

Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police  
MICHIGAN LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCREDITATION PROGRAM



# Onsite Final Report

**The City of Muskegon Police  
Department December 20, 2023**

**Team Leader: Matt Wolfe**

**Team Member: Scott Kolster**

**A. Agency Name, CEO and AM:**

The City of Muskegon Police  
Department 933 Terrace Street  
Muskegon, MI 49440

Timothy Kozal  
Director of Public Safety

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Casey Bringedahl  
Lieutenant/Accreditation  
Manager

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**B. Dates of the On-Site Assessment:**

Wednesday, December 20, 2023

**C. Assessment Team:**

1. Team Leader: Matt Wolfe, Assistant Chief  
Portage Department of Public Safety  
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Portage, Mi. 49024  
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2. Team Member: Scott Kolster, Staff Sergeant  
East Grand Rapids Department of Public Safety  
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**D. Community and Agency Profile:**

**1. Community**

**Profile**

**City History**

The City of Muskegon has always been linked to the fresh waters that inspired its growth and have maintained its quality of life. Fur pelts, pine logs, and piston rings have traveled

these waters to market. A river meets the lake at a place that's been known as the Lumber Queen of the world, the Port City, and the Riviera of the Midwest; Muskegon.

During the lumbering era, Muskegon boasted more millionaires than any other town in America. Tank engines manufactured in Muskegon were used fighting wars and began to give Muskegon a reputation as a foundry town.

Now, Muskegon has even more to offer including beautiful beaches, scenic forests, bountiful fishing, outdoor life, and culture. Today, Muskegon is a progressive city and has shown it can appreciate its history and its significance while continuing forward growth and movement in creating a new identity.

The City of Muskegon's resurgence is the result of meeting citizen and business needs. Proactive government approaches have led to the formation of strong neighborhood organizations and cooperative initiatives. This set the stage for the people of Muskegon to successfully pass a City income tax for improved police and fire services. Intergovernmental cooperation has led to the creation of a Community Enterprise Zone.

The initiative emphasizes family self-sufficiency, new business development, and job training skills based on strong work ethics. Employment is at a 25 year high. New jobs and industrial aspirations are finding a place to grow in our industrial parks.

The Muskegon Public School system is caught up in the same enthusiasm for improvement. Voters approved a 105-million-dollar capital improvement bond issue in 2020 to upgrade the buildings that have educated generations. The Muskegon "Big Reds" recently brought home their second football state championship since 2017 with a victory over Warrant De La Salle in November of 2023.

The Muskegon Housing Commission is revitalizing neighborhoods with an award-winning, first-time homeowner program for new construction. The City of Muskegon is also improving its downtown area and placing renewed emphasis on our waterfront. Shoreline Drive now beckons visitors to travel along the Muskegon lakefront. The City of Muskegon, with commitment to meeting community needs through thoughtful planning and vision continues to improve the quality of life for those who live and work



here.

Muskegon is a community of 37,827 people; demographics are 57.3% Caucasian, 31.7% African American, and 10% Hispanic. The median age is 34.9 and the median household income is \$37,827, with an unemployment rate of 7.7%.

## 2. Agency Profile

The history of the Muskegon Police Department dates back to 1861, when Muskegon Village was incorporated and elected Marshal Luman Hamblin to be the only peace officer. He was responsible to keep order when loggers and rivermen arrived for a spree.



In 1869, the Village of Muskegon became the City of Muskegon. Until 1920, the personnel of the Muskegon Police Department changed almost annually with the change in administrations. The new charter providing for the commission-manager government in 1920 took the police department out of politics and placed it on a merit basis.

In 1925, Muskegon Police Detective Charles D. Hammond, was shot and killed in a shoot-out on Halloween evening behind City Hall by murderer and escaped felon George “Dutch” Anderson, who was also killed. Anderson had just been arrested for passing counterfeit money and had over \$2,000.00 in counterfeit bills on him when killed.

Advancements came rapidly in the early years, not only to meet the needs of a growing city, but also to cope with the new problems of law enforcement and metropolitan life. The automobile with its traffic problems, juvenile delinquency, and crime detection, brought new duties to the modern police department.

In 1940, the Muskegon Police Department grew to a size of 50 police officers selected on the merit system and trained for police duty as their life’s work.

In 1960, Vice President Richard Nixon visited Muskegon. He was quoted as saying Muskegon was, “The best policed town we’ve been in so far.” The Muskegon Police

Department continued to evolve and modernize with the times. Revolvers were replaced with semi-automatic handguns, body armor became common place, and less than lethal weapons were utilized.

In 2023 the Muskegon Police Department's authorized sworn strength is 72 officers working throughout the Patrol Bureau, Investigations Bureau, Neighborhood Policing Unit, and Administration. The department provides law enforcement and policing functions for a 26 square mile area, including a variety of restaurants, retail stores, schools, industries, and residential neighborhoods. The department also employs 18 civilian team members who work throughout the agency. In 2021 the department received earned accreditation status through Michigan Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission.

The Muskegon Police Department is active in many community programs including the Gang Resistance and Education Program, Social Justice Commission, Caution Team, Alcohol Liability Initiative, Blight Fight, Shop with a Cop, Fishing Derby, National Night Out, National Collegiate Alcohol Awareness Week, Safe-Kids, Maranda Party in the Park, Cops and Kids Cruise, Citizens Police Academy, and Muskegon County Diversion Council.

2022 was a year of leadership transition for the department. Director of Public Safety Timothy Kozal took over for retired Director of Public Safety Jeffrey Lewis in August. Promotions were completed to fill vacancies for the Investigations Captain, Administrative Captain, two Road Patrol Lieutenants, and three Road Patrol Sergeants. Leadership was provided training, which included First Line Supervision, First Line and Mid-Level Supervisor, Shield Leadership Institute Command Level 1, Freedom of Information Act, Communicating in a Crisis, Media and Public Relations, Public Labor Law and Effective Grievance Processing, and Police Executives' and New Chiefs' School.

The Muskegon Police Department is comprised of the following:

Public Safety Administration

Director  
Administrative Captains  
Special Services Lieutenant (Accreditation Manager)  
Police Community Coordinator  
Executive Assistant

Patrol Bureau

Patrol (6 squads)  
Bicycle Patrol  
Parking Enforcement  
Records Bureau  
Quartermaster Program

Investigations Bureau

Investigations (Detectives)  
Neighborhood Police Unit Narcotics (WEMET)  
School Resource Officer  
Beach Patrol  
Violent Crime Task Force  
Detective Evidence Clerks  
Crime Scene Detective

An emphasis has been put on training and the department has experienced an unprecedented amount of training over the past three years. The department now conducts its own training from qualified in-house instructors in areas such as Emergency Vehicle Operations, Use of Force, Active Shooter, De-Escalation, and Verbal Defense and Influence.

The department has started or continued several community programs over the past several years which include:

Caution Team  
MACP Accreditation Process  
Shop with a Cop  
Coffee with a Cop  
End of School Celebrations  
Citizens Academy  
Dumpster Day  
Public Safety Fishing Derby  
Blight Fight

### **3. CEO Biography**

#### **Director of Public Safety Tim Kozal**

Chief Timothy Kozal is currently in his 34th year in law enforcement, serving as Public Safety Director for the City of Muskegon. Prior to Muskegon, he served as Police Chief in Ludington, Manistee, and Edwardsburg. Chief Kozal retired from Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety where he had served 22 years. He was instrumental on the KDPS tactical team leading the team for the last five years. Chief Kozal spearheaded the merging of SWAT teams with KDPS to form a cohesive Metro Swat Team consisting of Portage Police, Kalamazoo County Sheriff, Western Michigan University Police, and Kalamazoo Township Police. He also spent seven and a half years on the multi-jurisdictional drug team where more than 6,000 cases were initiated resulting in the eradication of over \$18 million in illicit drugs. Chief Kozal is the president of the Law Enforcement Thermographer's Association and also sits on several boards and commissions including the Michigan Municipal League Law Enforcement Action Forum.



### **4. Accreditation Manager Biography**

### **Special Services Lieutenant Casey Bringedahl**



Lieutenant Bringedahl grew up in the greater Muskegon County Area and completed his education at Reeths-Puffer High School in 2002. He pursued his higher education at Muskegon Community College and Ferris State University, earning a BA in Criminal Justice.

Lieutenant Bringedahl's journey with the Muskegon Police Department began in 2007. Over the years, Lt. Bringedahl has taken on various responsibilities, serving as a Field Training Officer, Neighborhood Officer, Neighborhood Response Team member, Response to Active Violence Instructor, and WEMET Detective. He went on to fulfill roles as Patrol Sergeant, Patrol Lieutenant and is a recent graduate of Eastern Michigan University Staff and Command School. Currently, Lieutenant Bringedahl holds the position of Administrative Lieutenant, overseeing department accreditation, the Embedded Social Worker program, and the CATT Team.

### **Administrative Captain Scott Zonnebelt**

Captain Zonnebelt has been employed with the Muskegon Police Department for over 18 years. He graduated from Grand Valley State University with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice in 2003, and a master's degree in criminal justice from Michigan State University in 2009. He also holds a professional certificate in Homeland Security from Michigan State University.



Scott has served as a Road Patrol Officer, Neighborhood Officer, Neighborhood Response Team Officer, Sergeant, Lieutenant, and Captain. He has also held positions as Crash Investigator, Fire Investigator, Field Training Officer, Evidence Technician, Background Investigator, Taser Instructor, Traffic Incident Management Instructor, and Accreditation Manager. In his current position as Captain, Scott is responsible for internal affairs investigations, recruitment and hiring, and training. In 2022, then Lieutenant Zonnebelt was the recipient of the Michigan AG's "Above and Beyond the Call of Duty" award for his work as the department's accreditation manager.

## **5. Future Issues**

Chief Kozol discussed the following issues he and his staff will be addressing:

1. **Facilities:** The most pressing challenge the department faces is an ageing and progressively antiquated police facility. Currently, the police department is housed in a multi-level municipal building that was built in 1970 and is shared with multiple city departments. Workspaces are cramped and not

outfitted with the necessary infrastructure to facilitate modern technology. Secure areas are still accessed with physical keys vs. electronic badging etc. Chief Kozal advised that he has taken multiple city leaders on tours of the facility in an effort to highlight the need for improvement. There is currently a renovation occurring in the upstairs portion of the building that will eventually house the department's investigative division. Any comprehensive capital outlay projects to address the issue do not appear imminent.

2. **Recruitment and Retention:** Like many other departments, Muskegon PD is not immune from the challenges of recruitment and retention. The department is authorized for 72 sworn and is currently short 16 of those positions. Competition for officers in this area is a challenge with departments in both Ottawa and Kent counties offering lucrative sign on bonuses, which Muskegon currently does not offer. The command staff also felt that the condition/age of the police department was an impediment to attracting top talent.

### **E. Public Information Activities:**

Public notice and input are cornerstones of democracy and the Michigan Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission (MLEAC) process. This section reports on the community's opportunity to comment on their law enforcement agency and to bring matters to the attention of the commission that otherwise may be overlooked.

#### **1. Telephone Contacts**

The public telephone line was active on, December 20, 2023, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., during which time the assessment team fielded numerous calls.

##### Perry Dennie – Neighborhood Association Leader

Mr. Dennie has served on various neighborhood association boards for approximately 15 years and has frequent contact with community officers, usually at neighborhood meetings. He advised that he's developed a good relationship with Chief Kozal and believes under his leadership the community policing model will continue to thrive. He very much appreciates how active the department is in the community and supports the department's goal of earning re-accreditation status.

##### Tim Cross – Pastor

Mr. Cross has been a Pastor for 40 years and currently serves at Living Word Muskegon. He advised that his church is located in a high crime area and that he has developed a good relationship with the department and its officers. Pastor Cross talked about how he likes the community officer being there when they have special events. He mentioned Trunk or Treat and a bike fixing event they host at the church. Pastor Cross said the department checks in at a minimum one time a year with them.

Pastor Cross talked about an incident where a car was stolen from their parking lot. He said the department had the vehicle back within three hours of the report. He credited the relationship with the department, which he refers to as "great," being the reason they have only had two police events in the last thirty years, despite the area being a high



crime area. Pastor Cross's one complaint is the officers will not accept coffee or doughnuts when they are offered to them.

Pastor Cross said the department creates a positive environment and he is absolutely in favor of them being reaccredited.

Greg Borgman – Citizen

Mr. Borgman is a long-time resident of Muskegon and is a past president of the Neighborhood Association. He previously participated in the Citizen's Police Academy and retired from a program that assisted MDOC parolees transition back into civilian life after serving their respective sentences. In that role, he worked closely with officers from Muskegon PD as they too participated in the program by conducting mock interviews. Borgman advised that he resides in a historical home in the city and is very proud of the community as it continues to revitalize the downtown area. He has participated in many ride along's with officers and believes that the department is staffed with very professional personnel from the line level to the command staff. He said he supports the department's goal of earning re-accreditation.

Jennifer Sanocki-President of the NIMS Neighborhood Association.

Jen called in and expressed how she was "super happy" with the neighborhood policing Muskegon Police Department provides. She likes getting to know the officers and says they are very responsive to the needs of the neighborhood. Jen said the community police officers are very responsive and know the neighborhood. One issue Jen saw was that the community officer in her area constantly changes. She said she has had three different officers in three years. Jen said she knows she is losing her current officer in January and getting a new one. Jen talked about the random pop-up parties the department does. She said this has led to officers making contact with several kids and has been fantastic. Jen acknowledged the difficulties officers are facing. She is happy with the city officials and the police administration. She supports the department getting re-accredited.

Dan Leask – Head of Neighborhood Association

I spoke with Dan Leask who advised that Officer Adam Brown is his community officer. Dan said Adam really engages with them. Dan said he knows the department is down 10 officers but is happy they still keep the community officers around. Dan said the officers are approachable and not arrogant and regularly attend outreach events. Dan said he recently did a ride along with Officer Brown and was amazed at the amount of paperwork officers had to complete for things that were done. Dan said he has moved around a lot over the years. He said the officers at Muskegon Police Department are real people. He thinks this is important as they build relationships with the community. Dan said the officers are respected and trusted within the community. Dan is in favor of reaccreditation.

Randy Vanderweit – McLaughlin Neighborhood Association President

Mr. Vanderweit said that all of his interactions with Muskegon PD have been very

positive. He very much appreciates that they have specific officers assigned to the various neighborhood associations and he's been impressed with the ability officers have demonstrated in building trust and relationships within the community. His only criticism is that due to staffing issues, some officers are now assigned to more than one association. Mr. Vanderweit voiced support for the department's goal of becoming re-accredited through MLEAC.

Terry McCallister- 60-year resident

Terry is 81 years old and has been a Muskegon resident for 60 years and described the department as "responsive." Terry said he liked Chief Jeff Lewis but has seen a change from the top of the department which has put the department in a better position. He said the current chief is in more contact with the officers on the street. Terry likes the outreach officers conduct with the community and feels this is a good thing for the department. He thinks this has increased positive interactions within the community, especially in the neighborhoods and with children. Mr. McCallister supports the department's pursuit of re-accreditation.

Heather Howell – Muskegon Citizen

Ms. Howell voiced frustration with the department, particularly how they handled an assault investigation that led to her son being criminally charged. She advised that Muskegon officers need additional "sensitivity training" as they refused to accept evidence in the case which would have proven her son was the victim rather than the aggressor. Ms. Howell's concerns are memorialized in a subsequent written correspondence.

## 2. Correspondence

The assessors received the following emails regarding the accreditation process:

**Item # 1**

**From:** Kati O'Grady <katiogrady@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 19, 2023 12:28 PM  
**To:** Muskegon Accreditation <muskegonaccreditation@shorelinecity.com>  
**Subject:** Accreditation for folks in Blue!

Whomever,

When the Lt. called wondering if I was available tomorrow morning to speak with someone about the job our police dept. is doing... shucks... I have another commitment at that time. I would much rather speak in person than an email. But this opportunity must be taken.

My name is Kati O'Grady. I bought my house here in Muskegon in 2017 and purposely moved to a neighborhood where I could make a difference. Now being president of ONA (Oakview Neighborhood Assoc.) I have had the honor of working with our police at

deferent occasions. I stood back and watched the inner action as folks come out of their houses this past summer when each neighborhood was visited on the pop up visits. I noticed many of the adults standing back, watching with trepidation, wanting to know what the commotion was. Did the kids hold back... oh no... they were running out when they recognized our neighborhood police officer... who has attended every activity we come up with. They also come running for hugs when they see their school officer. These kids are our future Muskegon... they are getting a great start ... but I think we lose them in Jr. High/High School. What can be done? I don't know but we need to try to keep that connection. I realize, as I went through the same detachment during their teens, it is normal behavior. I think we should try anyway. I would like to see this activity continue. The folks in my neighborhood who missed it asked if y'all were going to do it again... I hope it becomes a weekly event all summer long. Whew a big project I know!

Folks in my neighborhood call me and ask questions as they are still afraid to call the police. They have watched as a police car pulls up for our monthly meetings and they see the smiles, the greetings, the easiness of our connection. They want that easiness but are not willing, yet, to take the hand offered. Our police are at our events, schools, patrolling our city with a wonderful presence. We just need more officers. Whoever is in charge of that scenario needs to visit, or perhaps move to some of our neighborhoods. I know budgets are strained but please keep looking... don't give up trying to increase the presence of our "Folks In Blue". We need, appreciate, and value all you/they do.

Please feel free to call, stop by, or email with anything further I can add. I fully support our police, and first responders in all they accomplish in the limited funds they have.

Kati O'Grady  
889 Kampenga Ave.  
Muskegon, MI  
931-580-6119  
Katiogrady@gmail.com

## **Item # 2**

**From:** heather howell <heatherccllc@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 20, 2023 8:56 AM  
**To:** Muskegon Accreditation <muskegonaccreditation@shorelinecity.com>  
**Subject:** Muskegon police misconduct

June 11th started like any other day.

By 10:20 a.m. that normal day was over.

I got a call at work I will never forget!

My daughter lily was hysterical trying to get the words out the neighbor broke Alex's leg.

I can't put into words the emotional roller coaster my entire household was about to endure.

Time seemed to of stopped on my way home, it was only about 5 minutes it felt like an

eternity.

Not sure what I was going to find when I got home.

I run inside to find Alex sitting on the floor in front of his sisters door. A good 35 ft from our front door. He had scooted himself all the way to her door.

He is not crying, rather calm as he is sitting on the floor with not a broken leg, but a shattered pelvis and a fractured hip. He is basically going into shock. I don't know the extent of his injuries. I just know I can't get him to the hospital and he needs to go immediately.

You would think the brutal attack that just happened to my son would be the most traumatic event that day.

However, our nightmare was just about to start.

I had to call for an ambulance to transport my son.

I let the dispatch know my special needs son was attacked by the neighbor it appears he broke his leg. I need an ambulance. The cops show up before the ambulance, 4 deep the first one is so annoyed by my dog barking in a kennel he makes me leave Alex inside with my daughter who is mortified by the event that just took place.

The neighbor who videos just enough of the incident for their own agenda. Finally returns to the scene, they are moving that day. It his last day as our neighbor. A neighbor we had had issues with for about 3 weeks prior to his attack on my son and then exit from the property.

The cop was asking me what happened I was telling him what my son had said. He was in the house and the neighbor was trying to get in our house. Yelling for my son to open the door. Knocking and trying the handle. My son told him to leave repeatedly. When my son opened the door and he was attacked.

The video the neighbor has shows Alex opening the door with a stick. The neighbor heard my son tell his friend he was gaming with he was answering the door with the stick. That is when the neighbor knocks different and just wants to talk supposedly. he is also video so he can get Alex open the door with it.  
The neighbor shows the video to the police.

The officer comes over to me to tell me my son is lying it didn't happen the way he said. The neighbor has video. Then proceeds to tell my son as he is loaded in the ambulance if he felt so threatened he should of called the police. Every time my son was ask why he opened the door with a stick he said he felt threatened has to protect his sister and himself. Never why was the neighbor at my door in the first place. I didn't know at the time my son was streaming and has the incident on audio. All of it not just a portion of it. The whole incident from the first knock on the door to the neighbors brutal attack.

I let the police know of this evidence and I'm still waiting for them to call me back.

I can't get a victims advocate for my son because the way the police wrote the report. Without all the evidence. I went to the prosecutor, who is not allowed to accept evidence from me it has to come from the police. The police who lacked any critical thinking skills that day. The police who then victimized my son that day. Trying to blame and shame him.

The police who are avoiding me, I spoke with the supervisor to make a complaint. I will be filing my I.A.

I am going to be my sons advocate. All the citizens within my community who suffer from mental illnesses and have special needs deserve justice when their rights have been violated.

I'm ashamed the Muskegon police dept are not equipped to deal with the mental health and special needs of the citizens within our community.

If you have continued to read I appreciate your support.

I will add the public defender and prosecutor finally got it right the day before my son the victim was going to be charged. Finally the prosecutor got to hear our audio evidence and dismissed the case. I don't understand how the mpd got it so wrong actually I do they did not do an investigation like they should of. They do not deserve accreditation they deserve to be charged with obstruction of justice and yo be investigated. I will be filing a internal affairs investigation on the officers involved in my son case. Another worthy question is how many other innocent people are sitting in the Muskegon jail because they didn't have anyone to fight for them.

### **Item # 3**

December 11, 2023

Michigan Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission Re: Muskegon Police Department

Dear Commission Members,

It is an honor and a privilege to write this letter regarding the outstanding performance of the Muskegon Police Department. I have had the pleasure of meeting and working with police officers and personnel at every level. From the Chief to the patrol officer on the street, the men and women of the Muskegon Police Department continue to maintain the highest level of professionalism. I have seen this in action in the courtroom, in our community and in their interactions with other law enforcement agencies. I have also witnessed firsthand, Muskegon Police Department's commitment to continuing education through multiple training opportunities. My office sponsored two critical trainings; one related to testifying in court (for newer officers), the other training involved providing information on successful investigative strategies with drugged driving incidents. The officers of the Muskegon Police Department were well represented at both. This dedication to job performance and more importantly, a dedication to continuing education, has made

the Muskegon Police Department an elite law enforcement agency. I am very lucky to have a police agency that really cares about the detail and accuracy of its officers in everything they do. My staff benefits from their attention to operational detail, evidence gathering and processing, and their want to stay up to date in best practices, every day that they are prosecuting a case involving investigators/police officers from Muskegon Police Department. Our community is safer, thanks to the officers.

Sincerely,  
DJ Hilson  
Muskegon County Prosecutor

### **3. Media Interest**

Although the department issued a press release regarding the on-site, there were no inquiries from the media.

### **4. Interviews**

#### Emily Moregenstern - Police Community Coordinator

Ms. Moregenstern was hired as Muskegon PD's Police Community Coordinator approximately 8 months ago after working for the Chamber of Commerce. She advised that this position has existed since the early 2000's and is responsible for the coordination of all things public relations related in addition to grant writing. She enjoys her new position as she's encouraged to engage in "outside the box" thinking/approach to community relations with the goal of reaching those citizens that aren't normally engaged in the community. She advised that the department recently started doing "Pop up" parties in various neighborhoods within in the city. She described the event as officers going into a neighborhood unannounced, often times with music (DJ or symphony) and engaging with community members for about an hour. Ms. Moregenstern also said that the department is active on Facebook, Instagram, and Tik Tok. She very much supports the agency being re-accredited.

#### Phillip Dill – Officer/Union President

Officer Dill is the union president and has been with the department for 15 years. Phillip says he works well with administration and feels they do not make rash decisions and are up front about things. Phillip said the union filed one grievance in the last year and described this as having nothing to do with anything the administration had done, rather it related to a health care issue that was contractual with the city. Officer Dill said Chief Kozal is very straightforward and meets with each officer annually. These meetings have had a positive effect on morale, according to Dill. Phillip understands the purpose behind accreditation and credits it with getting improving lines of communication within the department.

#### Kristen Evans – Muskegon Co. Human Resources

Ms. Evans is a Human Resources specialist with the County of Muskegon and works directly with the City of Muskegon by providing various HR services on a contract basis. This model has been in place for approximately 25 years when the City of Muskegon lost their in-house HR function. Ms. Evans has a good working relationship with the police department as they administer the hiring and promotional processes within the Civil Service framework, as required by city charter. She said it has been very difficult finding quality applicants over the past few years for a variety of reasons. She advised that any future hiring incentives would need to be approved by both the City of Muskegon and Civil Service. Ms. Evans said that they regularly post job opportunities for the police department on the MCOLES website, as well as social media. Her primary contact at the police department is Captain Zonnebelt, with whom she has a very good “partnership.”

#### Kayla Foster- School Liaison Officer

Officer Foster is in her third year as the liaison officer at Muskegon High School. Kayla said there is also a liaison officer assigned to the middle school and the community officers work with the various elementary schools. Additionally, she advised that there is a 3<sup>rd</sup> party security group that works with the schools primarily monitoring hallways. Officer Foster said that she takes complaints at the high school when she is available, however when she’s tied up road patrol will assist her. She advised that she has a close working relationship with the Assistant Principal of the school. Officer Foster said her biggest challenge at the school is communication between school security and herself, however it’s being worked on.

#### Jonathon Seyferth – Muskegon City Manager

Mr. Seyferth became Muskegon’s City Manager in November of 2022 after serving as manager in Gaines Township in Kent County and prior to that in Coopersville. He stated that the Muskegon PD is the best police organization he’s ever worked with. He’s advised that he’s gotten to know the command staff at the department quite well and believes they provide the department with effective leadership. He’s been impressed with the relationships the department has built within the community and he consistently gets compliments about how the officers carry out their duties. Mr. Seyferth believes that the greatest challenge to the profession is in recruitment and retention. For that reason the city is considering various sign on and/or retention incentives to make them more competitive with nearby departments. Regarding the police facility, Seyferth readily admitted that improvements need to be made and pointed to the remodel the city is doing in the upstairs portion of the building to house the detective bureau. Additionally he stated there are plans to make improvements to the training area and weighroom and he would eventually like to envision a new combined DPW + Police facility. Mr. Seyferth said that he enthusiastically supports the department’s goal of achieving accreditation as it’s a signal to the community that the department adheres to the highest standards in the profession.

### **5. Ride Along’s**

Both assessors participated in ride along’s with patrol staff in the afternoon hours of December 20, 2023.

### Assessor Wolfe and Officer Marlin Dunmire

Assessor Wolfe rode with Officer Marlin Dunmire, an Army veteran who has served the department for approximately 25 years. He was very enthusiastic about his job as a patrol officer and advised that he still enjoys his role as an FTO. He advised that he regularly arrives for work at about 4 a.m. to prepare for his 5:30 a.m. shift. Due to his years of service, Officer Dunmire is eligible to retire, however he stated that he would most likely return to the department post retirement to continue working the road.

Officer Dunmire took me on a tour of various areas within the community and spoke on many interesting cases that have occurred over the years. He pointed out that there has been a considerable amount of investment in the downtown and areas near the lakeshore in an effort to revitalize the city. He stated that many of the neighborhoods are tight knit and most of the citizenry appreciate the department and its officers.

Officer Dunmire spoke glowingly of the department's command staff and stated that he really appreciated the efforts Chief Kozal has made in getting to know all the officers under his command. He asked several questions about the accreditation process and believes it has made the department better as it ensures they're subscribing to best policing practices.

Towards the end of the ride along we were dispatched to large senior living high rise on a missing persons complaint. Officer Dunmire and Officer Dill both responded and made contact with management before making contact with the involved parties. Both officers conducted the investigation in a polite and professional manner and were able to satisfactorily resolve the complaint.

### Assessor Kolster and Officer Hailey Flaska

Assessor Kolster rode along with Officer Hailey Flaska, a 6-year veteran of the Muskegon Police Department. Hailey is a field training officer with the department and presents herself as a very professional and competent officer.

Hailey received a domestic violence call and made contact with the complainant and the other party. The initial on-scene report was there was no physical altercation. Hailey handled herself in a safe and professional manner despite the complainant trying to bait her into a confrontation. Hailey ended the interaction by providing the female half a ride to remove her from any additional confrontation.

Hailey provided a knowledgeable overview of the community and highlighted the different geographical locations which highlighted the many dimensions of the community.

Hailey acknowledged the department was down personnel but knows help is on the way as there were new officers who had recently graduated from the police academy and were completing in house training prior to starting field training. Hailey thought there were additional officers getting ready to start the police academy in January. Hailey spoke highly of her coworkers and the community.

## **6. Community Involvement**



The Muskegon Police Department prioritizes their relationships with the community and encourages positive interactions between their officers and community members. Key to this dynamic is the department's Neighborhood Policing Unit (NPU). This sub-unit consists of a sergeant and seven officers, including one school resource officer (SRO).

Although it is expected that all officers within the department participate in community projects and events, the NPU has officers specifically assigned to different sections of the city where they interact and develop relationships with neighborhood associations and community agencies. By taking this approach, they're better able assess the policing needs of their neighborhoods and take action to address quality of life issues



within their neighborhood of responsibility. Additionally, they act as resource for referrals to other law enforcement and community agencies where appropriate.

Some of the neighborhood initiatives include being part of the National Night Out program; an annual Youth Fishing Derby, where kids 8-12 are provided free fishing poles and food and beverages. Typically, local businesses and neighborhood associations provide funding for prizes, food, and other incentives to participate.

Other community programs include Coffee with Cops, Shop with a Cop, Youth Police Academy, Bicycle Safety events, and Winter Sports Days where 5<sup>th</sup> graders from the



Muskegon Public Schools participate in cross country skiing, ice skating, snowshoeing and a hot dog roast. Their Blight Fight program involves the delivery of dumpsters to neighborhoods where residents can throw away items no longer needed or are an eyesore to the community. The Blight Fight program has led to the demolition of hundreds of structures in the city in order to make neighborhoods safer and look more appealing.

The department also established a program called the Caution Team. This team is made up of local pastors and community leaders who are called upon during stressful community situations where de-escalation is needed to calm tensions between the community and the police, for example, during a traumatic event like a shooting or homicide. This team gives officers and the department a viable resource to count on during times of crisis. The program has been well received by the community.

## **F. Essential Services:**

### **Chapter 1 – The Administrative Function:**

#### Direction of Personnel

The Director of Public Safety has the sole authority to issue, modify, and approve agency written directives. The department uses PowerDMS as their platform to issue, disseminate and archive policies. Anyone in the department can proffer suggestions to existing policies/procedure through their respective Bureau Commander. The written directive system was clear and understandable, and the directives were constructed in a logical manner with employee duties and responsibilities clearly defined, including constraints on employee actions and expectations.

#### Fiscal Control

The agency continues to maintain one cash account in the Records Section. The records supervisor is in charge of reconciling the two cash drawers every day. The drawer is balanced every day with a beginning balance of \$50 to start out the day. The records supervisor makes a daily deposit to the City Treasurer's Office with all transactions being tracked via BS&A software. There is no petty cash account. Instead, the agency utilizes the City Treasurer to obtain petty cash. The department conducts regular (monthly) cash reviews that are memorialized.

#### Internal Affairs

The internal affairs function is the responsibility of the Administrative Captain, Scott Zonnebelt. The agency will accept and investigate all complaints, even those made anonymously. The agency receives informal and formal complaints. Informal complaints go to the supervisor who fills out a complaint form which becomes an entry into their Guardian Tracking program which is used to document performance and alert command to any potential early intervention issues that may arise. If complaints can be handled at the shift level the complaint can be closed out by the appropriate command officer. If the complainant requires additional investigation, it is transferred to a formal complaint which is overseen by Captain Zonnebelt. Upon completion of the

investigation, the complaints are forwarded to the Director and the complainant is notified of the outcome. There is an appeal process for the complainant if they are not happy with the outcome where they may take their concerns to the Muskegon Citizen's Police Review Board.

In 2022, there were thirteen formal internal affairs investigations initiated, with 9 of the complaints being external and four internal. Four of the complaints were sustained with varying degrees of discipline rendered. The department made improvements to their website in 2022 which allows the department to easily accept complaints or compliments. Additionally, the website provides the citizen with an overview of the complaint process and how to appeal the findings of a complaint to the Citizen's Review Board.

Supervisors are responsible to monitor and take corrective action on any identified early warning triggers.

### Disciplinary Procedures

The agency's written directive system details the rules, regulations, and expectations for employee conduct. Supervisors have discretion to place employees on administrative leave when it is in the best interest of the individual or the department. The agency is well-disciplined and has procedures to apply training and counseling in lieu of punitive employee discipline. The agency has an appropriate appeal and grievance process in place with established timelines. There were grievances filed in 2021 and 2022. The 2021 grievance dealt with the length of a suspension that was eventually withdrawn after the discipline was modified. The 2022 grievance was in response to the city not allowing union personnel to participate in the health insurance opt out benefit if they were related to another city employee who received health coverage. There were no grievances filed in 2023.

### Organization

All sworn personnel take, sign, and subsequently abide by an oath of office to enforce the law and uphold the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Michigan and the rules and regulations of the Muskegon Police Department. All agency personnel acknowledge a code of ethics and receive ethics training. Bias-influenced policing is strictly prohibited by the agency. There is a clear definition for bias-influenced policing, including but not limited to race, mistreatment of individuals based on ethnic background, national origin, gender, sexual orientation/identity, religion, economic status, age, cultural group, or any other identifiable characteristics.

The agency also prohibits unlawful workplace discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment. The City of Muskegon harassment policy as well as the Muskegon Police Department's written directive outlines a proper reporting mechanism in the chain of command, including an alternate reporting process for any conflict of interest. The directives require employees to report any type of harassment and requires investigations to be conducted in accordance with state law. Every employee completes a yearly acknowledgement of these written directives during the performance evaluation process, which reaffirms their understanding of expectations outlined within the policy as well as affirms the employee has not been a victim of harassment. There

were no reported incidents of workplace harassment during the assessment period.

The police personnel have structured unity of command. In the Muskegon Police Department, the Director of Public Safety is supported by three Captains. The Muskegon Police Department currently authorized seventy-two full-time sworn personnel along with five part-time sworn personnel with eight civilian personnel. There are five lieutenants, nine sergeants and fifty-five full time patrol officers. Detective Bureau includes a captain, sergeant and eight detectives. The CAT team consists of a lieutenant and two road patrol. The Neighborhood Policing Unit has one sergeant and eight patrol officers, one of which is also the School Resource Officer. The agency also has access to supervisory personnel on a 24-hour basis, there is always a supervisor on-duty. In the absence of the Director, one of the Captains is assigned as in command of the department.

#### Agency Equipment and Property

Agency personnel are responsible for all equipment issued to them or physically under their control. It is the responsibility of the employee to maintain all law enforcement-related equipment in an operational state and report any malfunctions, damage, or loss of equipment immediately to their supervisor. The wearing of body armor is mandatory for all sworn personnel, and there are additional requirements to wear body armor while engaged in pre-planned and high-risk operations. All field personnel were observed to be wearing appropriate body armor during the on-site assessment. All sworn personnel are responsible for the maintenance of agency-issued equipment. Comprehensive inventory/inspections were conducted of agency equipment during the accreditation period.

#### Media Relations

The responsibility and authority for the release of information to the media remains solely with the Director of Public Safety. In situations not warranting immediate notice to the Director of Public Safety and in situations where the Director of Public Safety has given prior approval, Bureau Commanders, Patrol Lieutenants, and designated Public Information Officers (PIOs), may prepare and release information to the media as outlined in their policy (324.3) and in accordance with all applicable laws regarding confidentiality.

The designated PIO shall serve as the contact for the release of daily information. Their responsibilities include arranging and assisting at press conferences and coordinating the release of pertinent information concerning agency investigations.

The policy dictates that no member of the agency will make any comment to the media regarding any law enforcement incident without prior approval of the Director of Public Safety. Media access to police related events is properly detailed in policy (324.6)

#### Agency Records and Computers

The agency has a detailed written directive system describing field reporting, follow-up investigations, and the approval of reports by supervision. The department controls access to agency records electronically with records management passwords. Any hard copies of reports are stored in a room where only records staff has access. Juvenile

records are kept separate, and there are extra security measures in place for non-public records. All freedom of information requests are handled by the Detective Captain and the agency abides by the state retention and disposal requirements in accordance with Michigan Statute and Records Management.

The agency has procedures to protect its central records. The data is stored and backed up electronically and is password-protected. Muskegon Central Dispatch oversees security and backup of central records. Annual security audits and password audits were performed during the assessment period and information was given to Central Dispatch to update records. There were no breaches in security during the assessment period.

### Agency Training

The agency training records are current and are being maintained in accordance with applicable retention schedules. Both Guardian Tracking and PowerDMS are utilized as repositories for agency training records. Training course content is outlined, and lesson plans are utilized. In-house instructors are properly trained and experienced. New sworn personnel are required to complete an extensive field training program. Officers in field training rotate shifts and assigned field training officers in an attempt to expose newly hired officers to all shifts.

Field training officers are selected pursuant to a well-defined process and at the direction of the Director of Public Safety. The field training program is supervised by a Lieutenant who reports to the Patrol Bureau Commander. Newly promoted personnel receive supervisory and leadership training consistent with new responsibilities and tasks.

The agency has a remedial training policy that was utilized on a regular basis. During the assessment cycle, the department acquired the online training platform PoliceOne Academy to augment their existing training.

Specific required annual training topics were properly identified in the written directive. The agency conducts mandatory training annually with each patrol team to accomplish the required training, review of material, and assessments. Annual training included firearms, hazmat, use of force, blood borne pathogens, Taser, incident command, and ethics. Agency-authorized in-service training focuses on any changes in case law affecting law enforcement, crime prevention, emergency medical services, collection and preservation of evidence, and report writing.

### Authorization and Use of Agency Weapons and Ammunition

Only weapons and ammunition approved by the Director of Public Safety can be used by sworn personnel. The agency has access to qualified instructors and armorers for training, inspections, repair, and replacement. Records of weapons are properly maintained with written guidelines for storage.

## **Chapter 2 – The Personnel Function:**

### Personnel Benefits and Responsibilities

The agency has a written directive outlining an employee assistance program, line-of-duty injury and death circumstance policy. The agency uses WorkLife Services to

provide the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). All city employees have access to the service and it is kept confidential how many police department employees utilized the service during the assessment period. Periodic reminders of these services are sent out by command staff.

The department addresses procedures for line of duty deaths/injuries in policy. There were no events during this accreditation cycle.

The agency has a well-defined injury/exposure control and reporting policy. In addition to the City of Muskegon review, the department conducts a review that's memorialized in Guardian Tracking. A similar process is in place for employees involved in collisions while on-duty.

The City of Muskegon has a reimbursement program to assist in maintaining health and wellness. A combination of gym memberships, fitness classes/league play and Weight Watchers can qualify an employee for up to \$25 per month reimbursement of fees associated with the programs. Another program for employees is the residency program. If an employee lives within the City of Muskegon they get 4% of base wages paid weekly. The city will also match up to \$2000 for a down payment of a home, as well as more incentive programs to purchase homes within the City depending on the area and the condition of the home. Off duty employment is allowed with approval from the CEO. Extra employment is prohibited by policy.

The Department allows for personnel involved in critical incidents to attend organized debriefings on a voluntary basis. One officer was granted relief from duty after investigating the homicide of an infant.

### Performance Evaluations

The performance evaluation system has a well-defined purpose statement with established and defined criteria, scored on a rating scale (0 – 4). The system also includes directives to raters regarding evaluation responsibilities and procedures on how to use the required forms. Training for evaluators is documented and the evaluations are maintained according to the department's retention schedule. The department continues to conduct evaluations on an annual basis in January. All agency personnel (sworn and civilian) performance evaluations were represented in the files. The evaluation system has a clear appeal process, and no appeals of evaluations occurred during the assessment period.

The department's Early Warning System is administered via Guardian Tracking software and specific actions and behaviors are tracked. During this assessment period, no employees were referred for EAP assistance or fitness for duty assessments.

### Promotion of Sworn Personnel

The promotional process is outlined in the civil service agreement, department policy and collective bargaining agreements, and includes a point system. During the promotional process, the city utilizes the human resources function of the County of Muskegon to administer testing and interviews. The Director of Public Safety makes the final decision on the promotion from a list of qualifying personnel.

### Special Assignment Selection

The department fills specialized assignment positions pursuant to policy (1002). The policy provides clear definitions covering the specifics of the assignment (including length), necessary skills, and selection procedures.

### Recruitment of Sworn Personnel

The recruitment plan contains a clear statement that the agency is committed to equal opportunity. The stated goals and objectives for recruitment are clear and understandable. The agency has a desire to increase agency diversity; however, applications are limited on an overall basis. The agency is dedicated to creating a work force that is representative of the diversity of the community, however the department remains primarily Caucasian.

Sworn staff is comprised of approximately 85% male and 15% female officers, with 10% being of Hispanic decent and 8% African American, and 1.4% American Indian. Recruitment activities include outreach to the Muskegon Career Tech Center and Muskegon Community College. Candidates are sponsored through the city to attend the Grand Valley State University Police Academy. The department continues to recruit on platforms such as Facebook, MACP, MCOLES etc. In 2022 the department added both a male and female officer via their lateral hiring initiative.

### Selection of Personnel

The agency has a complete written process for the selection of new full-time personnel, which includes a thorough background investigation, as well as a medical and psychological exam. Background investigations are conducted by trained in-house investigators. Medical and psychological exams are conducted by qualified outside vendors. The agency uses an active police recruit program in an effort to mentor and recruit new personnel and to increase diversity. The selection process includes examinations, panel interviews, and an executive interview. The CEO makes the final decision on selection of new personnel.

## **Chapter 3 – The Operations Function:**

### Arrest, Search and Seizure

The City of Muskegon Police Department is a full-service police agency with full arrest powers. The agency and its policies follow the U.S. Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Michigan in relation to arrest, search, and seizure practices. The agency recognizes the foundations set forth in the Fourth Amendment.

Agency policy outlines the warrantless search exceptions and the need for a court authorized search warrant, when applicable.

Agency officers take arrestees directly to the Muskegon County jail for processing and housing.

Muskegon Police Department Drug Recognition Experts (DRE's) have an area in the police building used for providing DRE evaluations of suspects. The Muskegon Police

Department has alarm buttons that are installed in areas such as the DRE evaluation area and interview/interrogation rooms.

The agency has a strip search and body cavity search policy in place indicating when and where these types of searches are to be conducted, by whom and by what authority. There were proofs of strip searches showing their policies were followed. There were no occurrences of body cavity searches during this accreditation period.

### Interview and Interrogation

The Muskegon Police Department has established procedures for compliance with contemporary criminal procedural requirements related to interviews, investigative detention interviews, and interrogations. The agency has an interview room located on the premises with audio and video recording capability. The agency has a hard interview room and a soft interview room.

The interview/interrogation rooms are monitored by another detective in an adjoining room, have an emergency alarm they can set off in the interview room and have emergency buttons on their portable radios.

The hard interview room has audio and video recording capability. The agency's written directive indicates that investigative officers are encouraged to use the agency's audio and video taping capabilities for the purpose of recording statements and confessions consistent with state law. The policy also indicates that no more than two officers will be inside an interview room during an interview/interrogation.

### Use of Force

Assessors were able to review several use of force reports generated during this assessment period. The reports were well written and concise in nature but thorough in their descriptive language. The initial report is completed by the involved officer and the report is reviewed and approved by their supervisor.

In cases of death, serious injury, discharge of a firearm on or off duty, excluding training, recreational use, or the destruction of an animal, shall be reviewed by a use of force review board. The Director may request the use of force review board review any use of force incident.

The reviewed report indicates whether the force used was justifiable and reasonable and if the officer acted within policy. The agency conducts a thorough investigation for each use of force incident.

There were one hundred thirty-four use of force incidents reported in 2020, and 2021. In 2022 there were 124 use of force reports. Two citizen complaints were generated as a result of the use of force in 2020 and 2022. The complaints in these years were either exonerated or not sustained. There were 124 uses of force in 2021. There was one citizen complaint stemming from the use of force. The complaint was exonerated.

The agency completed detailed meaningful reviews of the use of force incidents for the evaluation period. The report went into detail outlining the types of force used (TASER,



drawing weapons, etc.) and shows a thorough understanding of what's occurring in the agency as it relates to the community.

### Communications

The Muskegon Police Department has contracted with the Muskegon County 9-1-1 Central Dispatch Center for all their dispatch needs. The Central Dispatch Center is a full-service dispatch authority, and the operators are trained in medical emergency dispatching.

Assessors did not go to the facilities as the dispatch center was visited by assessor Jill McDaniel on July 12, 2023. Assessor Matt Wolfe was part of the assessment team that completed the re-accreditation assessment for Norton Shores Police Department which uses Muskegon County Central Dispatch as well.

Assessor McDonnell documented the following about the communication center. Specific items to Norton Shores were removed.:

The Public Service Answering Point (PSAP) for the agency is Muskegon Central Dispatch. The PSAP receives calls for 11 different police departments, 15 different fire departments and 2 ambulance providers. Two of the police agencies are accredited agencies.

The center is funded by not only a property tax surcharge but has a countywide phone surcharge as well.

The center has a manager, who is supervised by a Board of Directors. The communication center is in the middle of several upgrade projects. The center has completed its construction that was on going during the previous onsite that created some additional space to meet the needs of the operation.

The communication center also covers all of the technology and radio needs for the entire county, providing all of the communication equipment needed for staff in the field. The agency has a full-time information technology unit which repairs radios, laptops, and the countywide records management system. The consortium is still in the process of upgrading their records management system to a new version with Central Square.

The assessment team toured the facility and spoke with the agency's telecommunicators and support staff. All recordings are kept in storage for a minimum of 180 days unless requested by the department for longer retention. Review of the tapes are limited to personnel with a legitimate and official need. They have a formal request process in place for receiving recordings and requests for evidentiary copies. The communications center has a back-up generator onsite that will automatically engage, supplying power to maintain operations. The generator goes through a minimum quarterly test with at least one annual test. Each dispatch station (except the supervisors) is set up alike, allowing for dispatchers to move station-to-station seamlessly. The Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) software assists in giving dispatchers guidance on police activities.

All emergency medical calls are screened using the Pro-QA dispatch system for screening medical calls. The screening includes key questions to ask the caller, pre-arrival instructions, and dispatch priorities. The communications center was following all

other law enforcement standards.

### Field Activities

During the assessment period, there were seventeen motor vehicle pursuits in 2020, twenty-three in 2021, and nineteen in 2022. A majority of the vehicle pursuits originated from traffic violations. In October of 2022, there was a change in policy. The policy used to read: "Pursuits are authorized when it is reasonable to believe that a suspect, who has been given an appropriate signal to stop by law a law enforcement officer, is attempting to evade arrest or detention by fleeing in a vehicle." The policy changed to only allow pursuits for serious violent felonies. The Muskegon Police Department policy allows for pursuits by officers who must follow the guidelines appropriately outlined in the policy.

During the assessment period, the Muskegon Police Department had sixteen-foot pursuits in 2020 with fourteen caught, twenty-nine in 2021 with twenty-seven caught, and twenty-nine with twenty-four caught in 2022. The foot pursuit policy was new to the Muskegon in 2020 and foot pursuit incidents were recorded from July through December 2020. A majority of the foot pursuits stemmed from suspects with warrants out for their arrest. All pursuits that were reviewed were compliant with established department policy and procedures and conformed to applicable accreditation standards.

The Muskegon Police Department has in-car computers available in each patrol vehicle and are in compliance with CJIS standards. There is an in-car video system accessible to each patrol vehicle. Each video is downloaded daily and retained for a designated time period unless there is some evidentiary value to the video and then it is kept until the disposition of the case. All other retention of video evidence follows the state retention guidelines.

The agency has Body Worn Cameras (Watch Guard).

The agency prepares its officers to encounter subjects with mental illness by providing training associated to interacting with individuals with mental illness. This occurred during the assessment period.

### Traffic Safety and Enforcement

The Muskegon Police Department has applicable policies in place regarding traffic violation enforcement, enforcement options, offenders, and traffic direction and control. The directive establishes procedures to conduct motor vehicle stops, including high-risk stops. The enforcement options include warnings, citations, and arrest when appropriate.

### Homeland Security/Critical Incidents

The agency has a critical incident system in place, which includes command, operations, planning, logistics, and fiscal responsibility. The agency uses Incident Command System strategies effectively while working several events throughout the year including their

participation in providing safety at local football games.

Operational plans based on the Incident Command System were prevalent during reviews of football game security, and even during operations using underage decoys while conducting liquor inspections. After action reports were evident and documented in detail.

## **Chapter 4 – The Investigative Function:**

### Criminal Investigation

Officers perform preliminary investigations from initial contacts. The information is reviewed by a shift supervisor before being sent to the detective bureau for further review before the case is assigned to a detective for follow-up and/or further investigation.

Policies are in place for interviewing, interrogation, and eyewitness identification. Instructions to witnesses for identification purposes are available and there were proofs of using show-ups and photographic lineups during the evaluation period. There were no live line-ups during the evaluation period.

### Crime Scene Processing

The agency has detectives, crime scene investigators, and specialists available 24/7 and available to investigate a wide range of crimes including fatal or serious injury traffic crashes, homicides, arson, CSC cases, etc.

The agency crime scene detectives are trained in latent fingerprint recovery, photography and videography, crime scene sketching, collection and preservation of evidence, and other forensic procedures. All evidence obtained are processed, tagged and designated to the Michigan State Police (MSP) Crime Lab for analysis as needed. Appropriate and standard compliant packaging requirements are in place and chain of custody is appropriately followed and documented.

### Storage of Evidence and Property

Policies are in place for property processing and evidence collection. The agency has a well-organized and equipped property room and secure storage areas. Access to the property room is appropriately limited. There is a sign-in log for anyone entering the property room and property storage areas, including MLEAC Assessors during this onsite. Access to the property room is by a special access key. The property room and storage areas are also monitored by video cameras. There are several large sized lockers for officers to put large items of evidence/property into along with smaller lockers in which evidence is placed and secured until evidence officers remove the property, log the property, then place the property/evidence in the appropriate storage bin until needed for court.

The process of sending evidence to the MSP crime lab is documented and items sent to

the MSP lab are packaged according to MSP evidence packaging standards. Any items retrieved from the lab and taken back to the Muskegon Police Department property room are properly documented back into the system to maintain the chain of custody and properly stored.

The agency has access to a large inside vehicle bay that can be secured to limit access in cases where a vehicle needs to be processed or for securing large items that cannot be secured in an evidence/property locker. These areas are in locked areas covered by video surveillance. The agency has a safe available for valuable jewelry and money. There is a secure area where weapons and drugs are stored.

Time sensitive inspections, audits and inventories were conducted. There were changes in the property custodian each year during the evaluation period and the proper inventories were conducted. An appropriate policy is in place for the possession, transfer and destruction of property. No irregularities were identified.

### Juvenile Matters

The agency has established policies regarding juvenile status offenses, including runaway cases, unidentified children, and the safe delivery of newborns. There were no incidents where the agency needed to use Amber Alerts.

There are designated areas where juveniles can be placed for temporary holding or detention.

Appropriate forms are used for the petitioning of juveniles to court. Parent notification policies and practices for the release of juveniles are present with appropriate documentation including time limits associated with juvenile processing and holding.

Reporting requirements were also observed that comply with accreditation standards. The agency has available child car seats for use as needed.

The outlined policies ensure the protection of the juvenile's Constitutional rights.

### Special Investigations and Operations

The agency has a special investigations policy. The written directives are in compliance with accreditation standards. The agency is well organized in keeping records of information shared with or received from another agency. The agency has appropriate deconfliction procedures in place. Operational supervisors and detectives work together to keep each other informed regarding general investigations as well as special investigations or operations taking place including raids, decoy operations, etc.

The agency does not formally use confidential informants. Anonymous tips received are forwarded to the appropriate agency or bureau for follow-up investigations.

## **Chapter 5 – The Arrestee/Detainee/Prisoner Handling Function:**

### Transporting/Processing/Holding of Arrestees/Detainees/Prisoners

The City of Muskegon Police Department has clear written directives governing the

procedures for the transportation of arrested subjects, to include searching vehicles prior to the beginning of each shift, prior to and following any transport, and the securing of arrested subjects in restraints (exceptions noted in policy) during transport. Patrol cars have been modified so the rear seat door handles and windows do not operate, and a safety barrier separates the rear compartment from the front of the vehicle. All arrestees that are transported by department personnel must first be seat belted.

All arrestees are transported to and processed at the Muskegon County Jail. The Muskegon Police Department does not have a processing area, however, there is an area for DRE evaluation. This area is outfitted with an appropriate emergency alarm and officers are encouraged to exercise diligence in preventing escape. Officers have the ability to secure arrestees who are in custody waiting interrogation to fixed objects in designated areas in the department. When arrestees are attached to these fixed objects, they are under constant supervision.

**G. Applied Discretion Compliance Discussion:**

This section provides specific information on those standards found to be in compliance after on-site adjustments were made.

During the assessment, there were no standard's where applied discretion was applicable.

**H. Waivers of Standards:**

This section provides specific information on those standards which qualified for waivers. Waivers are available to agencies when it is impossible to comply with a specific standard. A request to waive standard compliance must be made to the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police Accreditation Program Director in writing, on official agency letterhead, signed by the CEO. The following standards were granted non-applicable waivers:

*Standard 1.9.8 Tactical Team Training*  
*Standard 2.6.1 Reserve/Auxiliary Officers*  
*Program Standard 2.6.2 Civilian Volunteer*  
*Program Standard 3.5.9 Police Canines*  
*Standard 4.5.3 Using Confidential Sources*  
*Standard 5.3.1 – 5.3.5 Temp Detention*

**I. Standards Noncompliance Discussion:**

The agency had no standards in noncompliance.

**J. Future Performance / Review Issues:**

The transition of Accreditation Manager responsibilities from Captain Zonnebelt to Lt. Bringedahl appears to have been seamless as the files were generally well organized and mapped. It was recommended to acquire new "not applicable" waivers for the next

cycle as those provided were requested by the previous Public Safety Director and approved by the previous Accreditation Program Director.

Discussions were held with command staff regarding moving away from paper (legacy) documentation for various processes. Specifically discussed was the opportunity the department has to streamline the field training program by moving it to a web based program that integrates with software they currently leverage - PowerDMS & Guardian Tracking.

By all accounts the most glaring challenge the department currently faces is the condition and constraints of their facility. Both Chief Kozal and City Manager Seyferth share a vision of a new facility being built at some point, however until that occurs they're committed to moving forward with projects that improve existing spaces as the budget allows.

**K. Summary and Recommendation:**

A thorough review of the files for compliance was conducted, as well as observations of compliance. After interviews were conducted, it was determined that the agency was in compliance with all of the established accreditation standards. Accreditation is recommended.

Matthew Wolfe, Team Leader  
Date: January 11, 2024

Reviewed and approved to be scheduled for a hearing before the MLEAC.

Ron Wiles, Program Director  
Date: January 18, 2023