

**PROGRAM EVALUATION TOPIC PROPOSAL
FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION**

**Submitted by: Sup. Andrae, PP&J
November 14, 2024
Subject: PSC Scheduling Analysis**

Note: After discussing with your standing committee and any other relevant parties, please submit your proposal to Lisa MacKinnon, Sustainability and Program Evaluation Coordinator in the Office of the County Board, at MacKinnon.Lisa@danecounty.gov. It will be shared with the County Board Chair and Executive Committee for discussion and consideration. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE: By the end of October.

Please provide information for each of the following sections in order to develop your program evaluation proposal. Take as much space as you need and feel free to provide additional resources if you think they will be helpful to understanding the program evaluation proposal.

1) TOPIC OF THE PROGRAM EVALUATION: PSC Scheduling Analysis

Creating a schedule pattern that maximizes time off for 77 Communicators, who are exposed to vicarious/secondary trauma and suffer from post-traumatic stress, is critical in allowing staff to create a work life balance that allows staff to cope and heal due to the trauma they are exposed to daily. Balancing the staffing needs in PSC, that requires a specific number of staff per shift while minimizing forced overtime has been challenging over the last 25 years, creating more reliance on forced overtime. There are numerous elements that factor into PSC's schedules including:

- Meeting service levels of answering 90% of calls in 15 seconds or less
- Having schedules adhere to an equalized pay period of 74.7 hours
- Fluctuating staffing needs due to weather, community events and large-scale public safety situations
- An industry average of 30% annual attrition
- Need for staffing redundancy to accommodate for staff illness and FMLA
- Staff desire for alternative schedule patterns of 10/12 hour shifts

The needs and desire of staff sometimes conflict with the operational needs of PSC creating an adversarial environment that impacts retention, overtime and culture with PSC. This issue came to a head in 2024, specifically, though it has been long-standing. A new scheduling pattern with short notice started in summer 2024, causing significant distress for staff. Securing an objective third-party consultant that has the tools and expertise to guide on schedule pattern alternatives is needed to build long-term scheduling stability and help contribute to a culture that allows staff to find professional satisfaction and balance, while maintaining public safety standards.

2) SCOPE OF THE PROGRAM EVALUATION

A criterion for the consultant will be a history of working successfully with organized labor organizations as meeting with local 720 leadership will be required. This is beneficial to demonstrate the collaborative nature of the relationship between labor and management. A completely non-biased consultant would be able to use call data to create schedules that maximize staffing redundancy while determining what staff are defining as work life balance and meeting those needs. PSC will be the Department impacted, but the mechanisms used to determine and create these schedules could be replicated for other 24/7 departments within the County. Labor and Management have also agreed that current Employee Benefit Handbook policies will be reviewed and changed if necessary to balance Department and staff needs. The consultant would spend time on-site at PSC and also in direct communication (e.g., focus groups, interviews) to gather input from both staff and management. The finished report will be presented by the consultant to PP&J as well as provided to PSC staff.

3) ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

Securing staffing evaluation to develop effective alternative schedules based on required staffing levels to meet 911 answering time goals that is agreed to by Labor and Management will:

- Reduce attrition
- Reduce unanticipated time off
- Reduced forced overtime
- Increased employee job satisfaction
- Follow up after one year from consultant

Additionally, regarding the creation of alternative schedules, the consultant would recommend workforce management tools that incorporate dynamic staffing forecasts.

The overall impact to the residents and visitors in Dane County will be retaining a more tenured staff to effectively respond to their 911 calls, which benefit everyone in the way of saved lives and property. Staff at PSC will also be more satisfied with their work and optimally able to respond to community needs.

4) DESIRED TIMELINE/ BUDGET TIMING

Timeline would be:

- Release an RFP in December 2024. Due to the very specialized nature of qualified vendors for this a limited response time and evaluation period the award of the contract would be completed by February 1, 2025.
- The schedules would need to be presented by early May 2025 with presentation to PP&J made that month.
- Staff would receive the schedules in June of 2025.
- Staff would select individual shifts in the annual shift pick in September 2025.
- New schedules start January 2026.