



CITY OF WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS

Committee of the Whole Agenda Communication

Meeting Date: January 12, 2026

Prepared By: Police Chief Jeff Stevens

Agenda Item: Using the Deputy Chief Level to Support Technology and Process Improvement

Summary: The Washington Police Department has reached a point where long-term technology improvement, administrative modernization, and supervisory development require more executive capacity than the current command structure can provide. Since 2007, the Department has operated with a single Deputy Chief overseeing operations, administration, investigations, training, and technology for a workforce that has grown to 27 full-time officers, 9 part-time officers, and 5 civilian employees. Despite a strong cadre of sergeants, this structure has created a broad span of control at both the executive and supervisory levels, limiting progress in technology initiatives, data-driven practices, and consistent supervisory mentoring aligned with best practices.

Major modernization efforts, including digital evidence systems, data analytics, policy development, and supervisory coaching focused on procedural justice, now exceed the sustainable bandwidth of a one-deputy model. FEMA's Incident Command System guidance identifies effective spans of control as typically ranging from three to seven direct reports; the current structure exceeds this range and concentrates operational leadership and administrative innovation within a single position. This recommendation recognizes the distinct demands of field operations and administrative, technical, and project-management leadership.

The Department also requires sustained executive leadership to advance procedural justice, supervisor development, organizational consistency, transparency, and long-term planning, priorities identified by both the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board and the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing as essential to modern policing. A second Deputy Chief would provide focused oversight to embed these principles into daily operations, training, and policy implementation.

Rather than seeking additional personnel, the Department proposes reclassifying one patrol officer position into a second Deputy Chief role. This preserves overall staffing while strategically shifting internal capacity from frontline deployment to long-term organizational development. Although the change reduces one patrol position, the impact is offset by gains in efficiency, reduced liability exposure, stronger supervisory performance, and improved service quality resulting from enhanced executive leadership.

Alternative approaches, including adding mid-level commanders, creating civilian specialist roles, outsourcing project management, forming internal modernization teams, or relying on the Chief to absorb additional responsibilities, were evaluated but found insufficient. These options do not adequately address executive span-of-control challenges or provide durable leadership capacity for modernization and supervisory development.

Adding a second Deputy Chief strengthens leadership resilience, distributes responsibilities across two executive domains, improves organizational accountability, and positions the City to deliver efficient, transparent, and modern police services. This adjustment equips the Department to meet rising expectations for technology, data, and procedural justice while maintaining readiness and public trust.

Fiscal Impact: While individual employees promoted will not be eligible for overtime, resulting in a substantial decrease in overall compensation, the base pay will, of course, increase. For the purpose of this summary is estimated at \$31,836 in base pay plus annually determined pension costs. Using the pension fund's current statutory minimum employer rate (about 32.6% of payroll), a \$31,836 increase in pensionable payroll would be expected to increase the City's Police pension levy by roughly \$10,400 per year (i.e., $\$31,836 \times 32.6\%$), subject to the next actuarial valuation and overall payroll/market experience. Base cost this FY would be less than half this annual estimate and would be within the current appropriation.

We expect to include a proposal in the upcoming FY budget to subdivide office space at a cost not to exceed \$80,000. I believe the estimate is intentionally high, as I have not engaged a contractor to estimate the specific work necessary.

Action Requested: Provide a consensus related to this proposed change. With Council consensus, we would, with the City Attorney, propose an ordinance amendment aligning Department structure with this proposal.

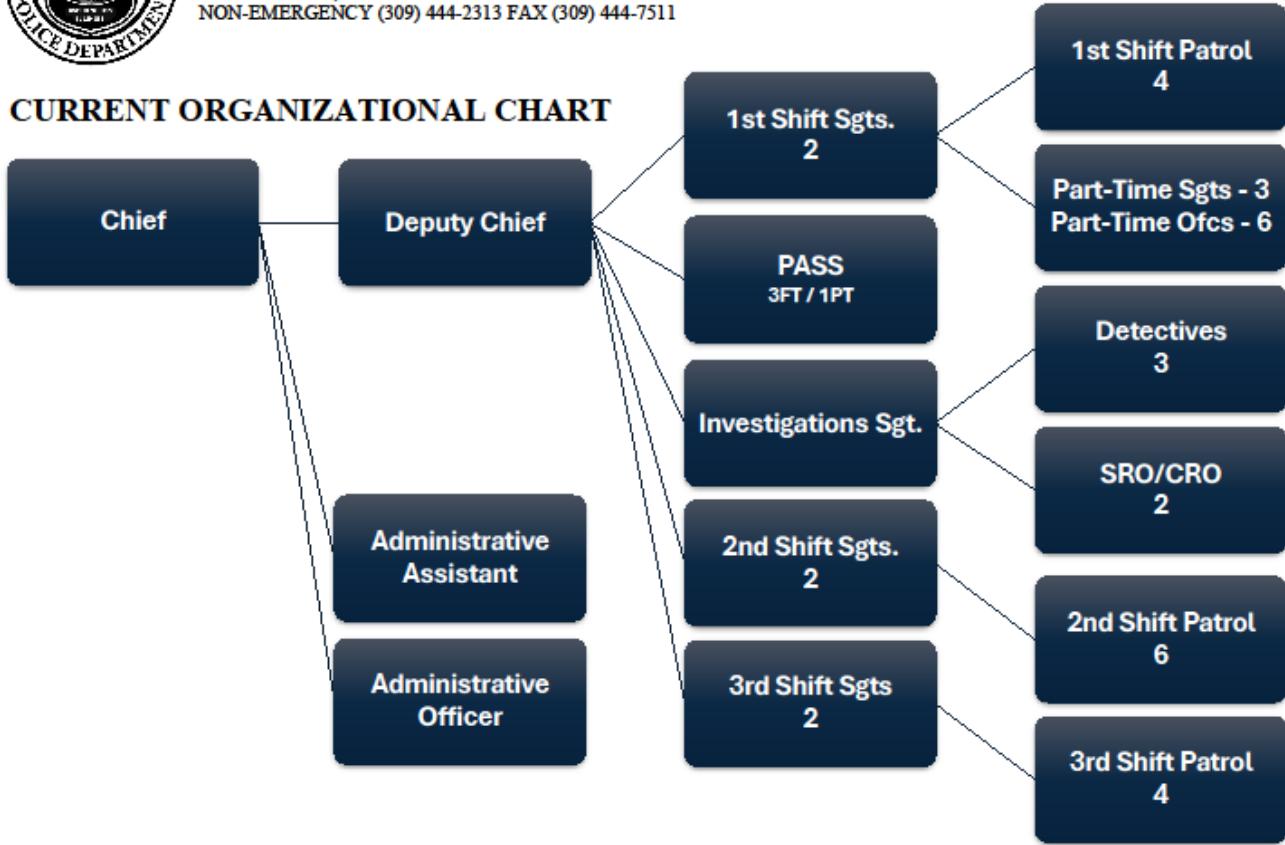
Attachments: Current and Resulting Organizational Charts



Washington Police Department

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CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART





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TWO DEPUTY CHIEF - ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

