



# WINCHESTER CITY COMMISSION WRAP-UP

Information from the Tuesday, April 15, 5:30 p.m. meeting

## Commission promotes asst. police chief, hears department update

After welcoming a new police chief earlier this year, the Winchester Police Department also now has an assistant police chief for the first time in more than two decades.

At the Tuesday, April 15, meeting of the Winchester Board of Commissioners, the commission approved promoting Harvey Craycraft from captain of the department's patrol division to assistant police chief.

Winchester Police Chief Travis Thompson said there hasn't been an assistant chief in 25 years.

Craycraft has been spent his entire law enforcement career serving Winchester and celebrated 30 years with the department in April. He started as a patrol officer in 1995 before moving up the ranks to sergeant and then captain. He served as captain over the

criminal investigations unit and then the patrol unit until his promotion this week.

During the meeting, Thompson also provided an update about the department.

In the first quarter of 2025, the department, which houses the only dispatch center in the community, has fielded 13,147 calls, including 2,124 for Winchester Fire-EMS, 2,567 for the Clark County Sheriff's Office, 325 for Clark County Fire and 8,131 for Winchester Police.

Some of the most frequent calls included assaults, non-injury accidents, mental health transports, domestic disturbances and public intoxication.

In the first three months of the year, the

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## DON'T MISS THE NEXT MEETING!

The next meeting of the Winchester Board of Commissioners will be Tuesday, May 6. There will be a 4:30 p.m. special meeting and a 5:30 p.m. regular meeting.

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department has made 70 mental health transports. According to Thompson, many of those calls didn't require police interference.

Thompson told the commission he made changes to protocol for mental health transports that will strengthen the qualifications for police mental health transports and keep officers on the streets instead of making transports across county lines. With the changes, the number of transports declined from 37 in January to nine in March.

Thompson also highlighted the department's K9 officer, Jensik, who joined the department in the fall of 2024. Already, Jensik, a trained drug-detection K9, has been getting drugs off the streets, Thompson said.

He shared a video clip showing Jensik in action during a bust



DURING THE MEETING, THE WINCHESTER BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS HONORED LOCAL DISPATCHERS DURING TELECOMMUNICATIONS WEEK.

that resulted in the confiscation of 18.5 grams of methamphetamine and other drug paraphernalia. In other busts, Jensik has detected Fentanyl, heroin, cocaine and narcotic pills.

With Jensik's successful efforts in the department, Thompson's goal is to add another K9 officer, which would allow one on each shift.

The department welcomed two new officers, Baker and Toombs, who recently graduated from the Department of Criminal Justice Training. There are

three other officers and one dispatcher in DOCJT training right now.

In addition to adding an assistant police chief, two other officers were recently promoted. Zack Conlee was promoted from sergeant to captain of the training division and Wesley Craycraft was promoted from patrol officer to sergeant.

Thompson also acknowledged the department's involvement in the community, including spring break and fall break food drives and visits to

many local schools.

Thompson ended his presentation with a tearful moment in honor of Abe, the department's therapy dog. Abe had cancer and was humanely euthanized because of complications of the disease earlier this year. Abe left a lasting impression on the department and community, he said.

The department would like to add another therapy dog in the future, and is exploring grant opportunities to fund that initiative.

## IN OTHER BUSINESS

In other business, the commission:

— heard an update from Jeff Truitt of BIM Group about the city employee medical benefits. According to Truitt, based on the rate of claims from June 2024 to January 2025, the city needs to budget 9.2% more in the next fiscal year to accommodate claims. This only reflects an increase in the city's contribution. The commissioners approved building an additional 9.2% into next year's budget and to keep the contributions at 95% from the city and 5% from the employee.

— approved an application for a grant from Smart Growth America to apply for \$22,000 for the Kentucky Complete Streets Leadership Academy Award. Winchester is one

of only three communities in the state chosen for the initiative, which aims at developing quick-turnaround projects to improve pedestrian safety on state roadways within the selected communities.

— approved the second reading of an amendment to an ordinance related to blighted and abandoned properties. The ordinance imposes an additional tax on properties deemed blighted or abandoned within city limits and sets definitions for these conditions.

— approved the first reading of an order annexing property from the county to the city. The annexation includes 23.515 acres on the western limits of the city. The order will

require a second reading.

— approved the second reading of an ordinance updating language associated with the use, cultivation, processing or production of medical cannabis within the city and county.

— accepted an agreement with the Law Firm of Linda K. Ain for legal services relating to the renewal of the City of Winchester electric franchise.

— approved an order appointing Christa Williams to the Housing Authority of Winchester for a four-year term.

— adopted the position description for an assistant code enforcement/traffic safety officer.

— approved an order hiring Alyshia Martin as a grant writer.