



**Marty Kelly**  
Goodhue County Sheriff

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**DATE:** January 9, 2023  
**TO:** Goodhue County Personnel Committee  
**FROM:** Marty Kelly, Sheriff  
**RE:** Request to hire an overlap Public Safety Telecommunicator (PST)

**Summary**

Public Safety Telecommunicators are an essential position to the Emergency Communications Center. In order to best serve our residents, new staff undergo a comprehensive training program of 5-6 months. We are requesting to hire a Public Safety Telecommunicator (PST) now to begin the training program and backfill an expected vacancy in order to ensure minimal impact to the public safety communications.

**Background**

The Emergency Communications Center is embracing new terminology for staff which better describes the critical work performed. Public Safety Telecommunicator (PST) is the new term used for Dispatcher. For the 2023 budget, the Emergency Communications Center has 12 approved FTEs: 8 full-time PSTs and 4 full-time PST Sergeants.

A recruitment and hiring process is currently underway for a Public Safety Telecommunicator position vacated by a 25-year employee. This is a significant loss in this relatively small division. Our PSTs go through a five to six-month training program within our Emergency Communications Center. This is a substantial undertaking not just for the new staff, but also for the Communications Training Officer (CTO) overseeing the training.

Additionally, we anticipate the retirement (or phased retirement) of a 32-year Public Safety Telecommunicator Sergeant by the second quarter of 2023. We expect to promote from within to backfill this upcoming vacancy and would like to begin this process immediately in an effort to stem the tide of outgoing institutional knowledge.

During the Public Safety Telecommunicator training period, the new staff is compensated out of the E911 funds until they are proficient in the position thus the approved salary budget is not impacted.

Again, the PST Sergeant retirement date is unknown, but inevitable. Given the training time, we believe Goodhue County is best served by hiring 2 full-time PSTs now to avoid gaps in staffing and pass along vital operations information.

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**Recommendation**

Recognizing the importance of succession planning and continuity of operations, we recommend the Board authorize the immediate hiring of an overlap Public Safety Telecommunicator to best prepare for the forthcoming PST Sergeant retirement.