing of citizens. During these calls, individuals often experience personal, medical, and/or a mental crisis. As a result, their actions can be unpredictable, and in some cases, violent. Having a crisis worker embedded and working directly with our staff will not only close the gap in getting citizens the help they need, but it will help reduce the stress of those involved during the crisis and reduce use of force instances.

Why contract an embedded crisis worker?

- Not only are costs to contract less, but we are also not responsible for the ongoing training associated with the position (county responsible). In addition, a contracted crisis worker will make these calls for service more efficient. In the moment, their communication with other county and private resources would reduce the time patrol resources are dedicated to the individual. As an example, the police department conducted 75 well-being checks with the same individual in 2024 and 31 in 2025 (YTD). A contracted crisis worker would assist with proactive case consultation and potential law enforcement diversion on these types of cases.

- After the initial police response and once the scene is deemed safe law enforcement could clear the scene if no emergency detention is necessary while the crisis worker completes safety planning.
- Crisis worker duties would include collaboration with local entities (city facilities, hospitals, emergency departments, school district) to build increased awareness around Crisis Intervention Services, potentially reducing inappropriate calls to law enforcement and improving crisis response time.
- Crisis duties may include providing psychological first aid to traumatic death scenes or at other related calls which could benefit from a mental health professional on scene.
- Crisis worker duties may include proactive follow-up services to assist with linkage to individual services and again reducing the number of 911 calls for service.

CONCERN #3:

Tasks previously handled by a police service tech are now divided up amongst sworn and non-sworn personnel. Due to budget constraints and other operational priorities, the position wasn't immediately filled and was then cut in the 2025 budget.

REQUEST:

Hire non-sworn police service aides with the funds previously budgeted to complete various tasks previously handled by the police services tech and now by other sworn/non-sworn staff.

RATIONALE:

Within a public safety building, there are countless duties, audits, checks of equipment, and other needs. In the past, the department employed one part-time police services technician for 24 hours per week. Historically, the person who filled this position was retired and had experience in law enforcement operations. Following the retirement of the most recent technician, we divided up the responsibilities amongst sworn and non-sworn personnel until we could assess the most effective way to perform the duties moving forward. Due to other operational matters requiring attention, we maintained those assignments for a period of time without immediately filling the position. Although the assignments are getting done, they are conducted by those who could be doing other things more appropriate for their job description. The goal in 2025 was to fill the position but re-imagine how.

Many departments around us currently staff several non-sworn community service officers or police aides, similar to our historical cadet program. Those non-sworn officers/aides perform many of the tasks that our police services technician performed but also conduct other administrative duties that a sworn officer wouldn't necessarily have to perform (i.e. parking enforcement or extra patrol type reporting and/or checks).

In addition to performing various tasks, these departments also use these positions as a recruiting tool. As a result, they fill the positions with those seeking a career in law enforcement. While employed as aides, the department has an opportunity to evaluate the individual's performance and consider the individual when filling sworn vacancies.

Our goal is to split the police services technician position that was previously budgeted into two police service aide positions and then add a couple hours to each position. The reasoning for two positions is due to the make-up of the assignment and those who fill it. These positions would likely be staffed for no more than 4 – 5 years while the employee was earning a degree. As a result, two positions would allow for some redundancy and succession planning. It would also give us an opportunity to evaluate more than one future police officer candidate at any one time.

With the number of administrative tasks, coupled with the challenges of recruiting quality police officers in today's employment climate, hiring police service aides would serve two purposes. If this was approved, the model is in place in other departments and could easily be tweaked to meet our needs.

CLOSING:

As explained, the police department has experienced hiring challenges in the last ten years. Those challenges are not unique to New Berlin. Departments across the country have experienced retention and recruiting challenges to varying degrees. We have tried to forecast as much as possible over the years and receiving council approval to pre-hire has helped but still leaves us with additional challenges.

Those challenges have increased as personnel wages and benefits continue to rise. Those increases impact the police department's overall budget and have forced us to further scrutinize our operating expenditures, leaving us to rely on unconventional funding. As a result, certain projects such as expanding our vehicle impound and fencing our employee lot have been pushed into the future. Lastly, we also know that our body-worn/fleet camera contract will need to be renewed in 2027 and based on recent research/meetings, our mobile radios (city-wide) need replacing in the next couple of years.

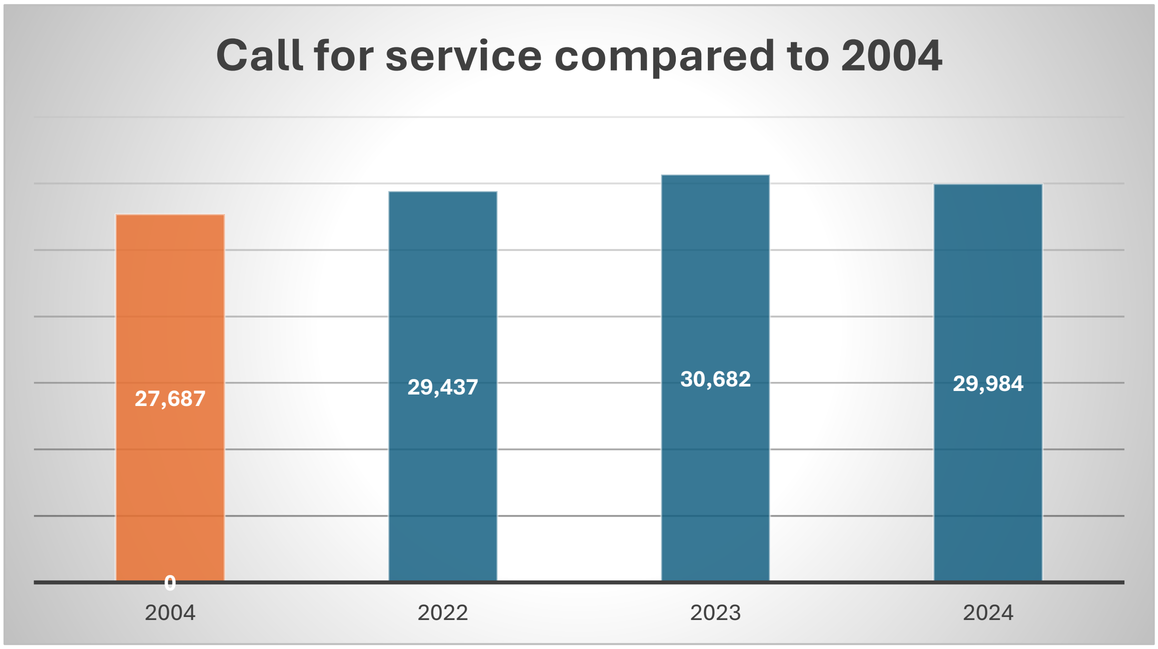
We have learned that the department can operate efficiently when fully staffed at seventy (70) officers, but based on all the variables explained, we struggle to stay close to that number. Considering the police department's needs, this referendum will help buffer staffing challenges similar to those faced over recent years, address mental health challenges, and help our budget address day-to-day needs.

Jeffrey Hingiss
Chief of Police

Phone: (262) 782-6640
Fax: (262) 782-9033

History

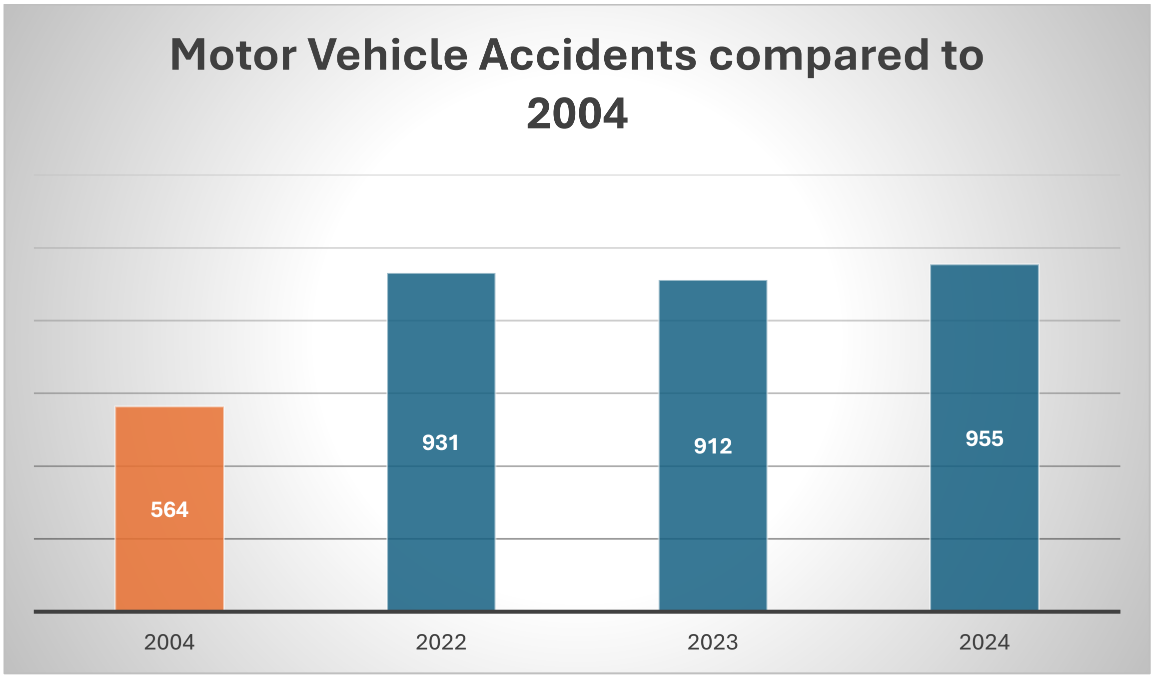
In 2004**,** the police department was budgeted with 74 sworn officers. During the economic downturn of the early 2000s, the police department reduced its budgeted number of officers to as low as 67 sworn officers. By 2024**,** the number of sworn officers slowly increased to 70, throughout this 20-year span, 2004 to 2024, the police department has not experienced a reduction in call for service, but other factors have continued to impact our daily operations.



While the volume of calls has remained steady—or increased—the nature of calls has shifted, becoming significantly more time-intensive and complex. Incidents that now require more time and resources include:

- Motor vehicle accidents
- Critical incidents
- Mental health-related calls
- Domestic violence cases
- Fraud and financial crime investigations

These types of calls often involve lengthy on-scene response, coordination with other agencies, detailed reporting, and in some cases, ongoing follow-up investigations. The decreased staffing, combined with the increasing complexity of calls, has placed a greater strain on officer availability, reducing their ability to remain proactive and responsive across all areas of public safety.



Proactive Policing

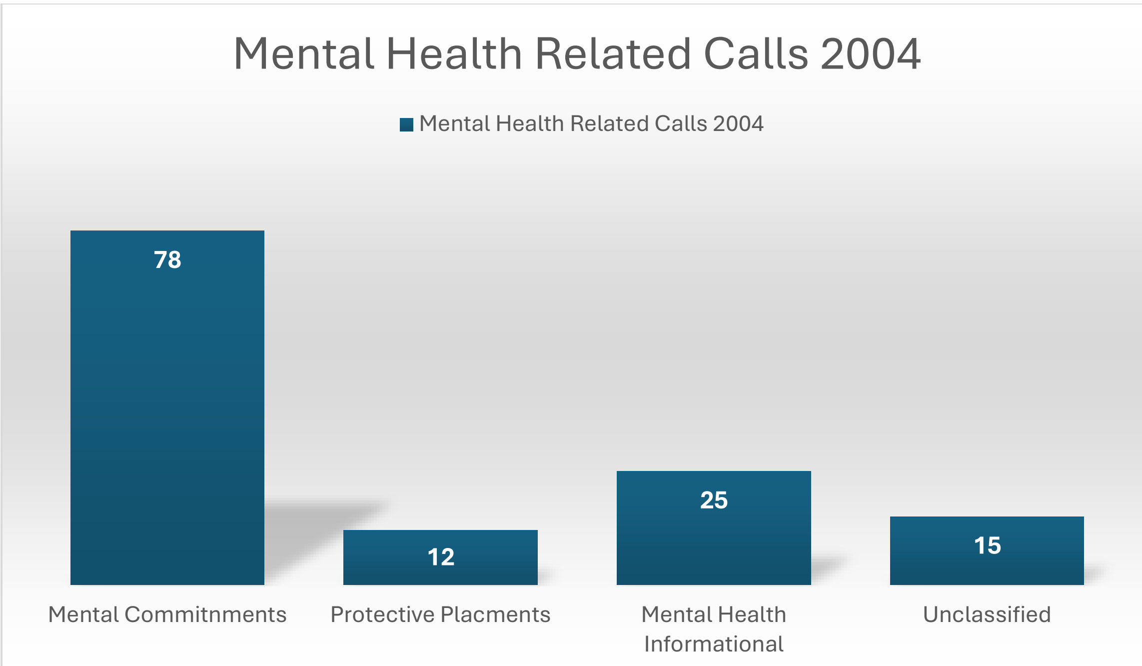
An officer's ability to engage in proactive policing is significantly limited by the volume and complexity of time-intensive calls for service. These calls often require extensive on-scene investigation, follow-up, report writing, and coordination with external agencies. As a result, they reduce the time available for self-initiated activity such as community engagement, targeted enforcement, and preventative patrols.

Common examples of time-intensive calls include:

- Traffic-related complaints
- Theft investigations
- Fraud, identity theft, and financial crimes
- OWI (Operating While Intoxicated) arrests
- Domestic violence incidents
- Mental health-related calls, including:
  - Mental health commitments
  - Wellbeing checks and suicide assessments

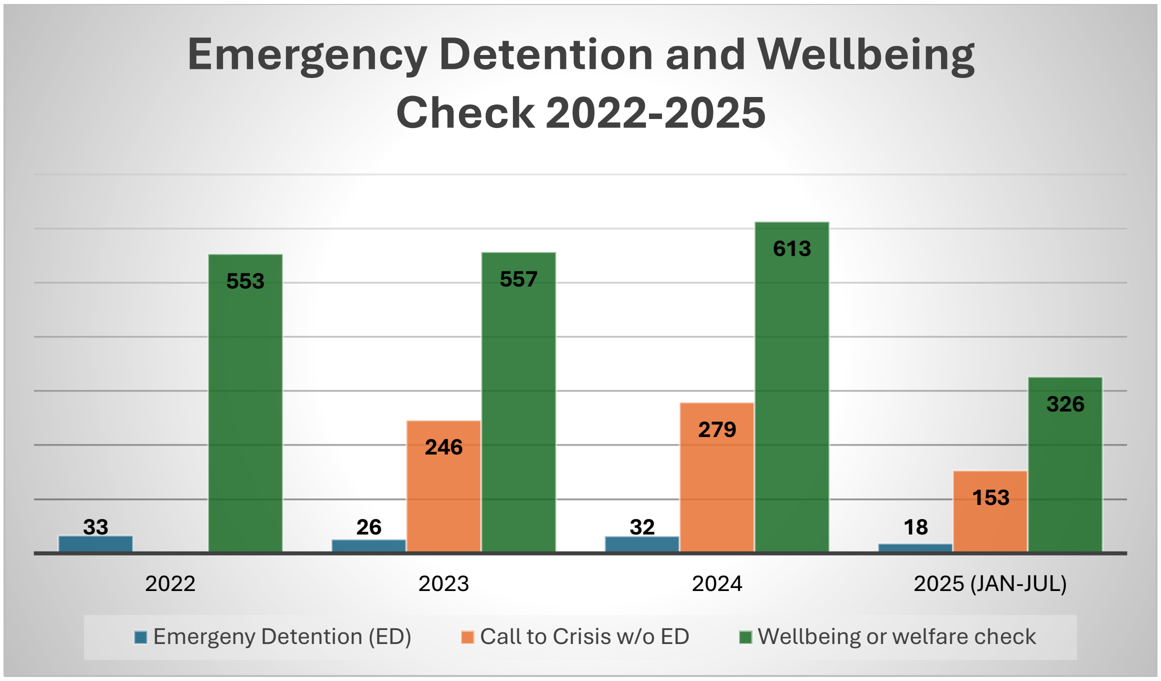
These types of calls are not only resource-demanding but also critical to public safety, often requiring multiple officers and significant time to resolve. When staffing levels are at minimum, the cumulative impact of these incidents leaves less time for proactive policing strategies, which are essential for crime prevention, community trust-building, and long-term public safety outcomes.

Mental Commitments & Wellbeing Checks



In 2004, the Police Department operated under a different Record Management System. The following were included in categories in 2004 that are now summarized in 2025 RMS as either mental commitments or wellbeing checks:

- Mental Commitments (78)- all suicide or emergency detentions
- Protective Placement (12)- protective custody due to aging or disability and all runaway or uncontrollable juvenile
- Mental Health Information (25)- Any well-being check where a commitment was authorized but subject exhibited signs of mental health issues or concerns
- Unclassified (15)- uncategorized mental health calls to include homeless or undetermined MH status
- Since the mid-2010s, Law Enforcement in Waukesha County has worked extensively with Health and Human services to better assess individual needs and to determine proper treatment and emergency placement. In 2023, WCHHS and NBPD began tracking the number of calls to a crisis worker that resulted in Emergency Detention or a safety plan. A crisis worker responds to complete an on-scene assessment and coordinate either placement or a safety plan with police versus 2004 when the decision was left to the officer(s) on scene.



Calls for service related to mental health continue to demand a significant amount of time and resources from officers. These calls often involve multiple stages of response and coordination with external agencies, including:

- Initial contact and investigation
- Coordination with Health and Human Services crisis workers
- Medical clearance at a hospital when required
- Transport and placement at a suitable facility

On average:

- Mental health commitments take approximately 9.5 hours from initial contact to final placement.
- Mental health calls that do not result in immediate transport to a facility or result in a safety plan, still average about 2 hours to resolve.

In addition to mental commitments, officers frequently respond to well-being checks, which are often more frequent and equally taxing on staffing levels. These include:

- Reports of concerning or erratic behavior
- Interactions with homeless individuals
- Assistance requests for aging individuals or those with disabilities

While critical to community safety and well-being, these calls pull officers away from proactive patrol duties and other service demands. The increasing frequency and complexity of these incidents highlight the need for additional resources, improved interagency coordination, and long-term planning around mental health response.

Current Staffing Overview

The department is currently staffed with 70 sworn officers plus one authorized pre-hire intended to fill an anticipated retirement in 2026. However, 9 of these officers are not currently counting towards shift staffing due to the following reasons:

- 4 officers are currently on extended FMLA
  - (2) modified duty along with maternity leave could be as long as 9 months
  - (2) serious injury or illness resulting in extended amount of time on light duty
- 3 officers are currently in field training
  - Minimum of 16 weeks of field training
- 2 officers are attending the academy
  - Expected return in December 2025 however they will need to field train for an additional 16 weeks

In addition, 3 more officers are expected to take FMLA for an extended amount of time on paternity leave before the end of 2025.

These absences have significantly impacted our ability to meet daily minimum staffing levels, leaving patrol units solely responsible for maintaining minimum patrol coverage along with an impact on our overtime budget. Operating at or below minimum staffing reduces officer availability for proactive policing, community engagement, and preventative efforts.

Over the past three years, the department has operated with a shortfall of 5 to 10 sworn personnel due to the reasons stated above, which has either necessitated the reassignment of duties or left several key specialty positions vacant, including:

- Undercover drug or other vice related crime investigator
- Administrative Sergeant
- Training Officer
- K9 Officer
- Other short-term vacancies that shift based on priorities

The inability to staff these positions hinders the efficiency and effectiveness of departmental operations and limits opportunities for officer development and professional growth.

Changes in Policing Since 2004

Since 2004, the role of a police officer has evolved significantly, with growing demands associated with accreditation, technology use, reporting requirements, and mandatory training. These changes, while improving transparency and officer preparedness, also add substantial time and workload to daily operations.

1. Increased Technology Requirements

Officers are now expected to engage with a variety of digital systems that did not exist or were limited in 2004:

- Body-Worn Cameras (BWC) and Fleet Video Systems
  - Require officers to log in, categorize footage, and ensure proper storage for evidentiary and legal purposes.
- Real-Time GIS Data and Information Sharing
  - Officers now operate with real-time intelligence tools for situational awareness and deployment.
- Digital Documentation
  - What was once jotted down in an officer's notebook must now be entered into formal digital reporting systems, increasing documentation time and precision.

2. Expanded Reporting & Legal Demands

- Public Records Requests & Litigation Readiness
  - Increased demand for transparency and open records compliance requires officers to ensure reports, video, and digital records are accurate, well-organized, and legally sound.
- Detailed Report Writing
  - Even minor incidents now require extensive documentation to meet internal, legal, and public expectations. Including review of body worn cameras prior to written documentation to ensure accuracy

3. Mandatory and Specialized Training

Ongoing training requirements have increased both in frequency and complexity. Officers must now complete numerous mandatory annual certifications as well as specialized tactical and situational training, including:

- Use of Force, Firearms Qualification, and Legal Updates (Annual)
- Crisis Intervention Training (CIT)
- Taser, PepperBall, and Less-Lethal Munitions
- Pursuit Intervention Techniques (PIT)
- Rescue Task Force and Active Shooter Response
- Training on Emerging Threats and Trends, such as:
  - New drug trends (e.g., fentanyl safety)

- Human trafficking investigations
- Technology-assisted crimes, including cell phone and digital evidence recovery

These training requirements often pull officers off shift for full days at a time, further impacting staffing and shift coverage. The department has an increasing need for **certified in-house trainers** to manage these requirements cost-effectively and efficiently.

Outlook and Future Needs

To maintain effective public safety and adapt to the increasing complexity of law enforcement, the department must prioritize strategic investments in staffing, specialized units, and technology. The following key areas outline the most critical needs for sustainable operations and long-term service delivery:

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1. Minimum Staffing Enhancements

Current staffing levels only meet minimum patrol requirements, limiting flexibility and proactive policing. Moving forward, overall staffing levels must be increased to ensure:

- **Training Coverage** – Allow officers to attend mandatory and advanced training without depleting patrol strength.
- **Field Training Officers (FTOs)** – Ensure the department continues to develop experienced officers to mentor and field train new officers.
- **Expert Trainers and Specialists** – Support the development of in-house training staff who are specialists to manage increasing certification and readiness demands.

2. Dedicated Traffic Unit

With a noted increase in reckless driving and traffic accidents, the department needs to establish a dedicated traffic enforcement unit to:

- Conduct targeted enforcement operations
- Investigate serious or fatal crashes
- Handle traffic-related community complaints
- Reduce the burden on general patrol officers

3. Specialized Investigators for Financial Crimes & Human Trafficking

The growing complexity and frequency of financial crimes, identity theft, and human trafficking necessitate a dedicated investigator or small unit with specialized training. These crimes often involve:

- Long-term investigations

- Collaboration with state and federal agencies
- Digital evidence collection and analysis

Without dedicated resources, these cases risk delays, limited follow-up, or non-investigation.

4. Technology Modernization

To stay operationally efficient and data-driven, the department must continue to invest in modern technology solutions, including:

- Upgraded Records Management System (RMS) Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD), and a system that ties the RMS information from other agencies together
- Drone capabilities for tactical support, search and rescue, crash scene mapping, and surveillance
- Tools to enhance digital evidence processing, especially for crimes involving phones, cloud storage, and social media

5. Recruitment and Retention Strategy

With fewer officers reaching long-term tenure, the department must develop strategies to:

- Attract and retain qualified officers, including lateral hires and academy graduates
- Offer professional development opportunities, including promotions and specialty positions, to boost retention
- Adapt to generational workforce changes, focusing on work-life balance, wellness, and career progression

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By addressing these areas, the department can ensure long-term service sustainability, improve officer wellness and readiness, and better serve the community's evolving needs.

Referendum Impact Analysis

Tax Year	2027	2028	2029	2030
Police Total	476,385	500,789	559,161	620,756
Fire Total	1,266,680	1,334,890	1,485,078	1,653,078
Grand Total	1,743,065	1,835,679	2,044,239	2,273,834
New Berlin Assessed Value	7,385,906,400	7,385,906,400	7,385,906,400	7,385,906,400
Tax rate	0.0002360	0.0002485	0.0002768	0.0003079
Increase on Ave Single Family	$ 87.25	$ 91.88	$ 102.32	$ 113.82
% increase	4.74%	4.99%	5.56%	6.18%
Monthly increase	7.27	7.66	8.53	9.49
CURRENT				
Average Value of Single Family	369,700	369,700	369,700	369,700
City Tax Rate	4.977899	4.977899	4.977899	4.977899
City Tax on Ave single family	1,840.33	1,840.33	1,840.33	1,840.33

2031
683,401
1,854,842
2,538,243
7,385,906,400
0.0003437
$ 127.05
6.90%
$ 10.59
369,700
4.977899
1,840.33