



Referendum proposed to increase police and fire positions

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KENOSHA – The Kenosha Common Council on Monday will consider scheduling a referendum for the August 9 primary election, with a goal of adding 10 additional police officers and six additional firefighters and all the required equipment needed to fully provide for their service.

Approval of the referendum is needed in order to increase the tax levy beyond its state mandated limit by \$2.5 million for additional police and fire protection services. If the referendum is approved, the owner of a \$200,000 home would pay approximately \$5.50 per month.

“Increased development in the City of Kenosha means the City needs additional public safety personnel in the Police and Fire Departments. We want to ensure residents, visitors and businesses have continued access to high-quality public safety services,” Antaramian said.

Police Chief Eric Larsen said Kenosha is not immune to crime or its consequences. “Crime scenes have become more complex due to advancing technologies, that also require a greater personnel allocation and require greater technical skills,” Larsen stated. “Additionally, the department has increased its focus on building relations with the community and I believe this will play an equally significant role in any expansion of the department.”

Fire Chief Chris Bigley said department call volume and the complexity of the emergency service calls have increased over time.

“While emergency medical response is the primary duty, along with fire suppression, the complexity of these calls and the manpower needed to provide required treatment continue to tax our resources,” Bigley stated. “The additional manpower will allow the Fire Department to continue to provide other services including fire prevention inspections, fire investigations and

public education efforts in a timely manner.”

A failure to pass the public safety referendum to increase the levy will result in the City’s inability to hire the additional staff to meet the growing public safety needs of the community.