

# **PRE-MEETING AGENDA**

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**Casper City Council**  
**City Hall, Council Meeting Room**  
**Tuesday, August 2, 2022, 5:30 p.m.**





*\*Please silence cell phones during the City Council meeting\**

	<b>Presentation</b>	<b>Beginning Time</b>	<b>Allotted</b>
1.	One Cent	5:30	10 min
2.	Public Information Officer	5:40	10 min
3.	Agenda Review	5:50	5 min
	Approximate Ending Time		5:55

**We are CASPER**

**Communication    Accountability    Stewardship    Professionalism    Efficiency    Responsiveness**

July 27, 2022

MEMO TO: J. Carter Napier, City Manager   
FROM: Keith McPheeters, Police Chief   
SUBJECT: Casper Police Department Public Information Officer Position

**Meeting Type & Date**

Council Regular Session Pre-meeting  
August 2, 2022

**Action type**

Information Only

**Recommendation**

That Council, in an on-going effort to enhance, maintain, and solidify the hard-won relationship the Casper Police Department has built with its community, continue to support and fund the Police Public Information Officer position in the Police Department.

**Summary**

For many years, the Casper Police Department assigned a full-time, sworn police officer to serve as the Public Information Officer (PIO) of the Casper Police Department. The PIO was responsible for working with the press and with enhancing and developing the Department's outreach in the community. The PIO also managed the Department's social media platforms. During this time period, the Department enjoyed some success in developing the community's perception of the Casper Police Department.

At the end of 2017, a change in Department Administration brought a new focus on transparency and more resources dedicated to the maintenance and development of the Department's reputation in the community. Soon thereafter, the Department's in-car camera systems were upgraded and Body Worn Cameras were added to our equipment portfolio adding to the complexity of timely transparency with our citizens.

In early 2019, the Department shifted its PIO focus to be more proactive in our outreach and transparency efforts, returning the sworn PIO position back to the Patrol Division and hiring a talented and experienced, civilian PIO.

Immediately, the Department's outreach efforts dramatically increased. The Department's social media footprint expanded rapidly. Police participation in community events skyrocketed. Increased community participation in Department events paralleled this meteoric rise.

This focus and dedication of resources, to include a full-time, dedicated, civilian PIO, began to produce the desired impact on our community's participation in our public safety goals. In the summer of 2020, while the rest of the nation struggled to maintain a working relationship with its citizens in the wake of high profile unrest and discourse regarding police legitimacy, the Casper Police Department, due in no small part to our outreach efforts and growing capacity for transparency and community dialogue, continued to benefit from an active, working relationship with our community, built on mutual trust and respect.

The Casper Police Department *needs* to have the continued benefit of a PIO untethered by the archaic mindset and philosophies of traditional law enforcement perspectives. The civilian PIO experiment has been, by every measurable, an unqualified success. A success which has been a benefit to not only the Police Department, but also to the entire City of Casper organization as well as to our community at large. One need only look at the successes of the Casper Police Department's recruiting efforts during some of the most challenging times in Law Enforcement's history of recruiting struggles to see a perfect example of the efficacy of having the civilian PIO dedicated to the Police Department. Another example is "The Day is Done" marketing campaign to reduce stolen firearms in our community, an effort that received national attention and recognition from the International Association of Chief of Police (IACP) Mid-size Agencies Division.

Even with this hyper focus on carrying the messaging of the Casper Police Department, the PIO, unfettered by the ancillary duties of a traditional, sworn police officer, actively participated in and assisted nearly every department within the City of Casper organization, while still maintaining the priority focus on the Police Department's marketing and outreach transparency.

The PIO position of the Casper Police Department serves more than our external communication efforts. The PIO position is a demanding, more than full-time, critically important position that serves an integral role in the Department's administration while also helping to bridge the internal communication gap between Administration and the Department's professional and sworn staff. The PIO position frequently and routinely worked far more hours than the 40-hour, standard workweek. The PIO, an exempt position, responded to call-outs and emergencies on nights and weekends, accepted calls, emails, and texts from our media partners 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and made countless appearances at Department functions and community events.

It is the recommendation of the Casper Police Department that the Police PIO position remain funded within the Police Department budget so that the obvious and readily apparent momentum the Department has attained under this program is not only maintained, but added to, as we continue down this path which has proven to be immensely effective.

**Financial Considerations**

None. The PIO position is currently budgeted under the Police Department's FY23 Budget.

**Oversight/Project Responsibility**

Keith McPheeters, Chief of Police

**Attachments**

None