



WINDSOR  
HEIGHTS  
the heart of it all

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



May 1, 2024

## FIRE & POLICE

**City of Windsor Heights, Iowa  
2023 Fire and Police Annual Report**

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# Welcome!

James Mease, Fire Chief



The 2023 calendar year challenged our City of Windsor Heights Fire Department with a handful of significant incidents, again demonstrating the professionalism, dedication, tenacity, and commitment of our team to the safety of the community we serve.

The Windsor Heights Fire Department saw multiple "working" structure fires within the city limits and we assisted our mutual aid partners. In May, the Fire Department responded to a residential structure fire in Urbandale. Heavy fire conditions were encountered and our team, along with our mutual aid partners, were able to quickly knock down the fire and save the structure. In June, our members responded to Norwalk for a reported structure fire that was updated to a "working fire 1st alarm." On arrival, crews were met with heavy fire coming through the roof and limited initial staffing. Crews were able to quickly mitigate the incident and save the structure.

Also in June, crews responded to a "working fire 1st alarm" at 7209 Bellaire in Windsor Heights. The fire was quickly located and extinguished, limiting overall damage to the structure. In July, crews responded to the report of a gunshot wound with medics employing life-saving measures and later transporting the patient to a local hospital. In August, crews responded to a structure fire in Clive. Engine 551 was the first to arrive on the scene to find moderate smoke conditions and the report of a trapped disabled resident. Crews worked together to remove the victim and extinguish the fire without issue. In September, crews responded to the report of a structure fire at 7019 Forest Court, with the incident being upgraded to a "working fire 1st alarm." Light smoke conditions were noted, and the incident was quickly mitigated with minor overall damage to the home.

Along with these major incidents, Windsor Heights Public Safety was met with new challenges involving integrating a new Fire Chief and Police Chief into the staffing model. Within the Fire Department, much change was instituted to aid in a better service delivery model by adding a dedicated Fire Chief. The previous Fire Department Captain position was eliminated to allow for a part-time firefighter position during the day. This position covers 12 hours from 6 am to 6 pm every day. This change also allowed a much larger pool of part-time employees to help cover full-time sick days and vacations. The Fire and Police Departments also collaborated with Roe Consulting to implement a progressive flood mitigation program to better prepare our residents for future flooding issues. Other changes are aggressive maintenance programs, and new assignments for full-time staff covering vehicle maintenance, training, medical supplies, personal protective equipment, and station maintenance.

Best Regards,

*James Mease*

James Mease  
jmease@windsorheights.org



# Welcome!

Pete Roth, Chief of Police



The members of the Windsor Heights Police are pleased to present the Department's 2023 Annual Report. This is a comprehensive overview of our department's activities, accomplishments, and dedication to serving and protecting our community.

The past year presented many unique challenges and opportunities which included several retirements, a new police chief, and two new lieutenants. Despite these challenges, the department demonstrated our unwavering commitment and professionalism in adapting to these "opportunities" and the evolving needs of our community.

This report will highlight:

- Our Organization: An overview of the police department personnel and divisions.
- The 2023 Year in Review: Highlights of the year showing our commitment to community outreach, engagement, and training. It also demonstrates our endeavors to build trust and foster stronger relationships with our residents.
- Crime Statistics: An analysis of incidents over the year.

We value open communication and invite your feedback, questions, and suggestions. Your input is crucial as we strive for ongoing improvement, transparency, and quality police services.

We extend our sincere gratitude to our residents, businesses, community organizations, and city staff for their continued support and partnership.

Thank you for reviewing the 2023 Annual Report. The Police Department remains committed to our overall mission of serving and protecting, and we look forward to collaborating with you in 2024!

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Pete Roth".

Pete Roth  
proth@cityofwindsorheights.org





## **Windsor Heights City Government**

### **Mayor**

Mike Jones

### **City Council**

Lauren Campbell

Threase Harms

Joseph Jones

Micheal Libbe

Susan Skeries

Adam Plagge

### **City Administrator**

Adam Plagge

### **City Attorney**

Erin M. Clanton

### **City Clerk**

Adam Strait

### **City Finance Director**

Rachelle Swisher

## **Community Overview**

Established on July 19, 1941, Windsor Heights is a city situated in Polk County, Iowa, and is a part of the Des Moines metropolitan area. The city spans 1.41 square miles and is home to approximately 5,525 residents living in around 2,143 households. Windsor Heights shares its borders with Clive to the west, Des Moines to the east, Urbandale to the north, and West Des Moines to the south. The median household income is estimated at \$64,230, and the median family income stands at approximately \$77,841.

The community features a blend of residential, multifamily, and commercial properties. Notably, the city hosts one of Iowa's highest-grossing Walmart Stores, conveniently located along one of the Des Moines Area Regional Transit (DART) main lines. The DART bus stop, situated in the Walmart and Sam's Club parking lot, is one of the most frequented DART hubs outside of downtown Des Moines, resulting in significant pedestrian and transient traffic.

Adjacent to Walmart, is one of only two Sam's Clubs in the Des Moines area. Windsor Heights also has a Hy-Vee and an Aldi. The city also boasts a variety of small businesses, restaurants, and services.





## WINDSOR HEIGHTS FIRE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL

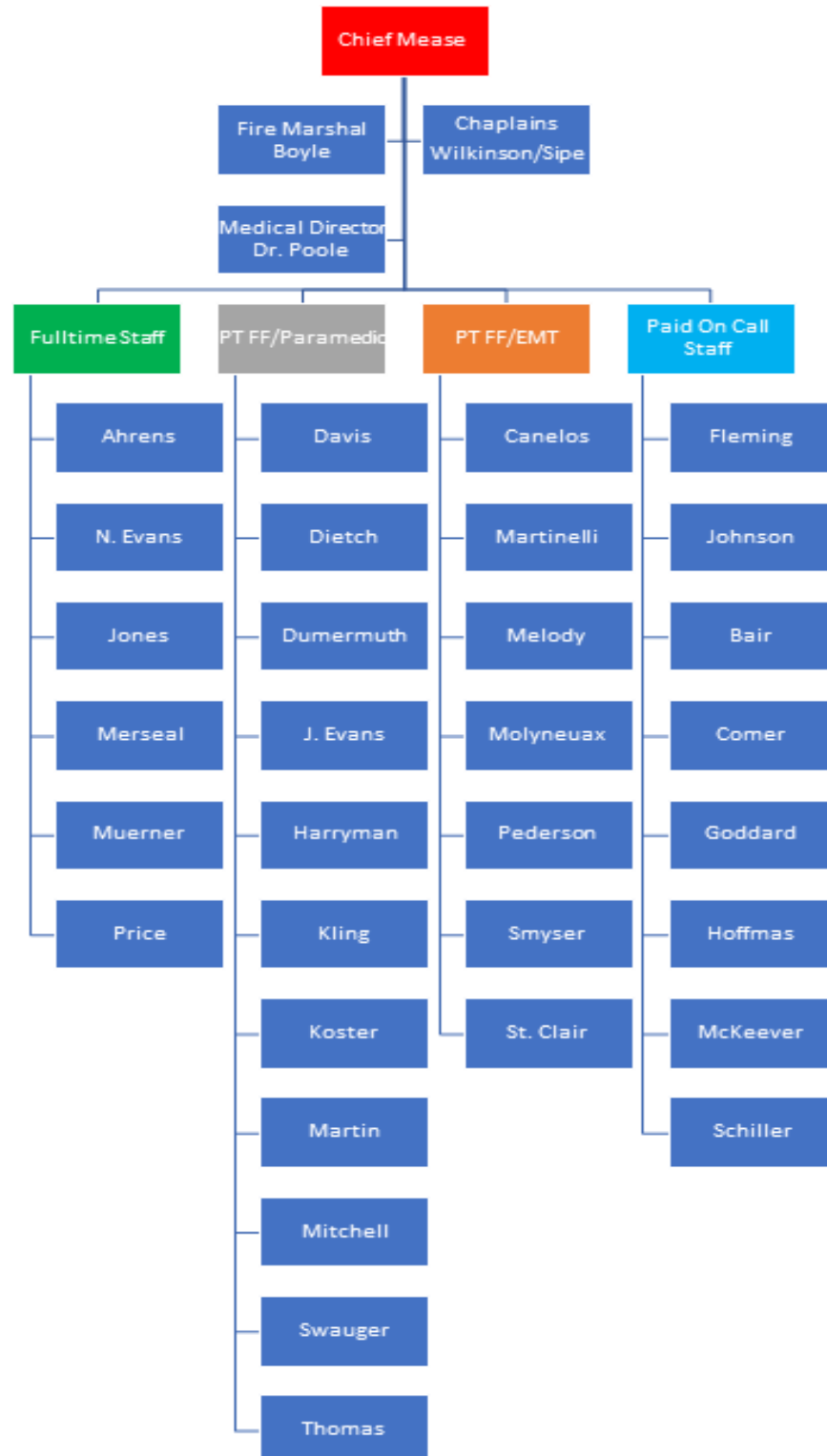
Blake Boyle, Part-Time Fire Marshal  
Brian Jones, Full-Time Firefighter/Paramedic  
Nick Evans, Full-Time Firefighter/Paramedic  
Brett Merseal, Full-Time Firefighter/Paramedic  
Jeff Price, Full-Time Firefighter/EMT  
T.J. Ahrens, Full-Time Firefighter/EMT  
Mark Muerner, Full-Time Firefighter/EMT  
Bryan Koster – Part-Time Firefighter/Paramedic  
Kari Davis – Part-Time Firefighter/Paramedic  
Jeremy Dietch – Part-Time Firefighter/Paramedic  
Jared Dumermuth – Part-Time Firefighter/Paramedic  
Jessie Evans – Part-Time Firefighter/Paramedic  
Jason Kling – Part-Time Firefighter/Paramedic  
Colby Martin – Part-Time Firefighter/Paramedic  
Mary Mitchell - Part-Time Firefighter/Paramedic  
Tyler Pederson - Part-Time Firefighter/Paramedic  
McLain Swauger - Part-Time Firefighter/Paramedic  
Pat Thomas - Part-Time Firefighter/Paramedic

Joe Canelos – Part-Time Firefighter/EMT  
Dominic Martinelli – Part-Time Firefighter/EMT  
Collin Melody – Part-Time Firefighter/EMT  
David Molyneaux – Part-Time Firefighter/EMT  
Jason Smyser – Part-Time Firefighter/EMT  
Malcolm St. Clair – Part-Time Firefighter/EMT  
Robert Fleming – Paid-Per-Call Firefighter/EMT  
Spencer Johnson – Paid-Per-Call Firefighter/EMT  
Nathaniel Bair – Paid-Per-Call Firefighter/EMT  
Lucas Comer – Paid-Per-Call Firefighter  
Nathan Goddard – Paid-Per-Call Firefighter/EMT  
Alex Hoffman – Paid-Per-Call Firefighter  
Nathan McKeever - Paid-Per-Call Firefighter/EMT  
Jacob Schiller - Paid-Per-Call Firefighter/EMT  
Terry Wilkinson - Chaplain  
Steve Sipe - Chaplain  
**Resignations**  
Dayton Harryman





## WINDSOR HEIGHTS FIRE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART





## OUR CULTURE

### Our Mission

*The mission of the Windsor Heights Fire Department is to deliver excellent EMS and Fire service to the public through continuous training, rapid response, public education, and fire prevention.*

### Our Values

*The Windsor Heights Fire Department includes Duty, Pride, and Tradition in our core values. **Duty** is a commitment to the people whom we protect that we will be mentally and physically prepared to serve at all times. We will train to operational perfection and discharge our duties with efficiency and effectiveness. **Pride** is a feeling of confidence that comes from being part of something bigger than yourself. We will ensure our equipment is maintained to the highest level of readiness. We will wear our uniforms proudly; we will act with integrity, as to never bring discredit to our Department, the Fire Service, or to the public we serve. **Tradition** includes knowledge, respect, and passing down the history of our Fire Department and our profession to new members. Tradition is our link to the past and our map for the future.*



## **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

The Windsor Heights Fire Department provides 24-hour, fire and ambulance coverage to the City of Windsor Heights, meeting the requirements of Iowa Code 364.16. The mission of the Windsor Heights Fire Department is to improve the quality of life and safety of our citizens by providing the highest level of customer service through Fire Prevention, Community Risk Reduction, Emergency Response, and Training. The goal of the Fire Department is to prevent incidents of fire within the community, respond to those in need of medical and fire assistance, and continue striving to maintain the exceptional Insurance Service Office rating the City enjoys which translates to lower insurance rates for our residents.

### **2023 Year In Review Pictures:**







## WINDSOR HEIGHTS FIRE DEPARTMENT

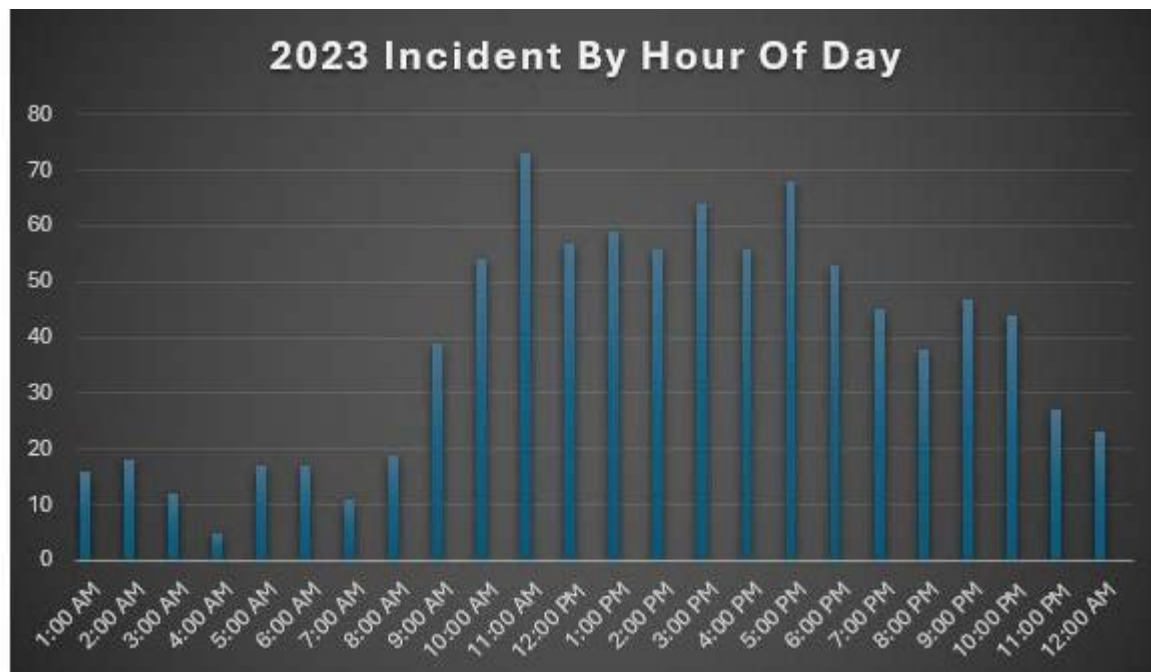
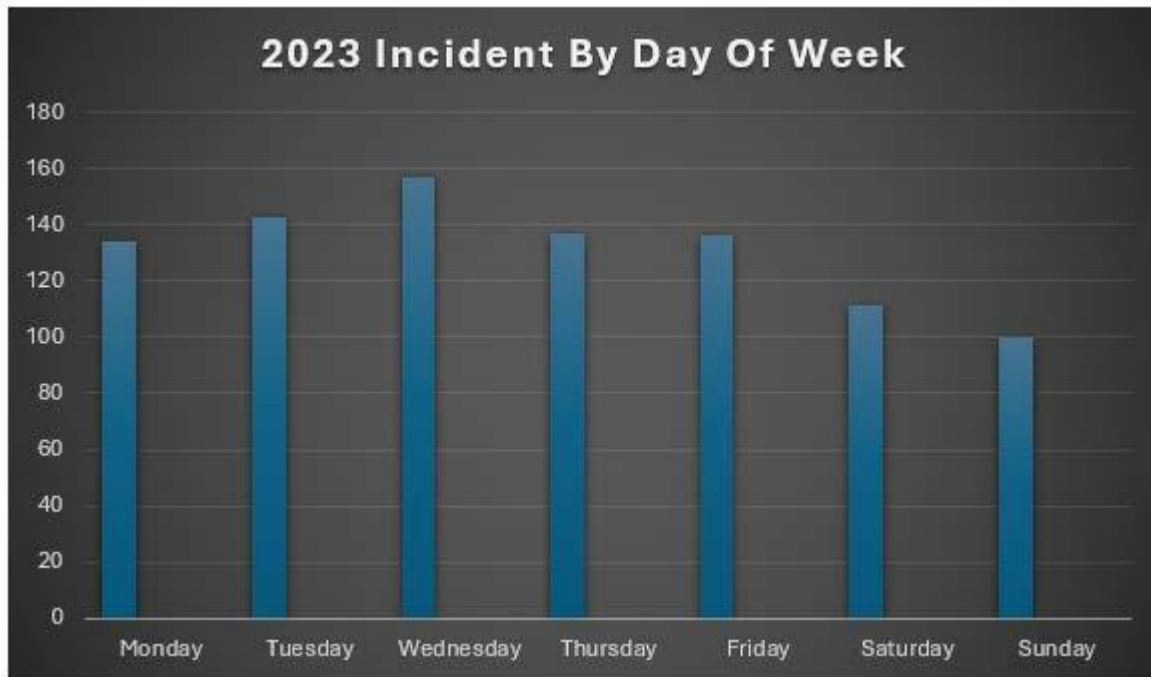
### 2023 Statistics

Total Calls For Service (Calendar Year 2023)	918	100%
Fire Incidents	31	3.38%
Rescue / EMS Incidents	619	67.43%
Hazardous Conditions – No Fire	30	3.27%
Service Calls	73	7.95%
Good Intent Calls	118	12.85%
False Alarm / False Call	34	3.7%
Special Incident Type	3	0.33%
Overpressure, Explosion, Excessive Heat	10	0.09%



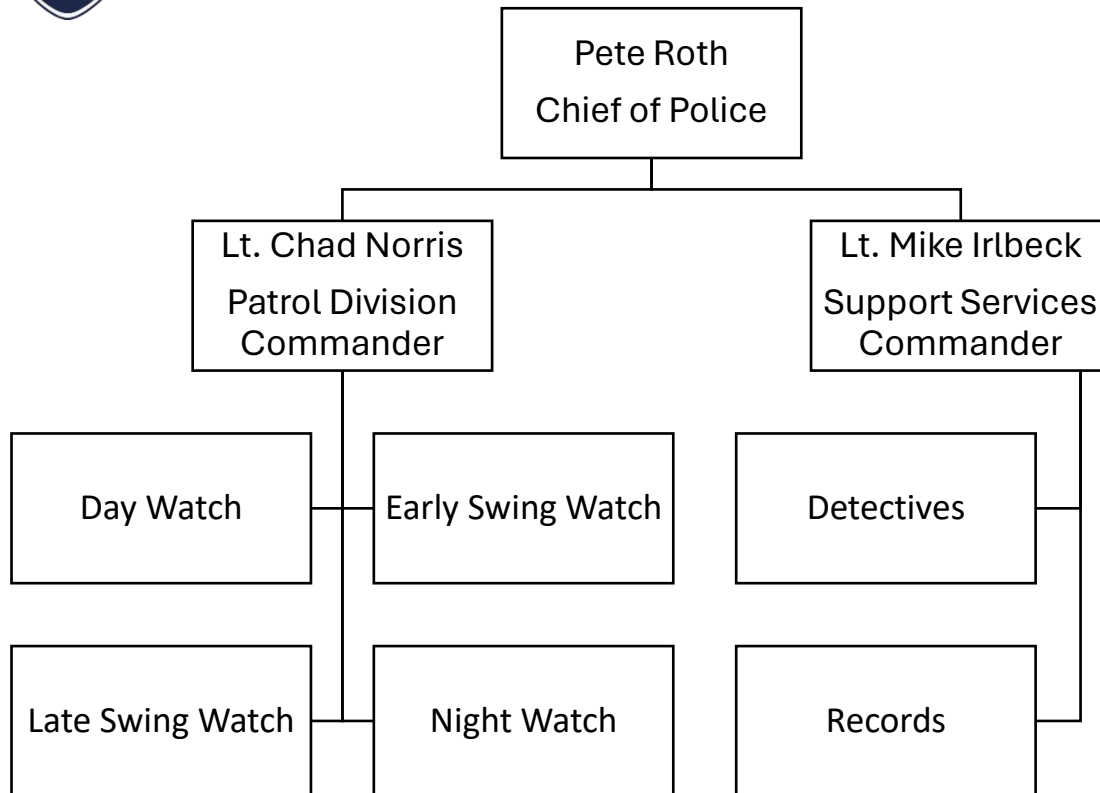
## WINDSOR HEIGHTS FIRE DEPARTMENT

### 2023 WHFD Response Statistics





## Windsor Heights Police Department Organizational Chart



### Staff (in alphabetical order)

Ryan Bowers – Police Officer  
Tammy Breese – Administrative Support Clerk  
Cody Brown – Police Officer  
Mark Davison – Police Officer  
Daniel Jacks – Police Officer  
Kyle Johnson – Detective

Andrew Nissen – Police Officer  
Matt Palmer – Police Officer  
Rob Pearson – Police Officer (PT)  
Catherine Pleiness – Police Officer  
Joe Roetman – Police Officer  
Eric Stein – Police Officer

### Police Department Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Windsor Heights Police Department to safeguard the lives and property of the people we serve, to reduce the incidence and fear of crime, and to enhance public safety while working with the community to improve their quality of life. The women and men of this agency, in partnership with the community, are committed to providing quality, professional police services to our citizens and visitors through the preservation of peace, order, safety, and problem resolution. Our duty is to do so with honor and integrity while at all times conducting ourselves with the highest ethical standards.





## Windsor Heights Police Department The 2023 Year in Review

There were many changes at the Police Department in 2023 beginning with a new Police Chief in May, two Lieutenant promotions in September, and the hiring of two new police officers (May and November). Public Safety Director Chad McCluskey left the department in December 2022 to become Waukees's newest police chief. The department also experienced the retirements of Captain Derek Meyer and Lieutenant Rob Pearson. Both longtime and valued employees of the city.

Captain Meyer served as interim police chief at the beginning of the year. When he retired in April, retired West Des Moines Assistant Police Chief Travis Ouverson was selected as the interim police chief. Despite the personnel changes, staff continued to offer quality public safety services to the community.

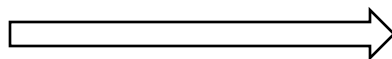
In April, the department placed two new marked Ford Utility Police Interceptors (Explorers) into service. They replaced older, higher mileage patrol units.

Police Chief Pete Roth's first day was May 15. He was formally sworn in at the June 5 Council Meeting. Officer Cody Brown was also sworn in at the June 5 council meeting. His first day with the department was May 22.

In May, Detective Kyle Johnson volunteered to be the department's representative on the Iowa Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run Board. He will also be the point of contact for the WHPD for all Law Enforcement Special Olympics activities. This is an amazing organization to partner with and thanks to Detective Johnson for serving on the board.

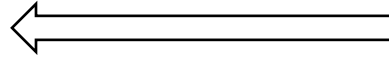
Also in May, detectives wrapped up a major fraud/forgery case involving many other jurisdictions in the central Iowa area. Charges were filed, while other agencies continued their investigations relating to this incident.

On May 16, Lieutenant Mike Irlbeck received a 2023 MADD Award for his outstanding work in impaired driving enforcement. This is a special recognition from the Mothers Against Drunk Driving organization.





Officers participated in the Touch a Truck event in Colby Park on June 2.



Officer Matt Palmer attended the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERT) Level 1 instructor course (active shooter response) from June 5 through June 9, 2023. The curriculum of this course covered such items as the approach to the active incident, entry into the site, movement through the hallways, room clearing and

tactics, and radio communication. The course also taught post-incident subjects including combat/rescue medicine, treating the injured, evacuation, and scene command. As this was an instructor-level course, students were required to teach the material to the class.

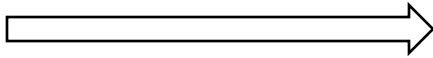
Officer Joe Roetman received special recognition from the Noon Optimus Club of Western Des Moines on June 13. This is the organization's "Annual Respect for Law" program, honoring police officers from Clive, Windsor Heights, and West Des Moines for their outstanding service to our local communities. Honorees were nominated by their department's leadership and provided comments on the rationale for their recognition at the ceremony. Each officer received a framed certificate, and their name was added to an engraved plaque presented to each police department." This recognition began in 2011.

On July 10, 2023, Officers Andrew Nissen and Matt Palmer were dispatched to an apartment complex for the odor of narcotics. Once on the scene, the officers contacted the residents. After a preliminary investigation was completed, detectives were notified and obtained a search warrant for the apartment. Officers located drugs and other contraband throughout the apartment. They also found a handgun (which was later identified as stolen) and a rifle. One person was taken into custody on charges of trafficking stolen weapons, being ineligible to carry a dangerous weapon, and an out-of-state felony warrant.

On July 16, officers responded to a shooting in the 1000 block of 65th Street at 2:15 am. Once there, they located a female who was shot in the arm and the bullet appeared to travel through to her chest. The female was transported to a local hospital where she was treated and eventually released several days later. Detectives investigated the case throughout much of the summer.

Officers assisted Ankeny Police with RAGBRAI on July 26. Over 40,000 cyclists were estimated to ride through Ankeny on their way to Des Moines.

On August 1, the department hosted the Annual National Night Out (NNO) Event in Colby Park. Many members of the community joined us for the activities and met with officers and firefighters. Several area businesses participated.



Chief Roth announced the promotion of Chad Norris and Michael Irlbeck to Police Lieutenant effective September 1. Lieutenant Norris assumed command of the Patrol Division and Lieutenant Irlbeck became the Support Services Division Commander. Lieutenant Rob Pearson worked with both new supervisors until Rob retired from his full-time position in September. Pearson remains on staff as a part-time police officer.

During the Week of August 21, Detective Johson completed a week-long FBI LEEDA Supervisor Leadership Institute Training held at the Polk County Sheriff's Office. LEEDA is the Law Enforcement Executive Development Association.

On August 22, officers conducted a search warrant at a rental property. This was a result of an ongoing narcotics investigation stemming from several complaints of alleged criminal activity. Two males were arrested on various drug charges and one outstanding warrant. The successful conclusion of this case stems from the commendable efforts of Officer Nissen and other members of the department.

An "explosives" incident was reported to the Police and Fire Departments on Thursday, September 7. After investigating, officers discovered the incident occurred in Clive. Detective Johnson worked with area investigators on this incident.

The department assisted with the 2023 Windsor Heights Fall Festival on October 6 and 7. There was a great turnout along with perfect weather. Officers enjoyed interacting with the community. Thank you to the Special Events Committee, City Staff, and the volunteers for an amazing event.

National Night Out was a huge success thanks to Hy-Vee, Walmart Des Moines - 73rd St, The Bake Shoppe Des Moines, Eileen's Cookies-Windsor Heights, DSM Inflatables, Access Yourself Services, Great Clips, and our friends at the Windsor Heights (Iowa) Fire Department! We had an awesome time!



On September 18, Officer Roetman investigated a theft incident from Hy-Vee. The involved individuals reportedly stole from other area Hy-Vee stores and had not yet been identified. Due to Officer Roetman's efforts, he was able to identify and charge two people in the incident. This also helped the West Des Moines Police close their related cases.

Officer Nissen attended a three-day wellness conference hosted by the Iowa Peer Support Foundation (Sept. 27-29). The training took place at the Hilton Garden Inn in West Des Moines.

Lieutenant Irlbeck completed a 40-hour investigative training at Camp Dodge. Officers from five states participated in the class during the week of September 11.

On October 11, Lieutenant Irlbeck and Administrative Support Clerk Breese attended the Administrative Professionals Conference at the Polk County Sheriff's Office. The event was sponsored by the Iowa Police Chiefs Association (IPCA). The agenda included a presentation on Iowa voting laws about polling locations. An additional panel comprised of members of the Iowa Concerns of Police Survivors discussed administrative procedures in the tragic event of a Line of Duty Death.

Eric Stein was sworn in on Monday, November 13 as the department's newest police officer. Officer Stein was already certified and has approximately four years of previous law enforcement experience.

The inaugural Saturday Beggar's Night was held on October 28. Officers handed out candy, provided extra patrols, and interacted with many trick-or-treaters. While speaking with the many parents and guardians, all seemed to like having Beggar's Night on the last Saturday in October instead of the night before Halloween.

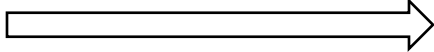
Detective Johnson coordinated the department's participation in the Drug Enforcement Administration's National Prescription Drug Take Back on Saturday, October 28. Over 10 pounds of prescription medication were submitted. The Omaha DEA Region reported that 21,316 total pounds were collected for destruction.

The DMACC Criminal Justice Club hosted a recognition presentation on November 1 at the main campus in Ankeny. This was a formal "thank you" for the donation of two retired WHPD police cars. Mayor Mike Jones, Council Members Susan Skeries and Joseph Jones, as well as other City Staff attended the event. A special plaque was presented to Mayor Jones.

Lieutenant Mike Irlbeck and Detective Kyle Johnson investigated a felony theft case involving area pawn shops. These cases can prove difficult to solve due to the nature of the items being sold. This incident involved many rare and exotic gold coins. However, due to the efforts of the investigators, an individual was located and subsequently charged on December 13.



The annual Shop with a Cop Event was held at Walmart on Wednesday, December 13. Windsor Heights Police and Fire personnel had a wonderful time helping 21 children from 11 families fulfilling some of their holiday wishes. A few event photos were posted on the department's Facebook page. Many thanks to the businesses and people who made this event possible.



City Staff worked with Retired Clive Fire Chief Rick Roe on updating the City's Flood Response Plan. Several meetings and work sessions were held in 2023 to finalize a plan in 2024.



Throughout 2023, several members of the department assisted in updating technology equipment and systems which included the city server project, vehicle mobile modems, body and in-car cameras, a switch over to a new internet provider, electronic access, and many other items. A special thank you to Lieutenants Pearson and Irlbeck for coordinating.

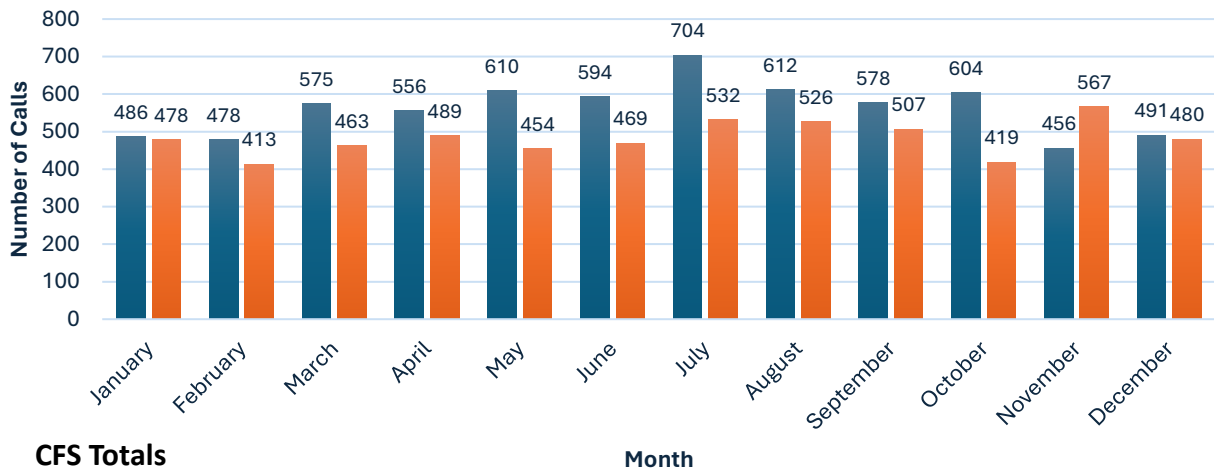






## Windsor Heights Police Department Statistics

### Calls for Service (CFS) by Month



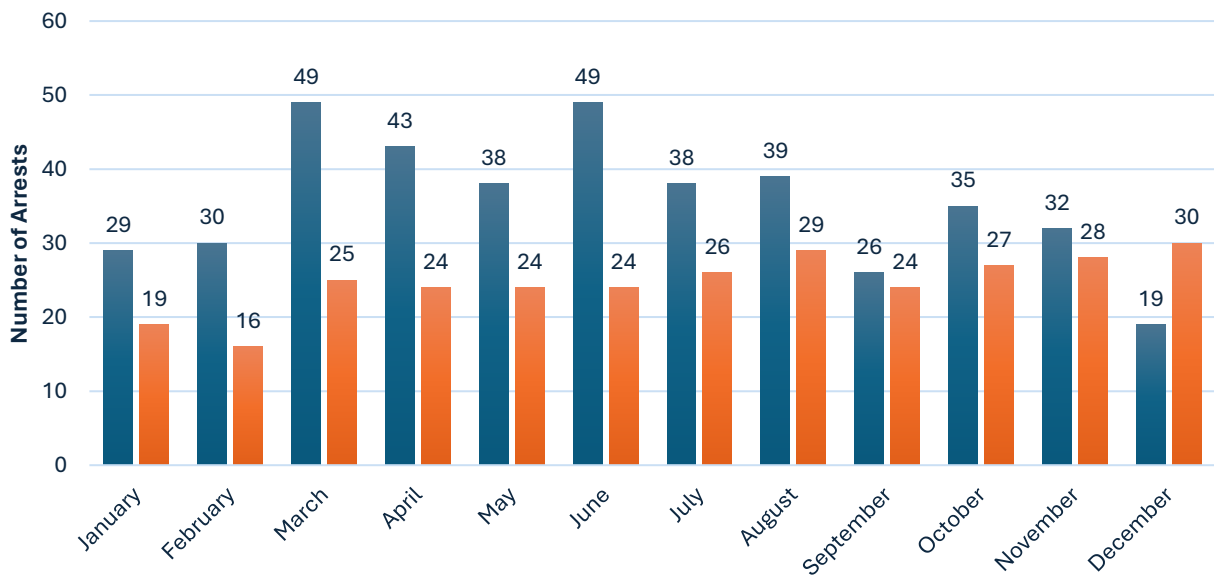
#### CFS Totals

2022 – 6744

2023 – 5797

■ 2022 CFS ■ 2023 CFS

### Arrests by Month



#### Arrest Totals

2022 – 427

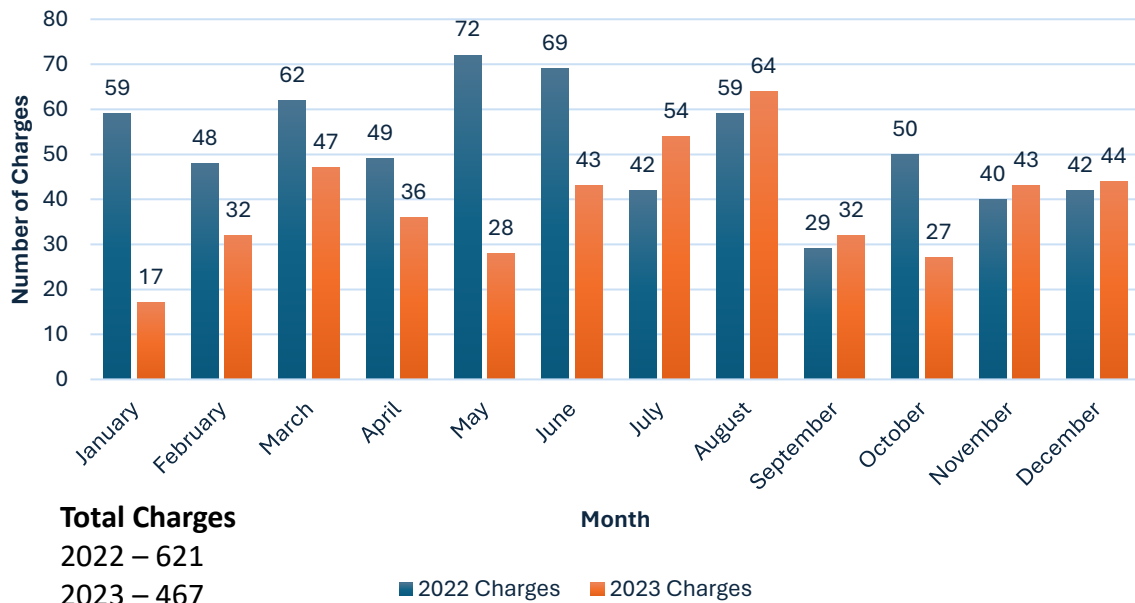
2023 – 296

■ 2022 Arrests ■ 2023 Arrests

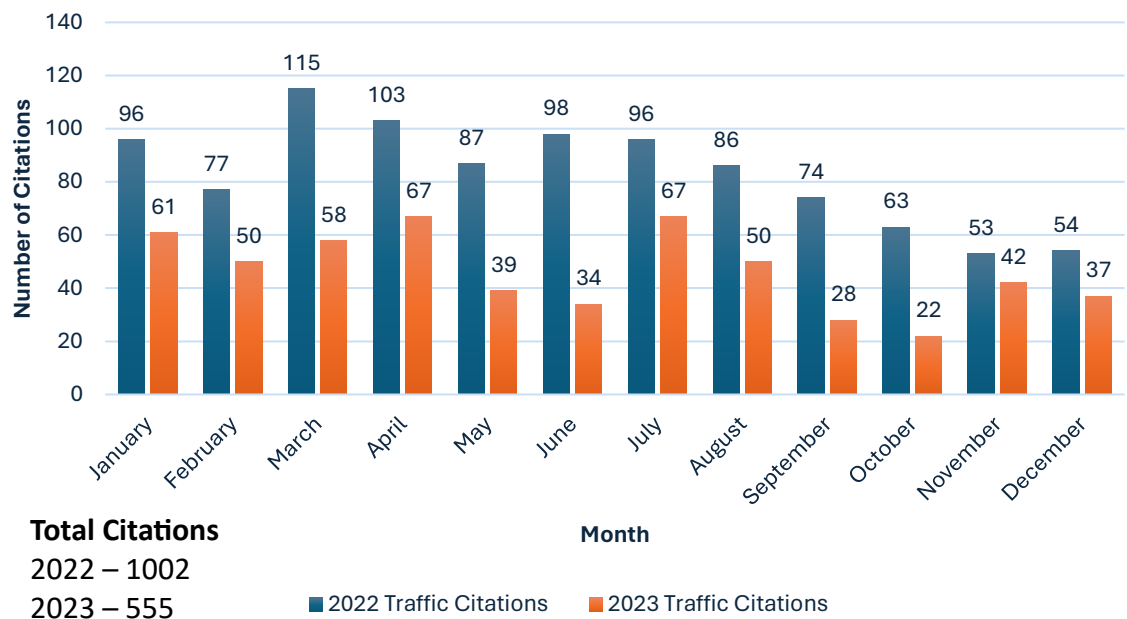


## Windsor Heights Police Department Statistics

### Criminal Charges by Month



### Traffic Citations by Month



## Special Recognition

In addition to the challenging and significant public safety events and incidents encountered in 2023, we saw a year of appreciating the police and fire staff for their accomplishments. Our personnel demonstrated exceptional dedication to protecting and serving our community. Every member of the Windsor Heights Fire and Police Department deserves recognition for their continued efforts, often working in the most dangerous, uncomfortable, and stressful environments.

### Special Awards and Recognition in 2023



***Collin Melody***

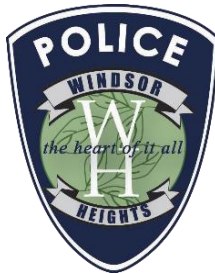
2023 Most Improved Member of the Year

***Brian Jones***

2023 Medic of the Year

***Brett Merseal***

2023 Firefighter of the Year



***Matt Palmer***

2023 Officer of the Year

***Rob Pearson***

West Des Moines Elks Lodge 2023

Law Enforcement Professional of the Year

***Joe Roetman***

Noon Optimist Club of Western Des Moines

Respect for Law Enforcement Award 2023

We also want to express our sincerest gratitude to all our public safety partners in the Des Moines Area for their steadfast support, cooperation, and assistance. These agencies seldom operate independently; instead, they rely heavily on regional collaborators for coverage, handling significant incidents, and exchanging crucial information.

### Windsor Heights Public Safety Committee

Finally, we express our sincere appreciation to the dedicated individuals serving on the Windsor Heights Public Safety Committee, whose unwavering commitment directly supports the endeavors of the Windsor Heights Police and Fire Departments. Thank you for your invaluable contributions!

Mayor Mike Jones

Council Members Lauren Campbell and Joseph Jones

City Administrator Adam Plagge

Residents Anna Hyatt, Darren Skeries, and Michael Stueckrath