

FIRE & POLICE
COMMISSION



ANNUAL REPORT

2 0 2 4

[HTTPS://CITY.MILWAUKEE.GOV/FPC](https://city.milwaukee.gov/fpc)



TABLE OF CONTENTS

01

Letter from the Executive Director

04

About the Fire & Police Commission

History	06
Guiding Principles	07
Board of Fire & Police Commissioners	08
Regular Meetings and Standing Committees	15
FPC Professional Staff & Organizational Chart	16



20

FPC Priorities and Notable Highlights

Policy Review	23
Constitutional and Unbiased Policing	27
Audit & Compliance	30
Citizen Complaint Investigations	32
Recruitment Priorities and Efforts	34
Community Outreach	43
Office of Emergency Management	49

52

About the Milwaukee Public Safety Departments

Milwaukee Fire Department	54
Fire Chief	55
MFD Areas of Strategic Focus	56
Milwaukee Police Department	58
Chief of Police	59
MPD Areas of Strategic Focus	60
Department of Emergency Communications	61
Emergency Communications Director	62
DEC Areas of Strategic Focus	63

DEAR COMMUNITY MEMBERS,

2024 was an important year for the Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission (FPC), one filled with challenges as well as significant accomplishments.

During this year, we welcomed three new commissioners to the FPC Board, appointed a new Emergency Communications Director who is at the top of his field, and hired several new FPC staff members who have meaningfully contributed to our talented and high-performing team.



Throughout 2024, the FPC focused on advancing our oversight and monitoring work, as well as improving our recruiting and hiring efforts for Milwaukee's public safety departments. A few of our noteworthy accomplishments and initiatives from 2024 include:

POLICY OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

This year marked the first full year since the enactment of 2023 Wisconsin Act 12, which transferred policymaking authority from the FPC Board to the Chief of Police and Fire Chief. In response to Act 12, the FPC adopted several new rules to ensure that public safety policy in Milwaukee remains transparent and responsive to community input. These included a rule that requires the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) to notify the FPC of any new or amended policy 30 days before the policy's effective date. In addition, the FPC codified a rule that explicitly provides that the Board may provide public notice of any adopted policy change at a regular FPC meeting, and may recommend to the Chief or Common Council that any such policy be amended or suspended.

Notwithstanding the changes of Act 12, 2024 marked the initial implementation of an important new transparency policy created by the FPC. This new policy, MPD Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) 575 - Video Release Policy, was initially adopted by the FPC in April 2023. Shortly thereafter, however, a Wisconsin court issued a temporary injunction blocking implementation of the policy pending the resolution of a lawsuit filed by the Milwaukee Police Association. After more than a year of litigation, the FPC ultimately prevailed in the case. In July 2024, the court vacated the injunction and dismissed the case, allowing SOP 575 to finally go into effect.

SOP 575 establishes clear criteria for when video evidence of police shootings and other critical incidents must be released to the public. The policy requires MPD to release video evidence to the public within 15 days of the incident. In cases of fatal police shootings, MPD must also offer the next of kin an opportunity to view the video within 48 hours. This policy is an important step forward in transparency and police accountability. The policy creates a presumption of release, while also protecting the integrity of investigations and the privacy interests of people depicted in such videos.

AUDIT & MONITORING

With its expanded Audit Unit, the FPC was able to maintain its compliance with the auditing requirements of the *Collins* Settlement Agreement. The Audit Unit also conducted several non-*Collins* audits in 2024. These included audits related to police overtime, vehicle pursuits, and domestic violence calls for service. The expanded scope of the FPC's auditing capacity allows the FPC to engage in a more robust and proactive model of oversight.

RECRUITMENT & HIRING

In 2024, the FPC further modernized and streamlined its hiring process by, among other things, moving to online testing for our written and oral exams. Online testing ensures that candidates will no longer have to worry about finding a mode of transportation, taking time off work, or arranging for childcare to appear in person for these exams. Instead, they are provided with a virtual link that allows them to take the exams at a time and place of their choosing.

At the same time, the FPC maintained its robust compliment of advertisements partnerships to maximize our reach and impact. We also rolled out a new recruitment campaign theme, "*More Than an Officer*", which is designed to humanize officers and allow them to share their journeys and personal stories. The campaign is centered around video recordings of true stories and focuses on highlighting the person in the uniform, rather than the uniform itself. Our goal is to show that MPD officers are more than police officers—they are mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, neighbors, friends, and ordinary people with lives just like the rest of us.

Finally, the FPC launched its first-ever police lateral recruitment in 2024. This allowed the FPC to open a new pool of applicants for MPD and attract new members with valuable experience. Future lateral recruitments will likely follow in subsequent years.

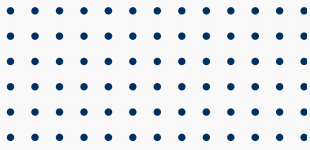
Despite the challenging environment for police officer recruitment nationwide, these efforts and others produced significant results. In 2024, the FPC recruited over 1,200 new police officer applicants and hired more than 100 new officers. All in all, this allowed us to increase MPD's average sworn strength in 2024 by more than 10 full-time equivalent law enforcement officers.

The following report provides additional information about the FPC's work in 2024. In partnership with Milwaukee's public safety departments, we have navigated significant challenges that underscore the importance of our collective responsibility for ensuring public safety in Milwaukee. While we are proud of our work and accomplishments to date, we know there is more work that lies ahead. We look forward to building on our momentum and progress in coming years to increase both safety and justice in the city of Milwaukee.

Sincerely,



Leon W. Todd
Executive Director



ABOUT THE FIRE & POLICE COMMISSION

ABOUT THE FIRE & POLICE COMMISSION

Under state law and City Charter, the Fire and Police Commission (FPC) oversees the Milwaukee Fire Department (MFD), Milwaukee Police Department (MPD), and the Department of Emergency Communications (DEC). The FPC is responsible for appointing the chiefs of MFD and MPD and the DEC director, and for monitoring the operations and performance of these departments, while the chief/director of each department manages daily operations. In addition, FPC functions include establishing recruitment and testing standards for positions in MFD, MPD, and DEC, rendering decisions in appeals by members of the departments who have been disciplined by their chief/director, independently investigating and monitoring citizen complaints, and disciplining employees for misconduct.

The FPC Board, supported by a full-time professional staff, represents the public and exercises its oversight function through regular meetings with the chiefs and DEC director and their staffs, by conducting research and analysis of policies and procedures, and by implementing reforms with public input.

The individuals who serve as part-time board members spend many hours each week working on FPC business. They serve as the public's voice in fire, police, and emergency communications operations to ensure responsive and effective city government. The board members' concerns reflect those of the Milwaukee community. Their priorities include increasing public safety, promoting constitutional policing, and maintaining an effective response to fire and medical emergencies.



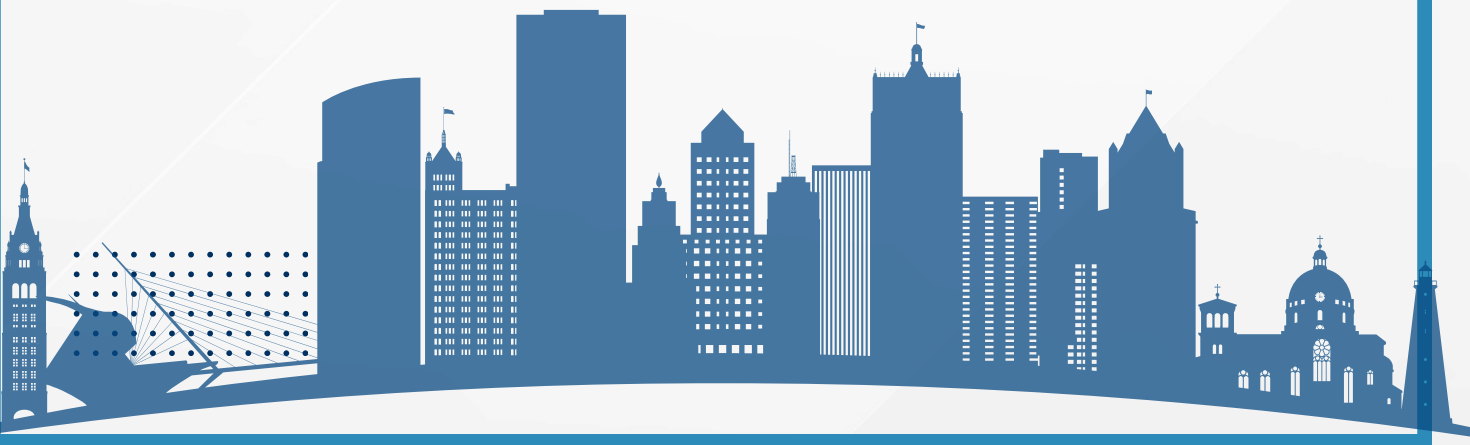
History


The FPC was established in 1885 by state law and is one of the oldest public safety oversight agencies in the nation. The FPC was originally created to remove the fire and police services from the influences of politics.

In Milwaukee, as in most cities, the chiefs of both departments were appointed by the mayor, who historically used these appointments and the appointment of police officers as a form of political patronage. The 1885 law made the FPC responsible for setting employment standards, testing candidates for positions in the Fire and Police Departments, and appointing both chiefs.

In 1911 the FPC's authority was expanded to include all aspects of operational oversight of the Fire and Police Departments. The City Charter in 1968 and state law in 1969 allowed people to file citizen complaints with the FPC against members of either MFD or MPD and, in 1977, changes in state law gave the FPC public safety rule-making authority.

In 2021, the Common Council created a new public safety department, the Department of Emergency Communications (DEC), whose mission is to provide city residents and the Police and Fire Departments with professional, time efficient, and operationally effective 9-1-1/emergency communication services. Under City Ordinance, the FPC is responsible for appointing the DEC director and overseeing the DEC's operations and performance.





In June 2023, Wisconsin Act 12 was approved by the State Legislature. The new law gave the chiefs of the Police and Fire Departments, rather than the FPC, the authority to establish policies relating to the control and management of their departments, whereas prior law authorized the FPC to do so. The act further provides that the city may suspend or modify policies established by the police or fire chief only if the suspension or modification is approved by two-thirds of all members of the Common Council. The act authorizes the FPC to advise the Common Council regarding any recommended policy changes.

Guiding Principles

The mission of the FPC is to ensure that the Fire and Police Departments and DEC are prepared to protect the lives and property of the residents of the City of Milwaukee. The FPC ensures that these priorities are carried out through the following activities:

- Monitoring the quality and effectiveness of Fire, Police, and Emergency Communications Department policies, practices, and outcomes;
- Ensuring that complainants are heard and satisfied under the citizen complaint program;
- Improving community relations and enhancing public confidence; and
- Identifying and reducing racial, social, and economic disparities in services.

Board of Fire and Police Commissioners

The FPC Board consists of nine civilian commissioners who represent the community. The commissioners are appointed by the Mayor of Milwaukee and approved by the Common Council. Commissioners serve overlapping five-year terms and receive a stipend of \$6,600 per year. The Board elects a chair and vice-chair annually. Diversity of background and experience makes the Board representative of the Milwaukee community.

Key responsibilities include:

- Appointments and promotions of every member of the Police and Fire Departments and the Department of Emergency Communications
- Recommending policies and standards for all three departments
- Hearing disciplinary appeals of department members

In 2024, the FPC welcomed three new commissioner to the Board: Jeff Spence, a former Milwaukee School Board member and retired executive at Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District; Ramon Evans, an educator who served as principal for multiple Milwaukee Public Schools; and Christopher Snyder, a retiree from the Milwaukee Fire Department who rose to the rank of Deputy Chief during his career.

Meet the Commissioners



Miriam Horwitz, Chair

Commissioner Horwitz was appointed to the Board of the Fire and Police Commissioners in December 2022. Commissioner Horwitz is an attorney experienced in employment law and workplace issues. Commissioner Horwitz is a graduate of Northwestern University (BA) and Northeastern University School of Law (JD). She served as a Deputy City Attorney for the City of Milwaukee from 2014 to 2020, supervising the section on litigation, employment, employee benefits, contracts, and municipal law. Commissioner Horwitz also served as an Assistant City Attorney from 2000 to 2014. Before her municipal career, she was a partner at the firm of Zubrensky, Padden, Horwitz & Weir, practicing labor, employment, and workers' compensation law. In addition, Commissioner Horwitz served as president of the Government Lawyer's Division of the State Bar, and on the Board of Governance from 2015 to 2016. Currently, she is on the board of Tikun Ha'Ir, a social action organization with a mission to "heal the city." Deeply committed to and a resident of the City of Milwaukee, Commissioner Horwitz was honored to receive the State Bar of Wisconsin's first Trailblazer award for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in 2019. Commissioner Horwitz was appointed to a one-year term as the board chair in June 2023.



Bree Spencer, Vice Chair

Commissioner Spencer was appointed to the Board of the Fire and Police Commission in April 2022. Commissioner Spencer serves as Senior Program Director, Justice, at The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a legacy civil rights organization that advocates for an America as good as its ideals. Before joining The Leadership Conference, Commissioner Spencer was the Director of Evaluation and Technical Assistance at Safe & Sound, where she created and managed revenue-generating technical assistance for community engaged public safety programs. She also served as the Director of Community Programs and Neighborhood Safety Coordinator at Safe & Sound. Commissioner Spencer previously served as a lecturer at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, where she taught program evaluation to first-year Master's students. Commissioner Spencer has her MPA from the Maxwell School at Syracuse University.



Christopher Snyder

Commissioner Snyder was appointed in February 2024 and brings more than three decades of dedicated service in public safety to his role. Before joining the FPC, he served the City of Milwaukee as a firefighter for 32 years—rising through the ranks to Deputy Chief. During his career with the Milwaukee Fire Department, he twice led the Training Academy: first as Captain of Training and later as Chief of Training, each for two-year stints. Throughout his career, Snyder has been a vocal advocate for mental health and wellness among first responders. He served as a peer support member during his tenure and continues this work in retirement. He also volunteers with Traumatic Incident Resource (TIR), a regional mental health advocacy organization, supporting other public safety professionals and community members. Currently, Commissioner Snyder serves on the FPC's Oversight and Accountability Committee, where he lends his deep operational knowledge and commitment to transparency. Outside of his commission work, he continues to teach in the fire service and is actively involved at St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Milwaukee, where he has held roles including Worship Coordinator and Choir Director.



LaNelle Ramey

Commissioner Ramey was appointed to the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners in July 2021. A dynamic and inspirational leader, Commissioner Ramey comes to the FPC with a Bachelor's and a Master's degree from Marquette University and significant experience serving the Milwaukee community. He was instrumental in the creation of the Department of Black and Latino Male Achievement within Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS), supported the African American Leadership Program at Cardinal Stritch University, and led a \$2 million Academic and Healthy Sports Initiative that provides academic support, career exploration, athletics, and service learning to 2000 members annually with Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee. Since 2019, Commissioner Ramey has served as the Executive Director of MENTOR Greater Milwaukee, where he has focused his attention on preparing and equipping mentoring organizations to provide quality and effective mentoring to young people throughout Greater Milwaukee. He also served as an Adjunct Professor at Cardinal Stritch University and most recently was a founding board member of the Inaugural Milwaukee Health Board.



Dana World-Patterson

Commissioner World-Patterson was appointed to the Board of the Fire and Police Commission in December 2021. Commissioner World-Patterson is the founder of a nonprofit organization, Foundations for Freedom, Inc., an organization recently given an opportunity to redevelop an eight-unit apartment building into transitional housing for women. Commissioner World-Patterson is the chair of the Human Trafficking Task Force of Greater Milwaukee and has been part of this task force for over 15 years. World-Patterson is a graduate of Jackson State University, earned a Masters of Arts degree from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, and recently a Masters of Arts degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Grand Canyon University. Commissioner World-Patterson is very committed to her work and uses her experience to inform her work as a commissioner.



Ruben Burgos

Commissioner Burgos was appointed to the Board of the Fire and Police Commission in September 2022. Commissioner Burgos currently serves as a senior lecturer at the University of Milwaukee Wisconsin, in the Criminal Justice & Criminology department. Commissioner Burgos worked for the Milwaukee Police Department for 33 years — 22 years as a detective, five years as a lieutenant of the Intelligence Division, and five years in police management. His expertise is bomb squads, polygraphs, and criminal investigations of narcotics, gangs, and homicide. Burgos teaches Introduction to Criminal Justice, Correctional Process, and Juvenile Justice. He is an expert in crime intelligence. Commissioner Burgos himself is also a University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Alumnus, as he obtained his bachelor's degree from the university. Commissioner Burgos currently serves as the President of the Board of Directors for the Wisconsin Scholarship Foundation and heads security operations at the Mexican Fiesta festival that takes place annually at the Summerfest grounds.



Jeff Spence

Commissioner Spence was appointed to the Board of the Fire and Police Commissioners in December 2023. He has been a dedicated servant in both public and private sector leadership and policy roles. Commissioner Spence served as the Equity and Inclusion Officer for the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD), as well as in numerous other leadership roles at MMSD over the course of a 20-plus-year career with the District. He also served as a member of the Milwaukee Board of School Directors for 16 years. In addition, Commissioner Spence has also served as the Chairman of the Board of Lakeland University and as a board member for numerous organizations, including Columbia College of Nursing, Discovery World, Hope House, Milwaukee Youth Arts Center, First Stage Children's Theater, and the Urban Ecology Center. A lifelong resident of Milwaukee, Commissioner Spence has a background in chemistry and business administration, having earned bachelor's degrees from Lakeland College. His two sons both graduated from Milwaukee Public Schools.



Ramon Evans

Commissioner Evans was appointed to the Board of the Fire and Police Commissioners in December 2023. He has been a dedicated servant in educational roles in Milwaukee for 31 years. Beginning in 1992 as an educational assistant with MPS, he began teaching third grade in 1995 at Brown Street Academy. Commissioner Evans then served as the principal at four Milwaukee schools: Thirty-Fifth Street School, Hickman Academy Preparatory School, Lincoln Center of the Arts, and Harold S. Vincent High School. Commissioner Evans holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in elementary education from Carthage College and a master's degree in educational leadership from National Louis University. He volunteers as the president of, as well as a coach for, Beckum Stapleton Little League. Commissioner Evans is married to Dr. Tanya Evans. They have two sons, Joshua and Jacob Evans, and a daughter, Dominique Evans.



Welcome, Krissie Fung



Commissioner Krissie Fung was appointed January 2025 and brings extensive experience in public policy, community engagement, and youth justice to the Fire and Police Commission. They currently serve as the Associate Director and Program Manager for Zero Youth Corrections at Milwaukee Turners, where they lead initiatives related to civic education, youth justice reform, and public health. Commissioner Fung co-produces the annual Vel Phillips Forum, organizes Jane’s Walk Milwaukee, and manages grantmaking strategies that promote equity and systemic change. Prior to their appointment, they played a key role in the FPC monitoring pilot from June to December 2024, designed to increase transparency and strengthen community trust in Commission processes. Their background in civic leadership includes serving as a Chief Election Inspector, a board member of the Japanese American Citizens League of Wisconsin, and a legal observer with the ACLU. Commissioner Fung is deeply committed to public accountability, and their work reflects a strong focus on justice, inclusion, and building community-centered systems of oversight.

Thank You, Fred Crouther



Commissioner Crouther was appointed to the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners in May 2015. He is the founding Pastor of New Covenant Baptist Church, where he has been preaching, teaching, and shepherding for over 35 years. Under his leadership and direction, the church has undertaken a number of projects and programs aimed at community improvement and citizen empowerment, including a credit union and housing development corporation. He also earned a Master’s Degree in Religious Studies and a Doctor of Ministry Degree in Strategic Leadership from Faith Seminary in Tacoma, Washington. Commissioner Crouther has served as President of the Wisconsin General Baptist State Convention, Inc., 2nd Vice-President of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc., Treasurer of the Board of Directors for OIC-GM, and Chairman of the Community Safety Coalition among other board and leadership appointments. He is a life member of the NAACP and has received a number of awards for his community involvement and leadership both locally and nationally.



FPC MEETINGS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

The FPC Board holds regular business meetings with the fire and police chiefs and DEC director and/or their representatives twice each month except August, usually on the first and third Thursdays of the month. All meetings are open to the public and provide an opportunity for interested people to listen to discussions and offer comments on agenda matters.

The Board has two standing committees that meet every two months: the Oversight & Accountability Committee, and the Testing & Recruiting Committee.

Oversight and Accountability

The Oversight and Accountability Committee is responsible for developing FPC research and policy priorities, analysis of data, reports, and audits related to MFD, MPD, and DEC operations, and recommending additions and modifications to FPC board rules. In addition, this committee monitors issues related to citizen complaints filed with the FPC and the public safety departments, as well as other disciplinary matters involving public safety department members. The committee is comprised of the following members:

- Ruben Burgos – Chair
- Miriam Horwitz – Vice Chair
- Christopher Snyder
- Jeff Spence
- Krissie Fung

Testing and Recruiting Committee

The Testing and Recruiting Committee is concerned with employment standards, qualifications, and competitive examinations for various entry-level positions and promotions. The committee also oversees recruitment efforts and provides recommendations on classifications for all positions in MFD, MPD, and DEC. This committee is comprised of the follow members:

- Bree Spencer – Chair
- LaNelle Ramey – Vice Chair
- Ramon Evans
- Miriam Horwitz
- Dana World-Patterson

FPC PROFESSIONAL STAFF & ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Daily FPC functions are performed by a professional staff of 27 full-time employees, headed by Executive Director Leon Todd. Staff members are employees of the City of Milwaukee and are divided into an Administrative Services Unit, an Audit & Compliance Unit, a Community Engagement Unit, a Legal Unit, an Investigations Unit, and a Testing & Hiring Unit. In addition, the City of Milwaukee's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is an auxiliary office within the FPC.

The key responsibilities of the professional staff include:

- Administrative and Technical Support of FPC Board Meetings
- Policy Review and Oversight
- Citizen Complaints
- Internal and External Investigations
- Audits
- Research Reports/Surveys
- Recruiting/Testing/Hiring
- Community Outreach and Engagement
- Professional Support and Management for Disciplinary Appeal Hearings

Leon Todd was appointed by the Mayor Tom Barrett as the new Executive Director in late 2020, and was reappointed by Mayor Cavalier Johnson in 2024. Among other initiatives, he has prioritized building a diverse, talented, and high-performing team at the FPC, along with a culture of support, professional development, teamwork, and pride.

In addition, Todd has focused on improving and modernizing the FPC's testing and hiring processes, as well as adopting new and innovative strategies and tactics for recruiting police officers and firefighters.

Todd has also worked to implement a more proactive and robust oversight model, which includes a new focus on auditing department practices to ensure adherence to policy and effective operations.

FPC PROFESSIONAL STAFF & ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

In 2024, the FPC hired several new personnel to fill key positions within the FPC department, including:

Community Outreach Coordinator – The role of Community Outreach Coordinator is currently held by Carlos Martinez-Rivera, who joined the FPC in July 2024 following his work in the nonprofit sector at Hunger Task Force. Mr. Martinez-Rivera brings a strong background in community engagement, advocacy, and public service. His addition has allowed the FPC to expand and deepen its outreach efforts, strengthening connections with community members and organizations while increasing public awareness of the FPC’s mission, priorities, and role in public safety oversight.

Senior Auditor – Natasha Anderson was promoted to FPC Senior Auditor in July 2024. Ms. Anderson previously joined the FPC in 2022 as an Auditor. Prior to that, she worked as an audit and compliance analyst for La Causa, Inc.

Auditor – The FPC hired Jacob Diederich in July 2024 to fill the Auditor position vacated by Ms. Anderson. Mr. Diederich previously worked for Chicago’s Inspector General’s Office as an Investigative Analyst.

Human Resources Assistant – The FPC also hired Annakah Kramer in July 2024 as a Human Resources Assistant to work primarily on testing and hiring for the Milwaukee Fire Department. Prior to joining the FPC, Ms. Kramer worked for Rogers Behavioral Health as a Mental Health Technician.

These new team members will add to the talented team we have assembled at the FPC.

In addition, the following notable addition took place within the FPC in 2024:

Deputy Director Nicole Fleck has over 21 years of dedicated service with the City of Milwaukee. She joined the FPC as Deputy Director, a position she assumed in July 2024. Prior to this, she built a strong background in labor relations—starting as a Labor Relations Officer (2007–2017), then advancing to Labor Negotiator (2017–2024). Earlier in her career, she held roles as an HR Administrator with MPD and a Prosthetic Representative at the VA, further reinforcing her deep commitment to public service and organizational leadership.

She earned a Bachelor of Science from the University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point, holds a Master’s degree from the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, and completed a Certificate in Negotiation Mastery through Harvard Business School Online. Her extensive experience in negotiation, mediating public safety labor agreements, and managing staff development positions her as a key strategic leader within the FPC.



FPC ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MIRIAM HORWITZ, CHAIR

BREE SPENCER, VICE-CHAIR

RUBEN BURGOS

RAMON EVANS

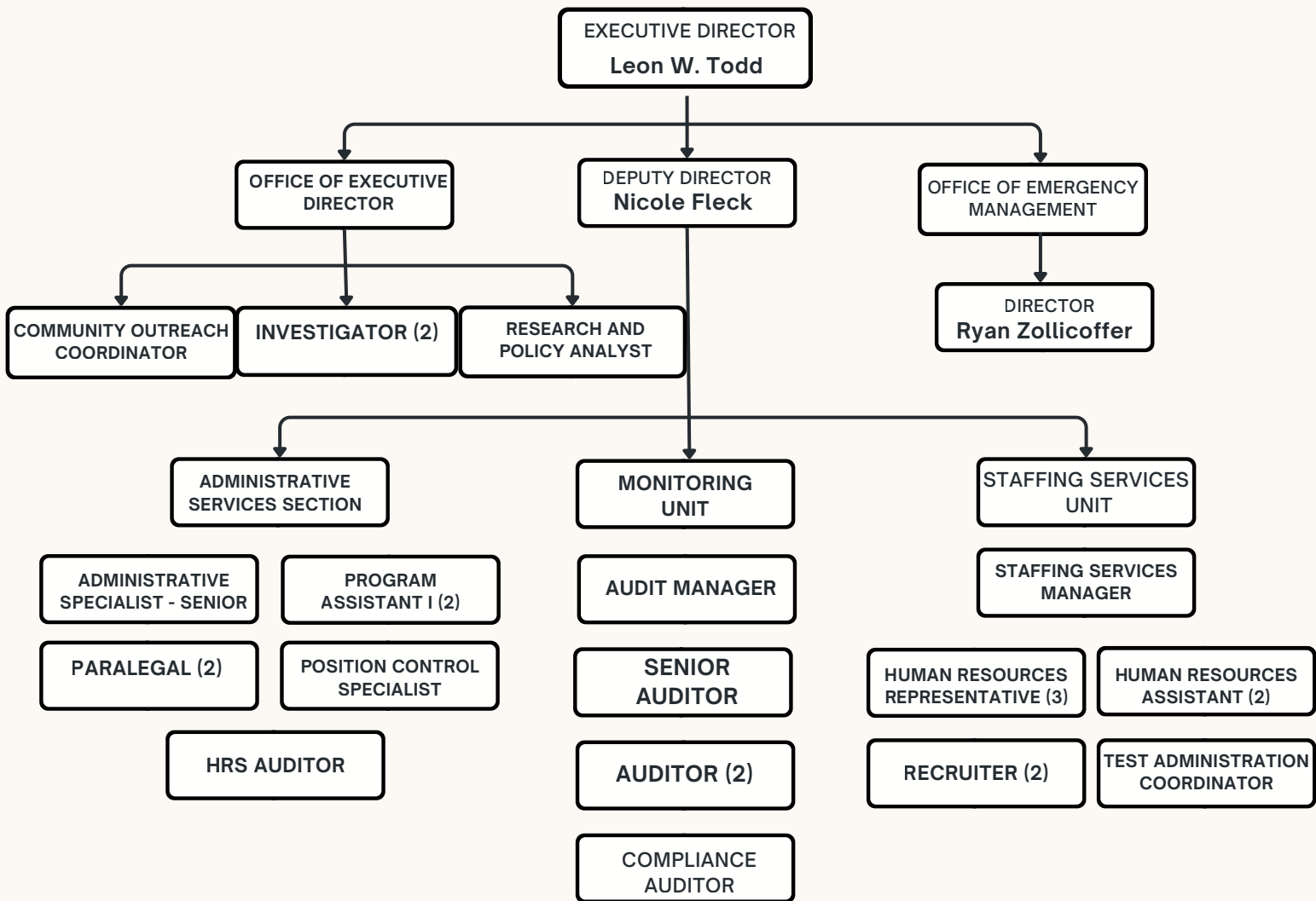
KRISSIE FUNG

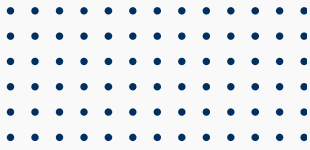
LANELLE RAMEY

CHRISTOPHER SNYDER

JEFF SPENCE

DANA WORLD-PATTERSON





FPC PRIORITIES AND NOTABLE HIGHLIGHTS

FPC PRIORITIES

Oversight and Reform



The FPC is charged with monitoring the quality and effectiveness of MFD, MPD, and DEC policies, practices and outcomes. The FPC strives to engage in proactive and robust oversight through its audit and research and policy work, as well as continually reviewing changes to the policies and procedures of public safety departments.

Constitutional and Unbiased Policing



Promoting constitutional and unbiased policing in the City of Milwaukee has been at the forefront of the FPC's work. Through the audit and oversight functions, the FPC seeks to ensure that all traffic and pedestrian stops are based on individualized, objective and articulable reasonable suspicion (IOARS) of criminal activity, that the basis for the stops are appropriately documented, and that stops are not based on improper motivations, including explicit or implicated biases.

Citizen Complaint Investigations



A key responsibility of the FPC is to ensure that members of MPD, MFD, and DEC carry out their duties in a professional and respectful manner. The FPC has full authority to investigate and discipline department employees for rule violations and acts of misconduct. Exercising this authority in a fair, independent, and meaningful way is a top priority of the FPC.



Recruitment and Hiring Efforts

The FPC conducts recruitments for Police Officers, Firefighters, and 911 Telecommunicators through a lens of equity and inclusion. Over the last few years, the FPC has been very intentional about developing diverse and inclusive public safety departments. Our most recent recruitments have produced highly diverse eligible lists that reflect the racial and ethnic demographics of the City of Milwaukee.



Community Engagement

The FPC is committed to expanding its community outreach and engagement efforts to increase public awareness of the FPC's mission and priorities, build positive relationships and partnerships with community groups, and improve community trust in public safety services.



POLICY REVIEW AND REFORMS

Though the departments' daily management responsibilities fall on the respective chiefs/director, the FPC has the authority to approve and/or modify all policy decisions for the DEC. It is also responsible for reviewing all the policy decisions of the Police and Fire Departments.

The FPC's Research and Policy Analyst reviews all amendments to MPD Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Standard Operating Instructions (SOIs), as well as MFD Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs) promulgated by the departments and supplies the Board with analyses to enable an informed assessment.

All new and amended policies for the Police and Fire Departments and the Department of Emergency Communications are placed on a regular meeting agenda for public comment and review by the full Board.

The policy oversight function of the FPC Board is key to community input into the day-to-day functions of the departments and provides an avenue to increase public understanding of those functions. The active role FPC board members take in the policy deliberating process has the potential to push the evolution of the departments toward a more fair, modern, and responsive future.

The FPC's Research and Policy Analyst is also responsible for the Commission's annual and biennial reports, including the Vehicle Pursuit Report, the Citizen Complaint Report, the Use of Force Report, the Police Satisfaction Survey, and regular dispatch/response times reports.



2024 Policy Amendments

Milwaukee Fire Department (MFD) – Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs)

Many updated SOGs are available on the MFD website. In 2024, the following revisions and additions were made:

Revised SOGs

- 6.1 – We Energies First Responder Handbook (April 16, 2024)
- 35.73 – Demonstration/Protester Device Removal (July 9, 2024)
- 42.0 – Mass Casualty Incidents (August 6, 2024)
- 36.0 – Respiratory Protection Program (December 17, 2024)
-

New SOGs

- 13.0 – Decontamination Guidelines (March 25, 2024)
- 27.3 – Ballot Box/Early Voting Locations (October 29, 2024)
- 27.4 – Election Day Response (November 5, 2024)
- 3.1 – Auto Fire – Electric Vehicles (November 22, 2024)
- 33.1 – Lithium-Ion Battery Emergencies (December 4, 2024)
- 33.2 – Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (December 4, 2024)



Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) – Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

In 2024, the FPC Board reviewed 43 updated or new SOPs from MPD. Highlights include:

SOP 250 – Communications

Updated to reflect the launch of the new Department of Emergency Communications, along with new CAD and 911 systems—anticipated in the 2023 Policy Review.

SOP 280 – Alarms

Now includes Scout burglar alarms as an option for residents or businesses experiencing repeated break-ins.

SOP 460 – Use of Force

Updated based on recommendations from the Community Collaborative Commission (CCC) to include:

- Requirement that uses of force must be objectively reasonable under the totality of circumstances.
- Guidance to use non-verbal communication when verbal warnings are not sufficient, including statements on the consequences of non-compliance.
- Inclusion of a civilian City of Milwaukee resident on the Use of Force Committee.



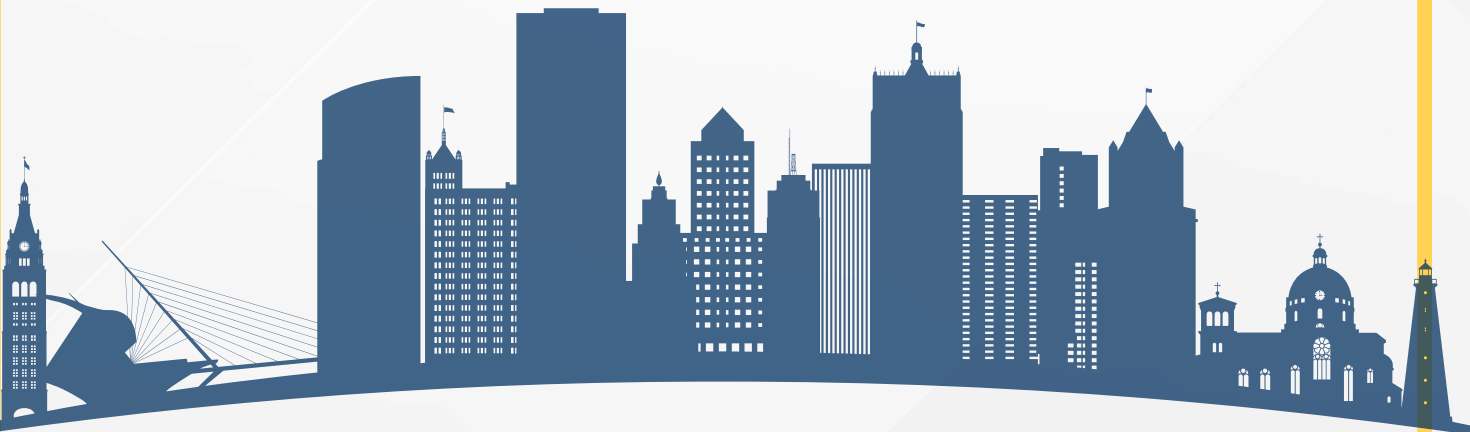
CONSTITUTIONAL AND UNBIASED POLICING

On July 23, 2018, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin entered an order adopting a settlement agreement among the Parties to Charles Collins, et al. v. City of Milwaukee, et. al. The plaintiffs in that case alleged that there had been racially disparate and unjustified stops, frisks, and other unconstitutional police actions. The city defendants denied those allegations and maintained that denial in the settlement agreement. By the terms of the settlement agreement, the City of Milwaukee, the FPC, and MPD committed to implementing significant changes to policies, training, supervision practices, and the use of sharing of data.

Key Elements of the Collins Settlement Agreement include:

- Changes to MPD policy to conform with constitutional requirements
- Improved training and supervision
- Consistent documentation and enhanced data collection and analysis
- Improved transparency and accountability of MPD members

**THE ULTIMATE GOAL IS
CONSTITUTIONAL POLICING IN
THE CITY OF MILWAUKEE**



Pursuant to the settlement agreement, the FPC and MPD have the following obligations:

- Audit internal and citizen complaints, traffic stops, field interviews, no-action encounters, and frisks
- Recruit and promote a diverse corps of police officers at all levels
- Ensure that fewer than 15% of police stops lack individualized, objective, and articulable reasonable suspicion (IOARS)
- Ensure that no significant racial or ethnic disparities exist in the rate of police stops

The FPC's compliance efforts were monitored by the Crime and Justice Institute (CJI), which created annual and biannual reports and data analyses pursuant to the terms of the settlement agreement.

The Settlement Agreement and compliance reports are readily available on the FPC's [website](#) under the "Reports" tab. The FPC also posts particular stop and search encounter data on a quarterly or yearly basis, in compliance with the Agreement.



**Pursuant to the settlement agreement, the FPC and MPD have the following obligations:
(Continued...)**

CJI'S SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT WAS RELEASED IN DECEMBER 2024. AS NOTED IN THE REPORT, THE EXPANSION OF THE FPC'S AUDITING CAPACITY HAS ENABLED IT TO BUILD UPON ITS PROGRESS TOWARD REACHING COMPLIANCE AND FURTHER STRENGTHEN ITS OVERSIGHT FUNCTIONS MORE GENERALLY. IN YEAR SIX OF THE SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT, THE FPC CONTINUED TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT NEW RECRUITING AND HIRING INITIATIVES TO CREATE A MORE DIVERSE POLICE FORCE. THE FPC COMMENCED USE OF A NEW TESTING VENDOR WHOSE SERVICES ARE EXPECTED TO REDUCE THE OVERALL TIME OF THE TESTING PROCESS AND IMPROVE RECRUITMENT EFFORTS BY PROVIDING VIRTUAL TESTING OPTIONS. THE FPC CONDUCTED PROMOTIONAL TESTING FOR THE DETECTIVE, SERGEANT, AND LIEUTENANT POSITIONS FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 2020. IN TERMS OF BOTH PARTICIPATION AND RESULTS, THESE TESTS SAW AN IMPROVEMENT IN DIVERSITY COMPARED TO THE TESTS IN 2020.



AUDIT & COMPLIANCE

The FPC Audit Unit is composed of one Audit Manager, one Senior Auditor, and two Auditors.

Per the *Collins Settlement Agreement*, the Audit Unit is tasked with:

Auditing data, dashboard camera footage, and body camera footage (BWC) on traffic stops, field interviews, no-action encounters, frisks, and searches, every six (6) months to identify:

- a) Officers who fail to conduct these encounters in compliance with constitutional standards and principles set forth in this Agreement;
- b) Officers who fail to properly document these encounters in accordance with the terms of this Agreement;
- c) Supervisors who fail to properly review subordinate officers' reports to identify officers who fail to conduct traffic stops, field interviews, no-action encounters, frisks, and/or searches in compliance with constitutional standards and this Agreement, or to ensure that the encounters are properly documented in compliance with the terms of this Agreement



AUDIT & COMPLIANCE (CONTINUED...)

D) SUPERVISORS WHO FAIL TO REQUIRE RE-TRAINING AND/OR DISCIPLINE FOR SUBORDINATE OFFICERS WHO CONDUCT UNREASONABLE

IN ADDITION TO THE AUDITS SPECIFICALLY REQUIRED BY THE COLLINS SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT, THE FPC'S AUDIT UNIT COMPLETED SEVERAL NON-SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT-RELATED AUDITS.

THE NON-SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT-RELATED AUDITS INCLUDE:

- POLICE OVERTIME
- VEHICLE PURSUITS
- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CALLS FOR SERVICE
- CITATIONS AND WARNINGS



CITIZEN COMPLAINT INVESTIGATIONS

A core function of the FPC is to provide a transparent and independent citizen complaint process that ensures that MFD, MPD, and DEC personnel treat community members with courtesy and respect in line with departmental policies. The complaint process aims to increase transparency and community confidence, establish independent oversight for misconduct investigations, identify patterns or trends within MFD, MPD, and DEC, and monitor complaint investigations to ensure fairness and accountability.

In addition to the FPC, MPD's Internal Affairs Division and MFD Assistant Chiefs investigate complaints filed directly with their departments. The FPC may audit these investigations for fairness and credibility and can review cases if a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome.

Effective civilian oversight of complaints is critical to maintaining public trust in MFD, MPD, and DEC. Key components of the process include independent investigations and timely resolutions. The FPC accepts complaints via mail, email, phone, fax, online submission, and in person. Two dedicated FPC investigators handle all complaints—formal or informal—ensuring each is thoroughly and professionally reviewed, from minor concerns to serious allegations.

CITIZEN COMPLAINT INVESTIGATIONS (CONTINUED...)

IN 2024, THE FPC RECEIVED 208 CITIZEN COMPLAINTS. THE AVERAGE TIME TO CLOSE CASES IN 2024 WAS 20 DAYS. THIS IS A CONTINUED SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT FROM PREVIOUS YEARS. BY COMPARISON, THE AVERAGE TIME TO CLOSE CASES IN 2022 WAS 21 DAYS (139 TOTAL COMPLAINTS). IN 2021 IT WAS 39 DAYS (110 TOTAL COMPLAINTS). THE AVERAGE TIME TO CLOSE FORMAL CASES IN 2020 WAS 73 DAYS (149 TOTAL COMPLAINTS). IN 2024, THE FPC RECEIVED 16 COMMENDATIONS, 15 OF WHICH WERE FOR MPD MEMBERS AND ONE FOR AN MFD MEMBER. THE 2024 CITIZEN COMPLAINT REPORT CAN BE FOUND ON THE FPC WEBSITE.



RECRUITMENT PRIORITIES AND DIVERSITY EFFORTS

Police Officer Recruitment:

As the landscape of the workforce continues to change, the FPC has continued to develop and implement new recruitment strategies to create a workforce within the Milwaukee Police Department that is diverse and reflects the greater community. Diversity and inclusion have been, and will continue to be, at the forefront of all of the FPC's recruitment efforts. We are committed to bridging the gap between the people of Milwaukee and the Police Department by increasing our presence within the community, encouraging positive interactions between the community and MPD, and attempting to increase diversity within the department itself. It is no secret that community-police relations are likely to improve when the department looks like the community it serves. The FPC understands the importance of recruitment and hiring qualified candidates for MPD. However, we cannot ignore the reality that despite recruitment efforts increasing across the nation, hiring for and retention of police officer positions have both experienced a steady decline.

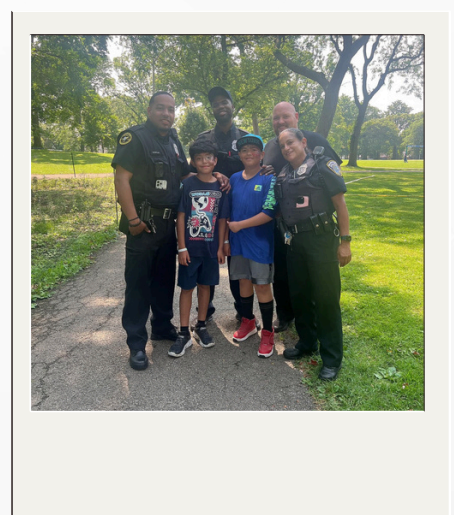
An important part of recruiting for law enforcement is being able to pivot, adapt, and change in response to new information. In order to build and improve upon our recruitment efforts, members of the FPC's testing and recruiting team conducted focus groups with police recruits graduating the academy to get more insight on how they heard about the police officer position, what made them want to become officers, and why they (specifically) chose the Milwaukee Police Department. The first focus group was conducted September 20–21, 2023, and the second focus group was conducted in the month of February 2024. The two focus groups included over 70 total police recruits and provided the FPC's recruitment team with a great deal of valuable information to help tailor and create a new recruitment campaign.



POLICE OFFICER RECRUITMENT: (CONTINUED...)

As mentioned earlier, the FPC is not naïve to the current state of how some in our community perceive MPD. Police officers are viewed by many with suspicion or in a negative light. It is difficult for some people to see and recognize police officers as “normal” people, just like anyone else. The way the community views the department and its officers, together with the information gathered from the focus group, and other research, played a pivotal role in developing and implementing our new recruitment campaign theme, *“More Than an Officer.”*

“More Than an Officer” is a campaign designed to humanize officers and allow them to share their journeys and personal stories on what made them become police officers. We believe that showing the human side of officers will help break down some of the misconceptions surrounding police officers, while also serving to encourage people who never considered this career to apply. With *“More Than an Officer,”* the recruiters work with current MPD officers to share their testimonials and journeys to becoming sworn law enforcement officers. This campaign is centered around video recordings of true stories directly from the officers themselves. The very first testimonial video was shot and recorded in November of 2023. Two Milwaukee police officers were featured in this recruitment effort who both shared their own unique stories. As mentioned previously, one of the officers relayed how they did not have the best interactions with the police growing up, but that his negative experiences played a part in why he decided to join the force. Click on the links below to listen to each officer’s testimonials and view clips on next page...





POLICE OFFICER THOMPSON: [HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/E-O-OFJP4Q8?SI=TXFDAOI16LIXE7TB](https://youtu.be/E-O-OFJP4Q8?SI=TXFDAOI16LIXE7TB)



POLICE OFFICER WALKER: [HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=GN7T4RI4ARU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GN7T4RI4ARU)

POLICE OFFICER RECRUITMENT: (CONTINUED...)

Once people are able to see officers in a different light, one that normalizes them and makes them more relatable, we will be better able to start breaking down the barriers between the community and our officers. *"More Than an Officer"* is about highlighting the person in the uniform, rather than the uniform itself. Our goal is to show that MPD officers are more than officers – they are mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, neighbors, friends, and ordinary people who have lives like the rest of us. The only difference between “us” and “them” is that they decided to take an oath to protect and serve our community and make it a better place. This campaign is not meant to be a quick solution, or solve all the problems related to the decline in public’s satisfaction with law enforcement around the nation. It is meant to humanize officers, give them an opportunity to share their stories, and highlight them in a positive way. The goal is to emphasize commonalities instead of differences and show true transparency, which we believe will help bridge the gap between officers and the community.



RECRUITMENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS — 2024

In 2024, the FPC worked hard to attract a diverse and committed group of candidates to join the Milwaukee Police Department — all while building stronger ties with the community.

Getting the Word Out

The FPC kept its message alive on the airwaves with radio ads on favorite local stations like The Truth (101.7), Hometown Rock (96.5), The Hog (105.9), and Jammin' (98.3). But we didn't stop there.

Facebook became a key tool for recruitment. Early in the year, we shared easy-to-understand picture slides about officer pay, benefits, and direct links to job openings. Soon, we realized videos were the way to go — people connect more when they can see and hear real stories. So, we started sharing videos featuring MPD officers talking about why they chose this career. Veterans spoke about moving from the military to the police force and working their way up to detective. Two Community Liaison Officers opened up about the challenges they faced in policing but explained why they stayed committed to serving the community. These authentic stories sparked more clicks, shares, and conversations — and they're all available on the FPC's social media channels.

To boost recruitment even further, the FPC teamed up with MPD for a radio show segment, sharing firsthand insights and encouraging more people to consider a career in law enforcement.



EXPANDING OUR REACH & NEW PARTNERSHIPS


Outreach in the community and creating new partnerships remains a tool that FPC use to grow recruitment. This includes outreach and engagement at a variety of community events, Milwaukee Public School (MPS) events, resource fairs, career fairs, and cultural festivals, including Puerto Rican Festival, Caribbean & Latin American Festival, Juneteenth, and all of the National Night Outs hosted by MPD in each of its seven districts. In total, the FPC recruiters have attended nearly 100 events that also includes presentations at various MPS locations regarding youth programming: police aide and fire cadet. In addition to a notable presence at community events and career fairs, there have been outreach efforts through new venues that had previously not been explored—two of which included partnerships with GSTV and Marcus Movie Theaters. GSTV is the station in charge of playing advertisements on gas station pump screens throughout Milwaukee. Officer Walker's and Officer Thompson's videos were used for this advertisement campaign, which included 64 gas stations throughout Milwaukee. This helped increase our visibility throughout the city. The FPC also partnered with Marcus Movie Theaters to advertise for police officer positions via video ads before movie trailers



Recruitment Campaigns and Events

In 2024, the FPC ran focused recruitment campaigns to bring in more diverse, honest, and caring candidates—answering the call for police reform and better representation of women and minorities.



On February 17, 2024, the FPC teamed up with Indeed for a Police Officer Open House at the MPD Academy. Attendees got the inside scoop on applying, training benefits, and what it is really like to serve. They could even apply on the spot and have their questions answered by FPC staff and officers.



OPEN HOUSE

Milwaukee Safety Academy
6680 N. Teutonia Ave., Milwaukee, WI. 53209
Saturday, October 5, 2024
9am to 2pm

Info Session | Q&A | Academy Tours | Apply On Site | Specialty Units On Site



OPEN HOUSE

Milwaukee Safety Academy
6680 N. Teutonia Ave., Milwaukee, WI. 53209
Saturday, October 5, 2024
9am to 2pm

Info Session | Q&A | Academy Tours | Apply On Site | CPR Demo

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES

Beyond recruitment, the FPC increased efforts to build stronger connections between the community and law enforcement. One notable initiative was the “*More Than An Officer*” campaign, launched in collaboration with MPD. Community members were encouraged to take photos with MPD officers, post them on social media using the hashtag #MoreThanAnOfficer, and tag MPD for a chance to win State Fair tickets. This campaign aimed to foster positive, non-enforcement interactions and was promoted through flyers, social media, and at community events such as resource fairs and National Night Out.

Additional recruitment outreach included advertising partnerships with Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC), Milwaukee County Transit System, Mayfair Mall, and billboard placements through Clear Channel.

STATE FAIR TICKET
GIVEAWAY

Monday, July 29th- Friday, August 9th

1 TAKE A SELFIE WITH A MILWAUKEE POLICE OFFICER

2 POST IT ON FACEBOOK OR INSTAGRAM WITH THE HASHTAG #MORETHANANOFFICER

3 TAG MPD FOR A CHANCE TO WIN

SNAP

WIN

MILWAUKEE POLICE

MILWAUKEE FIRE AND POLICE COMMISSION

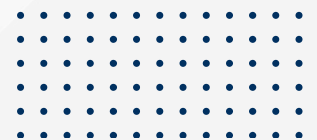


FIREFIGHTER AND EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION OFFICER (ECO)

Recruiting and hiring for the firefighter position has not presented the same challenges as police recruiting in recent years. The FPC recruitment and hiring efforts for the Milwaukee Fire Department have nevertheless utilized many of the same strategies and tactics as we do for MPD. For instance, the FPC uses a combination of on-the-ground recruiting at community events and job fairs, targeted advertising, and initiatives to reduce barriers in the testing and hiring process.

Flyers are distributed at a variety of community centers and gyms. Also, pop up application sites have been held at multiple gathering hubs like El Rey, Crunch Fitness, Milwaukee's Night Market, Juneteenth, and 3rd St Market Hall. In addition, the FPC sends SlickText reminders to people who have signed up to be notified once the firefighter recruitment opens. There are currently over 1,000 subscribers on the list.

Similarly, for Emergency Communication Officer (ECO) - previously called 911 Telecommunicator - interest is gathered at various career and resource fairs throughout the year, and once it opens the FPC will contact those who are interested in applying. Using social media platforms to boost and generate interest for ECOs and firefighters has shown success in engaging potential candidates, leading to successful recruitments in 2024.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The FPC remains committed to strengthening long-term relationships with community stakeholders and partners. A core principle of the Commission is fostering trust and transparency between public safety agencies and the communities they serve. Strong community relations enhance the FPC's ability to fulfill its key responsibilities—ranging from oversight and recruitment to investigations, appeals, and public reporting.

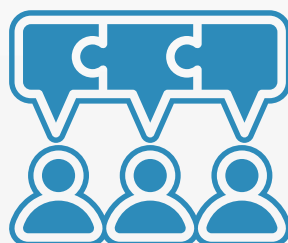
While community engagement is essential for the FPC, it is also a shared priority of both the Milwaukee Fire and Police Departments, and Department of Emergency Communications. Every interaction—from a firefighter responding to an emergency to an officer walking a neighborhood beat—shapes public trust and community connection.

In July 2024, Carlos Martinez-Rivera joined the FPC as the new Community Outreach Coordinator. With a background in nonprofit community engagement at Hunger Task Force, Mr. Martinez-Rivera brings a deep understanding of grassroots relationship-building. Since stepping into the role, he has actively participated in local events and public meetings, introducing himself to residents and community leaders. His mission is to ensure that Milwaukeeans are better informed about the Commission's work and feel empowered to engage with its processes. Through open dialogue and a consistent presence, he aims to be a bridge between the FPC and the communities it serves.

Meeting People Where They Are

At the heart of the FPC's outreach philosophy is a commitment to meeting people where they are—in their neighborhoods, at their community centers, places of worship, and local events. This approach recognizes that building trust starts with being present, listening, and showing up consistently.

Since joining the FPC in July 2024, Community Outreach Coordinator Carlos Martinez-Rivera has embodied that philosophy. In just under five months, he attended more than 30 community events across Milwaukee—despite coming onboard more than halfway through the year. From neighborhood cleanups and youth programs to public safety forums and cultural festivals, Mr. Martinez-Rivera prioritized connecting with residents on their terms and in their spaces. His outreach has helped raise awareness of the FPC's mission while creating new opportunities for collaboration, feedback, and community voice in public safety conversations.



THE FOLLOWING IS A SAMPLE OF SOME OF THOSE EVENTS AND MEETINGS THAT FPC PARTICIPATED IN.



MPD D2 Trunk or Treat Event

The FPC was proud to participate in MPD District 2's Trunk or Treat event, which brought together over 600 community members and dozens of local organizations for a fun and safe Halloween celebration. Events like this offer a unique opportunity to build trust, connect with families, and show our commitment to community presence alongside our public safety partners.



MPD D6 TRUNK OR TREAT

FPC also joined MPD District 6 for their Trunk or Treat event, where nearly 350 residents came out to enjoy a festive, family-friendly evening. The event provided a welcoming space for community connection and allowed FPC staff to engage directly with attendees while supporting MPD's efforts to foster positive relationships with neighborhood families.



MPD ACADEMY HAUNTED HOUSE

The FPC was excited to help coordinate and take part in the MPD Academy Haunted House, which welcomed approximately 450 attendees for a night of spooky fun and community engagement. This creative event showcased the lighter side of public safety and provided another meaningful opportunity for FPC staff to connect with families and support MPD's ongoing efforts to build trust through positive, community-centered experiences.



MPD & SAFE N' SOUND'S 3 KINGS DAY

The FPC was honored to support the Three Kings Day celebration hosted by MPD and Safe & Sound, a cherished cultural event that brought joy to families across the community. FPC staff assisted with shopping for gifts, setting up the venue, and attending the event to help ensure its success. This meaningful collaboration reflected the Commission's commitment to cultural inclusion and community partnership beyond traditional public safety efforts.



MPD OPEN HOUSE & SENIOR QUINCEANERA

The FPC was proud to take part in MPD District 2's Open House and Senior Quinceañera Celebration, a vibrant event that blended community engagement with cultural recognition. From connecting with over 200 residents to celebrating women in the community, the event provided a unique opportunity for the FPC to strengthen relationships and show support for the diverse traditions that make Milwaukee thrive.

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Throughout the year, the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) played a critical role in enhancing the City's preparedness, response, and coordination capabilities. A significant focus was placed on preparing for the Republican National Convention (RNC), including the development of several comprehensive multi-agency response plans. These plans addressed key operational areas such as evacuation procedures, mass dispensing operations, hazardous materials response, and the distribution of emergency resources.

OEM also hosted a four-day Integrated Emergency Management Course (IEMC), providing exercise-based training that simulated realistic emergency scenarios. This hands-on training enhanced interagency coordination and improved the City's overall readiness posture. In addition, OEM supported the creation of Incident Action Plans (IAPs) for a range of special interest events throughout the year, including rallies, marches, and dignitary visits, working closely with both the Police and Fire Departments to ensure public safety.



OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (OEM)

In alignment with the National Preparedness Calendar, OEM supported over 50 social emergency preparedness initiatives, delivering critical information and resources to the public to foster community resilience. The team also developed a dedicated Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Playbook specifically for the RNC, providing detailed operational guidance for the City's EOC during the convention. This work was complemented by direct support from the Fire and Police Departments in building out and enhancing the EOC infrastructure for the event.

During the RNC, OEM leadership served as the EOC Director for the City of Milwaukee, overseeing mission support, resource coordination, and event management. In preparation for the 2024 Presidential Election, OEM developed an incident management plan, Operation Vote 2024, which included the activation of a Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC) to ensure a coordinated response to any election-related incidents.

Finally, OEM worked collaboratively with the Department of Emergency Communications to successfully test and maintain the Code Red Alert Notification System—MKE Alert—on a monthly basis, ensuring the system's reliability in the event of a citywide emergency. These efforts demonstrate OEM's continued commitment to safeguarding the City of Milwaukee through proactive planning, coordination, and community engagement.



OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (OEM) RECOGNITION!



Ryan Zollicoffer
Emergency Management Director
City of Milwaukee
200 East Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI, 53202

Dear City of Milwaukee:

Congratulations! This year, Ryan Zollicoffer, CEM®, has earned recognition from the International Association of Emergency Managers by being among the group of professionals designated Certified Emergency Manager (CEM®). This is the highest honor of professional achievement available from the Association, which has in its membership more than 6,000 emergency managers representing professionals whose goals are saving lives and protecting property and the environment during emergencies and disasters.

Ryan qualified as a CEM® by submitting an extensive credentials package, giving personal and professional background achievements, and a written examination. To maintain certification, he must continue a program of professional development over successive five-year periods in the future. Thus, this is an honor neither easily earned nor maintained.

The CEM® designation is presently held by 2,454 individuals in the emergency management profession. As a CEM®, Ryan Zollicoffer demonstrated high competence and ethical fitness for emergency management. Your organization is commended for having a professional of this caliber on staff.

I hope that you will find an opportunity to share with your officials this singularly high achievement that Ryan Zollicoffer, CEM®, has attained. It reflects credit upon the City of Milwaukee and Ryan Zollicoffer.

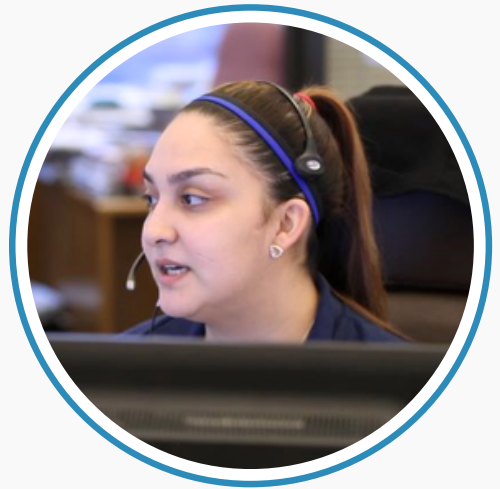
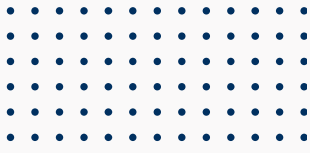
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon Fessler', is written over a light blue circular graphic element.

Jon Fessler, CEM®
Certification Commission Chair

IAEM Headquarters • 201 Park Washington Court • Falls Church, VA 22046 • 703-538-1795 • Email: info@iaem.com





ABOUT THE PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENTS



ABOUT MILWAUKEE'S PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENTS

The FPC is responsible for oversight of Milwaukee public safety departments while chiefs and director of those departments are responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the departments.

The following is a brief overview of each of Milwaukee's three public safety departments and their respective leadership.



MILWAUKEE FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Milwaukee Fire Department was established on January 1, 1875, as the primary fire suppression, prevention, rescue, and emergency medical service for the City of Milwaukee. MFD is currently under the leadership of Fire Chief Aaron Lipski who was originally appointed chief in May 2021.



FIRE CHIEF AARON LIPSKI

Fire Chief Lipski has served the City of Milwaukee for over 25 years. Joining the Milwaukee Fire Department in 1997 (in the same recruit class as his older brother, Daniel), Lipski is a 4th generation Milwaukee Firefighter and Milwaukee resident. Prior to joining, he served for several years as an EMT-Basic with an urban private ambulance service. Lipski holds a Bachelor's Degree in Communications, minoring in Africology, and a Master's Degree in Public Administration, both from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.



Lipski has filled every rank, rising from Firefighter to Heavy Equipment Operator, then on to the company officer positions of Lieutenant and Captain. Appointed to Battalion Chief in 2010, Lipski covered operational battalions prior to being tasked with running the department's Division of Construction and Maintenance, responsible for overseeing the department's catalog of facilities, all equipment and purchasing, and the entire fleet. Following this, Lipski was assigned as a Deputy Chief to the city-wide commander role. Filling this role for six and a half years, Lipski expanded the footprint and operational efficiencies of the office.

In his time as a Battalion Chief, Lipski initiated a series of familiarization exercises with all neighboring fire departments, with whom there had been very little interaction and frosty relationships for decades. As a Deputy Chief, this evolved into a positive and productive shared services initiative which now has a team of true partners across all jurisdictions throughout Milwaukee County. This initiative has been a paradigm shift in the provision of fire and EMS services for all involved.

In 2019, Lipski was promoted to Assistant Chief, overseeing the department's Support Bureau, responsible for all budget and finance concerns, dealing with elected officials and the Fire & Police Commission, labor relations, investigations and discipline, all technical services and dispatch, as well as fleet and facilities. In late 2020, Lipski was approved to be the Acting Fire Chief for the Milwaukee Fire Department. Lipski was sworn in as the Fire Chief in June of 2021.

Lipski chairs the American Lung Association's Local Leadership Board in Wisconsin as well as the Milwaukee County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (MCSAP). He also sits on the Board of Directors for the American Red Cross of Southeast Wisconsin. Happily married to his wife of 21 years, Krista, they enjoy spending time together, traveling to watch their daughter, Bella, play with her club volleyball team around the nation.

MFD AREAS OF STRATEGIC FOCUS

The Milwaukee Fire Department (MFD) remains committed to advancing public safety and community well-being through strategic initiatives addressing both operational needs and emerging challenges. As a leading force in the Milwaukee Overdose Response Initiative (MORI), MFD continues to play a vital leadership role in combating the opioid crisis by collaborating with partners to provide rapid response and follow-up care to individuals at risk. Recognizing the impact of aging infrastructure, the department is prioritizing the modernization of firehouses to ensure safe, functional facilities for firefighters and efficient service delivery. Similarly, the urgent need to replace aging fire apparatus is central to maintaining reliable emergency response capabilities. Additionally, MFD is enhancing support for individuals displaced by structure fires, with a focus on improving coordination with community resources to ensure compassionate, timely assistance and long-term recovery support.

Milwaukee Overdose Response Initiative (MORI):

MFD continues to take a leadership role in the Milwaukee Overdose Response Initiative (MORI), a collaborative effort aimed at addressing the opioid crisis through innovative, community-based intervention. Through MORI, MFD personnel respond to overdose incidents not only with emergency care but also with follow-up outreach, connecting individuals to treatment resources, recovery services, and support systems. By leveraging its trusted presence in the community, the department plays a critical role in bridging public health and emergency response, with the strategic goal of reducing overdose fatalities and supporting long-term recovery for Milwaukee residents.

MFD AREAS OF STRATEGIC FOCUS, (CONTINUED...)

Aging Firehouses:

Many of the MFD's firehouses are aging and in need of substantial renovation or replacement to meet modern safety standards, accommodate today's larger apparatus, and support the health and well-being of personnel. Outdated facilities can hinder operational efficiency, increase maintenance costs, and create unnecessary challenges for daily operations. Strategically, the department is committed to securing funding and support to modernize its infrastructure, ensuring that all firehouses are safe, resilient, and equipped to serve both the community and the firefighters who work within them.

Fire Apparatus Replacement:

Reliable apparatus is essential to the department's ability to respond quickly and effectively to emergencies. Many of the heavy apparatus are beyond their recommended service life, leading to increased maintenance needs, mechanical failures, and higher costs. As part of its strategic priorities, MFD is working with the City's Budget Office on an updated replacement plan to replace vehicles at/or near end-of-life to reduce the need for costly ongoing maintenance, while working with distributors and manufacturers through production times that can span two to four years! Investing in new fire apparatus is not only a matter of operational readiness, but also a commitment to the long-term sustainability of emergency services in Milwaukee.

Support for Individuals Displaced by Structure Fires:

MFD recognizes the profound impact structure fires have on individuals and families who lose their homes and personal belongings. As part of its strategic focus on community-centered care, MFD is enhancing efforts to support those displaced by fire incidents. This includes strengthening partnerships with organizations such as the American Red Cross and local social service agencies to ensure immediate shelter, clothing, and emotional support are available at the time of crisis. Additionally, the department is working to improve follow-up services and resource navigation to assist affected residents in their long-term recovery. Providing compassionate, coordinated support to fire victims is a critical part of MFD's mission to protect and serve all members of the Milwaukee community.

MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Milwaukee Police Department was established on October 4, 1855, as the primary law enforcement entity for the City of Milwaukee. MPD is currently under the leadership of Chief of Police Jeffrey Norman who was appointed by the FPC in November 2021.



CHIEF JEFFREY NORMAN

Chief Jeffrey Norman was appointed to the Milwaukee Police Department in 1996. As an officer, Chief Norman served in District 1, District 2, and the Technical Communications Division until his promotion to detective in 2002. As a detective, he served in the Robbery Division, Violent Crimes Division and Homicide Division until his promotion to lieutenant in 2010. As a lieutenant, he served in the Property Crimes Division, Metropolitan Division (Robbery Task Force, Homicide Unit and Cold Case Unit) and District 5 as the dayshift commander. Promoted to captain in 2017, he commanded the Inspections Division and District 3. In 2020 he was promoted to Assistant Chief.



Chief Norman was the executive commander of the Criminal Investigation Bureau. The Criminal Investigation Bureau oversees the Homicide, Special Investigation, Violent Crimes, General Crimes, Sensitive Crimes, Fusion and Forensic Divisions. Chief Norman was the former commander of District 3. His district served the west side of Milwaukee, which covers 11 square miles and over 100,000 residents. Chief Norman was also the former commander of the Inspections Division. The Inspections Division operates the Inspection, Accreditation, Audit and CJIS Compliance Units. Chief Norman oversaw the Wisconsin Law Enforcement Accreditation Group (WILEAG) accreditation standards for the department and ensures districts and divisions are regularly audited and inspected for compliance according to departmental policies and procedures, national law enforcement best practices, and federal, state and local law.

Chief Norman holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, a Masters of Public Administration degree from Kaplan University, and a Juris Doctor degree from Marquette University Law School. Chief Norman is a graduate of the FBI LEEDA's Executive and Command Institutes, Southern Police Institute's Chief Executive Leadership, International Associations of Chiefs of Police's Leadership in Police Organizations and 68th Session of the Police Executive Research Forum-Senior Management Institute for Police (SMIP) in Boston, MA.

MPD AREAS OF STRATEGIC FOCUS

As the Chief of Police for the Milwaukee Police Department, Chief Norman has prioritized the following key strategic areas:

1. Reducing violent crime through both preventative and responsive measures that are based upon research, empirical evidence, best practices, and a data-driven decision-making process. MPD's violent crime plan incorporates the following principles:
 - Community-oriented policing approach that emphasizes collaborative efforts with intergovernmental partners, community partners, and neighborhood residents.
 - Problem-oriented policing approach that directs MPD officers to focus on ways to prevent, disrupt, and deter crime with more than just enforcement actions
 - Intelligence-led policing that focuses on leveraging intelligence, data, and research analysis to drive operational and deployment decisions.
 - Enhanced guardianship that focuses on more visible police presence and positive community interactions that are designed to mitigate opportunities for crime to occur
2. Building positive police-community relations to enhance trust and legitimacy within our community and intergovernmental stakeholders
 - Establishing a renewed commitment to transparency with the community
3. Prioritizing constitutional and unbiased policing
 - Recognizing that MPD should not only focus on compliance with the Collins Settlement Agreement, but ensure that constitutional policing occurs in every transaction with every member of this community
4. Promoting a culture of health and wellness for all MPD members.
 - MPD is committed to building and maintaining a healthy and mentally fit police force and recognizes that the department is only as good as members of its team.
5. Recruiting and retaining a diversified, professional police force.

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

The Department of Emergency Communications was established on October 12, 2021, and vested with the responsibilities for the administration, coordination, and implementation of the City's new unified emergency communication services. DEC is under the leadership of Director Tony Bueno.



DIRECTOR TONY BUENO

Director Tony Bueno's career journey reflects a unique blend of technological expertise and hands-on experience in public safety. Raised in a rural community in southeastern Utah, he graduated from what is now Utah State University Eastern and continued his education at the University of Utah.

For many years, Director Bueno specialized in Information Technology, providing internet access to public and private educational institutions and state government. As Network Operations Manager, he was responsible for internet connectivity for over 1,700 locations across Utah and managed a department with an annual budget exceeding \$17 million.



Director Bueno's transition into public safety communications began with his work at a consolidated Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) in Salt Lake City, where he held almost every position, from call taker/dispatcher to Training Officer and Watch Commander. He is a strong advocate of leading by example and often emphasizes that he continued to take 911 calls and dispatch radio channels until his final day with the agency.

His extensive experience includes developing policies and procedures for various industries, and he was a key member of the transition team that merged Utah's largest PSAP and largest Secondary PSAP. He led a team that refined workflows and training programs, resulting in a three-month turnaround from concept to implementation for a project that successfully achieved NENA standards for call answer times.

Director Bueno has held two elected positions and has a strong background in negotiations, having secured co-location contracts and use agreements with organizations such as the International Olympic Committee and the Salt Lake Olympic Committee for the 2002 Winter Olympic Games. He has also negotiated interlocal agreements between state and local governments. Director Bueno has a history of serving on standards committees for the National Emergency Numbers Association (NENA), where he helped develop and refine industry standards for Communications Centers/PSAPs—a commitment he continues to uphold in his current role with the Milwaukee Department of Emergency Communications (DEC).

At the Milwaukee DEC, Director Bueno has embraced the challenge of finalizing the consolidation of communication centers, which involves merging departments, staff, policies, procedures, and operational practices. He is committed to transforming the department into a destination center that serves as a model for industry standards and best practices.

DEC AREAS OF STRATEGIC FOCUS

The consolidation of the city's emergency communication centers was officially completed on February 16, 2025. This achievement was preceded by a comprehensive effort to consolidate policies and procedures, establishing operational consistency across the formerly separate departments. As the DEC pursues operational excellence, we are focused on achieving measurable progress toward the following strategic objectives:

1. Unified Call Taker: To save critical seconds and minutes, all new and existing personnel will be cross-trained to become proficient Unified Call Takers, eliminating the need to transfer callers in need of fire or medical assistance.
2. Training and Proficiency: Standardization of training programs to ensure consistency across all disciplines (police, fire, and medical), including re-training existing personnel to meet new standards and curriculum.
3. Continuous Improvement: A new quality assurance program is being developed to provide timely, constructive feedback and allow for targeted skills development and reinforcement.
4. Actionable Data: The department will develop tools to measure and report on its effectiveness in providing critical communications to the community and to city leadership, including the Mayor and Common Council.
5. Industry Standards: The DEC continues to meet the nationally accepted standard for timely call answering. Moving forward, we will expand our areas of accountability by utilizing actionable data to meet standards in other critical areas. Where standards do not exist, we will adopt and hold ourselves accountable to industry best practices, including those for time to dispatch and abandoned call rates.
6. Technology Utilization: The department will judiciously evaluate new services and technologies, with a focus on maximizing the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). In the coming months and years, the DEC will embark on pilot projects and limited deployments of AI to enhance operations.

Thank you!



**MILWAUKEE
FIRE & POLICE
COMMISSION**

 200 E. Wells St., Room 705

 (414) 286-5000

 fpc@milwaukee.gov

 city.milwaukee.gov/fpc