

Stavn, Stephanie

From: Derek Wallace <derek.wallace4@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 25, 2024 12:58 AM
To: Andrae, Richelle; Kigeya, April; Collins, Aaron; Gray, Anthony; Peterson, David; Weigand, Jeff; Rose, Rick
Cc: Kuhn, Jamie; Miles, Patrick; Stavn, Stephanie
Subject: PP&J June 25, 2024 - Jennifer Foth Statement
Attachments: Jennifer Foth.docx

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Chair Andrae, Vice Chair Kigeya and Members of the Public Protection and Judiciary Committee,

Please find attached another written statement, this one written by Communicator Jennifer Foth. Jennifer has over 30 years of service to the department. She was somewhat surprised that her new shift pick actually works out better for her personally than the current shift she works, but yet she remains steadfast in her opposition to a mid-year shift pick, citing the profound impact on the rest of her work family. Jennifer's statement reflects the damage already incurred to the department's reputation and its ability to recruit and retain quality employees, and we ask for your support as we work to avoid the most devastating outcomes yet to occur if a mid-year shift pick is implemented.

Respectfully,

Derek Wallace
President, EGR 720

P.S. Please kindly attach this email and attachment to the minutes for the June 25 PP&J meeting.

Being second in seniority, I got one of the six shifts offered with set days, and although I'm not thrilled about my new hours (2230-1030 is a brutal shift), I was able to preserve having Fridays off to be with my father for the rest of the year, and for that I am grateful. However, my gratitude ends there. Nothing has changed in my opinion that a mid year shift pick was unnecessary and quite frankly, cruel to so many people.

In Mr. Brockmeyer's grievance decision he writes "Even though...I have denied the grievance, the department must make further attempts to mitigate the impact this change will have on our employees." Not only did nothing of the sort happen, employees were given a mere ten days between shift pick and implementation of the new shift pattern. Ten days to adjust already scheduled appointments. TEN DAYS to make new childcare arrangements. Please take a moment and ask yourself how you would feel if this happened to you. At the time of this writing, there are multiple when employees who are scheduled for six days in a row as the rotations change. Because this is a staffing problem and not just a schedule problem, the overtime is still going to be there, and it will still need to be filled with ordered overtime. Those people who are now working six days in a row after having their lives upended on 10 days notice are quite likely to be ordered almost every single one of those six days. If that worst case scenario comes to fruition, there will be employees working a 72 hour week.

While my life was not profoundly impacted, the lives of so many of my coworkers have been. It breaks my heart to see my work family breaking down in tears or talking about how they've been newly added to the transfer list.

If we lose only half of the people who are now actively trying to transfer out of our department, it will be catastrophic. Experience and length of service to the department are not at all valued by management, but what happens when all that experience leaves and there's no one left to share their knowledge with new hires? Responder AND citizen safety will be compromised.

Brand new employees have told me they want to leave as soon as they can. How much money is the department wasting in productivity and training hours, just to lose these people because no one was brutally honest with them about our staffing struggles? Why do we continue to hire small classes of 4-5 when we need to hire double that if we're ever to crawl out of this staffing shortage hole?

Word has gotten out about what is happening, and dispatchers from counties other than Dane have told me they won't apply here because of the working conditions.

I recognize that staffing shortages are an industry-wide problem. However, the utter failure of management to consider the well being of employees, or to make any small effort to recognize how hard many employees are working is starting to wear many of my coworkers down. People don't want to leave just because it's shiftwork, they want to leave because they are wholly undervalued and unappreciated.

I would like to reiterate that I have seen many staffing shortages in my 32 years, and I've never experienced anything like this. It is an absolute tragedy.