



A piece of Buffalo Police Department's history

Until the Winnebago Indians had their Treaty revoked in 1855, and was forced to move from the area that is now occupied by the downtown business district, they lived in an area that they found to be abundant with fish, wildlife, and mosquitoes. With the assistance of the U. S Army, Winnebago Chief Winnisheik led his people away from what is now Buffalo to new territory further west, allowing settlers to move in and the modern history of Buffalo to begin.

In 1857 an election precinct was organized and Armasa Ackley was elected as the first Constable of Buffalo. In 1888 a Village jail was completed and remained in use until 20 years later when the State Board of Control condemned it, forcing Village officials to use the county jail

George R. Laplant Jr. was appointed as the first full time Chief of Police of Buffalo on November 15, 1948. His duties were defined by Village ordinance and practice to preserve the peace within the Village Limits of the Village of Buffalo and to arrest all persons openly violating the laws of the State of Minnesota or the ordinances of the Village. Eddie Willems recalls working with Laplant in the late 1940's. Laplant, while dressed in his police uniform, would assist Willems with street and utility department duties. When they returned to the municipal building for lunch, Laplant would gather messages relating to requests for police service. Laplant would sometimes use the 1 ½ ton plow truck to respond the police calls so that he could promptly return to continue assisting Willems with other street and utility projects.

The first Buffalo Police car was purchased from Mahoney Elliot Chevrolet Company in 1948. The black 1948 Chevrolet 2 door Town Sedan cost \$1,295.25.

The first technology of the Buffalo Police Department was adopted in June 1951. A radio was installed into the new 1950 Deluxe 2 door Ford that replaced the 1948 Chevrolet the year before.



In November 1957 the Wright County Sheriff and the County Auditor appeared at a Council meeting to discuss the possibility of locating the Sheriff's Office and Jail in the Buffalo Municipal Building until the new court house was completed. A motion carried that the Village cooperate with the County in furnishing space for the Sheriff's Office and the jail during the construction of the courthouse with the understanding that space would be provided in the county garage for village motor grader and truck if necessary. The iron bar cage was present for several years until the Buffalo Municipal Building was renovated.

On January 24, 1966, after Laplant's resignation as Chief of Police, Lyle W. Spicer was appointed as Chief of Police. After serving as a Village Police Officer for a little over a year, George Laplant Jr. submitted his resignation from the police department. After much discussion, his resignation was accepted effective April 15, 1967.

Lyle Spicer resigned as Police Chief effective March 31, 1972. James J. McKown was appointed Chief of Police July 1, 1972.

In April 1978 the police department was authorized to purchase a tranquilizer gun for catching dogs running loose in the city. The police department still has that gun today.

The City Council received a letter of resignation from James McKown in December 1993. In February 1984 the City Council heard the recommendation of the Police Chief Selection Committee to hire Dan Scott as Police Chief.

The resignation of Dan Scott was accepted on February 16, 1993 by the City Council with regrets. The Council promoted Bob Fix to the Chief of Police position effective March 1, 1993.

In May of 2000 Mitch Weinzetl was hired as the new Police Chief for the Buffalo Police Department. Thereafter, he recommended Bob Harri be promoted to the position of Lieutenant effective January 1, 2004.

At a July 2004 City Council meeting proposals were opened and reviewed on the provision and installation of a Nomadic Wireless Data System. Administrator Auger explained that the City is attempting to push technology out to the field. He related examples of troops commissioned in the Iraq war are far less numbers due to technology in the operations and in the field.

Administrator Auger explained the Request Partner program and demonstrated its use in terms of citizens contacting the City anytime 24/7 to relay requests directly to staff whereby there is no intermediary to pass the information through so follow up can be made more efficiently and in less time. The request can be accessed in the field rather than requiring a trip to retrieve the information at the office.

Chief Weinzetl discussed the technology improvement journey the Department is embarking. He talked about the ability to move electronic data and demonstrated one process that currently reduces redundancies within the law enforcement system as well as how it reduces the need for paper.





With the increasing staff and the need for space, the mission was on for a new facility to house the Police Department.

With this, a new building was erected at 215 1st Street NE. The police department held an open house on Saturday, May 21st at the new facility. Dedication and guided tours were a part of the city's celebration. The new address is 215 1st Street NE.



At the June 19, 2006 Council meeting Administrator Auger reported City of Buffalo employees have been considering ways of saving energy resources used by the City. A Ford Escape Hybrid was purchased for the CSO vehicle, and a Toyota Highlander Hybrid was purchased for the Sergeant's vehicle.



As recent as 2007, the police department continues improvement in the efficiency and delivery of public service. The department has grown to consist of eighteen full-time officers, two full-time office staff, one part-time office staff, an Administrative Assistant, one full-time Community Service Officer, and six part-time Community Service Officers.

For current information about the Buffalo Police Department, please visit the other areas of our website.