



Police Department

Edward A. Flynn  
Chief of Police

August 10, 2009

To the Honorable  
Committee of Finance and Personnel  
200 East Wells Street – room 205  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Committee Members:

RE: File # 080783 - Merit days off for civilian personnel.

In May of 2008, I directed that major changes be made to the Department's Merit Awards Program. I envisioned a new program, which would mimic the military and that of other major police departments. The program consists of nine different awards in two major categories: **Category 1 - Heroism Awards:** Medal of Honor, Medal of Valor and Lifesaving. **Category 2 - Police Service Awards:** Meritorious Service, Purple Valor/Star, Distinguished Service, Unit Service, Excellence in Police Service, and Chief's Superior Leadership.

The program includes the issuance of medals, certificates, uniform commendation bars and lapel pins. Merit days off (between one and five days) would also be granted for acts, which fall under the heroism category (See SOP 490 - MERIT AWARDS PROGRAM attachment for detailed information).

In the interest of treating all members fairly, the new Merit Awards Program was written to include all members of the Department. However, in the late stages of development, it was learned City Ordinance 350-40 restricts the awarding of merit days off to only members of the "police force". City Ordinance defines the "police force" as sworn members of the Department.

Although not frequent, there has been and I assume there will be future, acts of a heroic nature in which a civilian member of the Department may become involved. In keeping with my intent to treat all members of the Department fairly, I suggested a change to the ordinance. The item was assigned council file #080783 on 10/07/08.

The proposed change to the ordinance is as follows:

350-40. Vacations.

15. POLICE DEPARTMENT.

a-2. Police Heroism. The chief of police is authorized to establish departmental rules in accordance with city ordinances for the purpose of granting additional vacation and off days to members of the police force ~~force~~ department who demonstrate

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outstanding merit in the apprehension of criminals and meritorious acts of heroism and bravery beyond the call of duty. No more than 14 additional days off shall be granted to any one member of the police force in a calendar year.

To avoid delays in the release of our Merit Award Program, the program was amended to reflect current ordinance. It required dividing heroic awards into two categories: awards for police members and awards for civilian members. The policy was promulgated November 13, 2008.

It remains my intent to move forward with the proposed ordinance change so all members of the Department will be equally eligible for merit days off when appropriate under an act of heroism.

Sincerely,



EDWARD A. FLYNN  
CHIEF OF POLICE

Attachment: MPD SOP 490 Merit Award Program

EAF:djw