

HUMAN RESOURCES



ANNUAL REPORT 2025

City of Fitchburg



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Pictures from the City's first Mission, Vision and Values (MVV) Employee Recognition Ceremony



The mission of the Fitchburg Human Resources Department is to recruit, develop and retain a diverse, talented and engaged workforce to support the City in moving forward.

WELCOME

Celebrating our People

In 2025, Human Resources had the honor of hosting our very first Mission, Vision, and Values (MVV) Employee Recognition Ceremony, an evening that truly captured the heart of who we are as an organization.



This new tradition was created to recognize four employees, nominated by their peers, who embody our City's core values of Teamwork, Service, Innovation, and Accountability. These are not just words on paper, they are lived out every day in the way our staff support one another, serve our residents, and rise to meet challenges with integrity and creativity. What made the evening so special was not just the awards, but the people. Honorees were joined by their friends and families as their nominations were read aloud. Stories of quiet leadership, selfless service, perseverance, and impact. There was laughter, there were tears, and there was an overwhelming sense of pride in the room.

We were proud to recognize **Amy Jordan**, Social Worker for Service; **Joyce Frey**, Economic Development Specialist for Teamwork, **Scott Yarbrough**, Community Media Services Assistant Manager for Innovation and **Misty Dodge**, Finance Director/Comptroller for Accountability.

Moments like this remind us why we chose to work in Human Resources. At the end of the day, it has always been about people. Supporting them, celebrating them, and creating space for them to thrive. Hearing colleagues speak so sincerely about one another was a powerful reminder that while policies and programs help shape our culture, it is ultimately brought to life by the character, integrity, and commitment of the employees.

Taking the time to pause, recognize, and celebrate our people is one of the most important things we can do.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sarah Olson".

Sarah Olson, SHRM - SCP, Human Resources Director

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

Human Resources coordinates personnel activities for about 275 employees. Key areas of responsibility include:

- Recruitment, Selection and Hiring
- Benefits, Compensation and Job Classification
- Policy Development
- Collective Bargaining
- Legal Compliance and Reporting

ABOUT US



Amy Tracy began her tenure with the City in 2012 and is the City's Human Resources Business Partner. Prior to joining the City, she spent several years as an Independent Consultant specializing in Recruitment and Project Management. Amy has over six years' experience as a Recruiter in the health care field. Her solid work experience combined with an educational background in Marketing, makes Amy a skilled HR professional who takes great

pride in helping the City hire and retain a diverse and talented workforce. Amy enjoys spending time with her kids and grandbabies and cheering on her rock star husband at local music venues.

Sarah Masa-Myers joined the Human Resources department in March 2022 and is the City's first shared Administrative Clerk. Sarah supports various City departments with their administrative needs. Sarah was born and raised in Fitchburg and is very happy to be working for the City. Sarah graduated from UW-Platteville with a degree in Communications and Public Relations and received a Marketing degree from Madison College. Sarah is currently completing her Associate's Degree in Human Resources Management from Madison College. Sarah looks forward to continuing her Human Resources education under the mentorship of Amy & Sarah O., as well as continuing to support nearly every department in the City! Sarah spends her free time with her cats, playing with her very active kids, and supporting her husband and his musical endeavors.

Human Resources Director Sarah Olson has spent the last 20 years working in Human Resources, with 16 of those years dedicated to the public sector. Sarah earned her Bachelor's Degree in Human

Resources Management from the University of Wisconsin–Whitewater in 2005 and achieved her SHRM-SCP certification in 2020. Whether focusing on recruitment and retention, compensation and benefits, policy development, collective bargaining, or employee relations, Sarah is deeply committed to building workplaces where employees feel heard, supported, and proud of the service they provide.

Outside of City Hall, Sarah can most often be found outdoors with her family or behind a camera lens. Photography reminds her to slow down and notice the details which is something she strives to bring into her work as well. She believes that when you pay attention, meaningful moments are everywhere.

YEAR IN REVIEW

Highlights of the year include:



Launched the City's first Employee Engagement Survey



Bring your Child to Work Day and Youth Government Week



Organizational Changes

The City's First Employee Engagement Survey

In early 2025, the City of Fitchburg launched its first employee engagement survey in partnership with Quantum Workplace, a third-party firm specializing in engagement surveys and action planning. Results showed that Fitchburg employees are more engaged than employees at comparable public employers and scored close to organizations recognized as Best Places to Work in the Public Sector. HR facilitated action-planning sessions with department heads to address areas for improvement.

Key strengths identified:

- Employees feel their immediate manager cares about them personally and supports their development.
- Employees feel accepted by their coworkers.
- Employees understand how their work contributes to the City's success.

- Employees find their work engaging.

Key areas for improvement:

- Understanding the City's plans for future success and reasons behind organizational changes.
- Perceptions of fair pay, recognition, and opportunities for advancement.
- Feeling included in decisions that affect their work.

To improve inclusion in decision-making, the City implemented a new requirement for leadership to hold monthly check-ins with employees. These meetings are designed to strengthen communication, share updates, gather input on proposed changes, and help employees better understand the “why” behind decisions.

The City will conduct a follow-up survey in July 2026 to measure progress and continue improving the employee experience.

Take your Child to Work Day and Youth Government Week

In 2025, the City launched its first Take Your Child to Work Day, giving employees the opportunity to bring their children to work for hands-on activities across various areas of local government.

Participants shadowed their parents and learned firsthand about careers in public service. The City also hosted its second annual Youth Government Week, continuing efforts to engage and educate young people about government operations and career pathways.



These successful events were led by Administrative Clerk **Sarah Masa-Myers**, who coordinated with all City departments to ensure thoughtful planning, strong communication, and seamless execution. Both initiatives were designed to inspire youth to explore future careers in government and public service. Kudos on a job well done, Sarah!





Organizational Changes Following the 2024 Referendum

In fall of 2024, voters did not approve a referendum request for additional staffing to support City operations. As a result, the City evaluated vacancies carefully and implemented strategic restructuring to address capacity and efficiency needs, guided by the 2023 [organizational review and staffing study](#).

Police Department Changes

- Discontinued in-house Police Dispatch operations, resulting in the City's first layoffs (two full-time and three part-time/on-call Dispatchers).
- Created two new civilian classifications—Support Specialist 1 and Support Specialist 3. Two full-time Dispatchers were reclassified into these roles.
- Reclassified the Court Liaison position to Support Services Supervisor.
- Transitioned a part-time Social Worker role to full-time.
- Added one Detective Sergeant (1.0 FTE) and one evening Shift Lieutenant (1.0 FTE), both filled internally.

Parks, Forestry, and Recreation Restructuring

- Following the retirement of the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Director, Recreation functions were reassigned.
- The former Director role was retitled Parks & Forestry Manager.
- Oversight of Parks & Forestry shifted to the Public Works Director, aligning these divisions with Streets and Utility operations.

Creation of Recreation & Community Services Department

- Established a new Recreation & Community Services Director position.
- Retitled the Senior Center Director to serve in this expanded leadership role.
- Realigned oversight of the Senior Center, Recreation, and Community Center under the new department.
- Retitled the former Community Center & Recreation Director to Manager.
- Moved the Community Development Program Coordinator and the Healthy Neighborhoods Initiative (HNI) from Planning & Zoning to the new department.

These changes were designed to maintain service levels, improve operational efficiency, and align resources with community needs despite fiscal constraints.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

RETIREMENTS

In 2025, the City celebrated the retirement of seven (7) employees:

1. Dan Ohm, Building Maintenance Technician & Lead Custodian – 11 years of service
2. Scott Endl, Parks, Forestry and Recreation Director – 18 years of service
3. John Crook, Building Inspections Manager – 34 years of service
4. Lonnie Tracy, Streets Maintenance Worker – 16 years of service
5. Steven Wunsch, Paid on Call Division Chief – 18 years of service
6. Wayne Aeschbach, Career Firefighter – 28 years of service
7. K9 Drago – 8 years of service

Pictured left to right: Dan Ohm, Scott Endl, John Crook (and Paul Scott)



Pictured below left to right: Lonnie Tracy and his wife, Steve Wunsch and his wife, Wayne Aeschbach and K9 Drago.



PROMOTIONS AND TRANSFERS

In 2025, we had nine (9) promotions! Congratulations to the staff below:

Matthew Sutter promoted to Fire Lieutenant

Scott Westphal promoted to Fire Lieutenant

Bethani Forster promoted to Library Assistant I

Josh Harper promoted to Library Assistant II

Paul Scott promoted to Building Inspections Manager

Lucas Hildebrand promoted to Career Firefighter

Logan Brown promoted to Shift Lieutenant

Clara Davel promoted to Career Firefighter

Craig Spangler promoted to Police Sergeant

SERVICE AWARDS

Every fall, the Human Resources Department coordinates an employee luncheon to honor the accomplishments of all City staff. Part of the program is recognizing employees that celebrated a milestone anniversary during the year.

Congratulations to the following employees recognizing a milestone anniversary!

Service Awards

5 Years

Meagan Christen
 Garrett Christian
 Sarah Masa-Myers
 Ariana Ridgely
 Jacob Roche
 Charmaine Sprengelmeyer-Podein

10 Years

Ruth Becker
 Nancy Gille
 Peg Guse
 Suzie Jones
 Brandon Reiter

15 Years

Dana Collins
 Jeremy Crosby
 Steven Droster
 Peter Johnston
 Johnathan Parker
 Wendy Rawson

Service Awards

20 Years

James Gray
 Matthew Laha
 Matthew Wiza

25 Years

Jack Pearson

30 Years

Michael Zimmerman

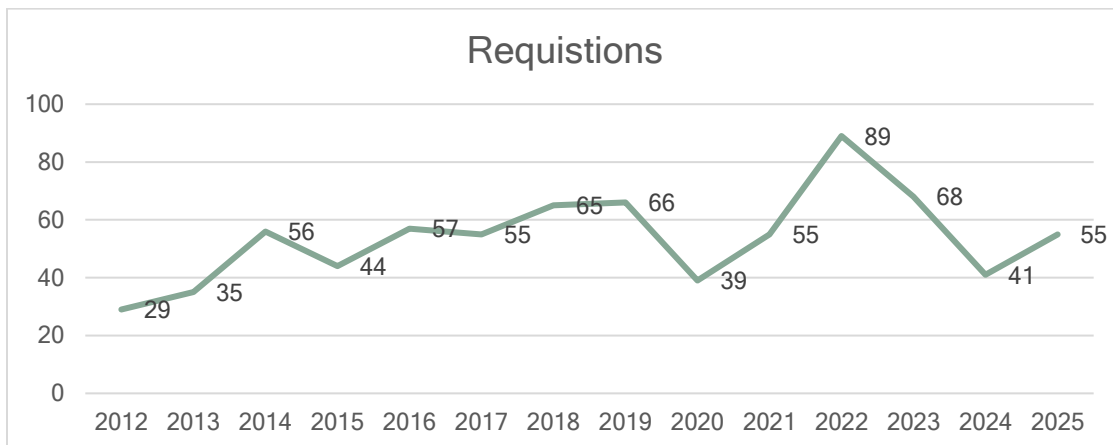
35 Years

Mark Hodel

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND HIRING

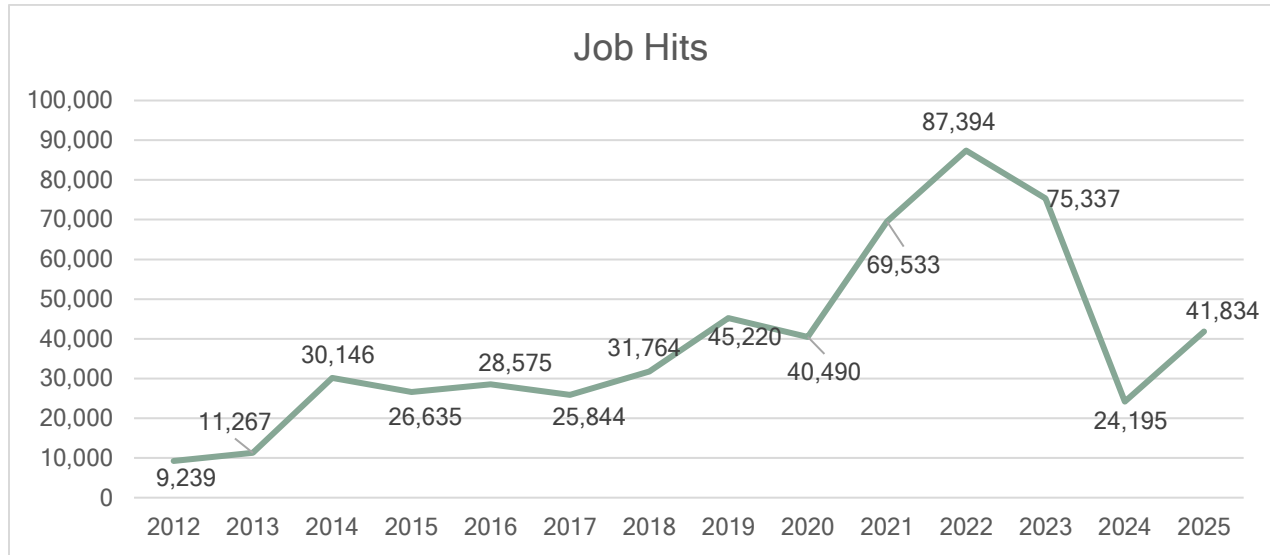
RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Each time an opening exists, a requisition is created to fill the position. Each requisition is unique to the position and initiates a discussion with the hiring manager and Human Resources regarding a recruitment timeline, advertisement sources, minimum qualifications, and selection of the interview panel. We experienced an increase in requisitions due to higher turnover in 2025.



JOB HITS

One way to assess the effectiveness of recruitment efforts is to monitor the number of job “hits”. This number indicates how many times people come to the City’s website to view a particular job. This number is of particular importance as it helps determine if the sources utilized for advertisements are driving traffic to the City’s web page.



RECRUITMENT ADVERTISEMENT SOURCES BY ETHNICITY

Heading Key:

AA: American Indian or Alaskan Native
 BL: Black or African American
 NH: Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 WH: White or Caucasian

AS: Asian
 HI: Hispanic or Latino
 TW: Other/Multi Racial

Source	AA	AS	BL	HI	NH	TW	WH	Unknown	Total	Total%
Bulletin board*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
City of Fitchburg Website	1	15	32	41	0	16	223	10	338	32.19
College Job Center	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Commercial	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Edgewood College	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Facebook	0	1	0	1	0	1	17	1	21	2.00
Handshake	0	10	0	7	0	4	26	1	48	4.57
Indeed	1	10	32	13	0	24	157	3	240	22.86
Internet website	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Job Fair	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	9	0.86
Job Interest Card	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	0.29
LinkedIn	0	1	1	2	0	1	13	0	18	1.71
Local Newspaper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Other	0	7	11	13	0	9	85	2	127	12.10
Outreach Event	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	5	0.48
Professional Organization Website	0	1	3	0	0	0	35	1	40	3.81
UW College Board	0	1	0	0	0	2	4	1	8	0.76
Word of Mouth (Family, friends, employee, etc.)	0	3	11	10	0	4	133	1	162	15.43
Unknown	0	17	0	1	0	0	10	3	31	2.95
Totals	2	66	90	88	0	61	720	23	1050	100
Total %	0.19	6.29	8.57	8.38	0.00	5.81	68.57	2.19	100.00	

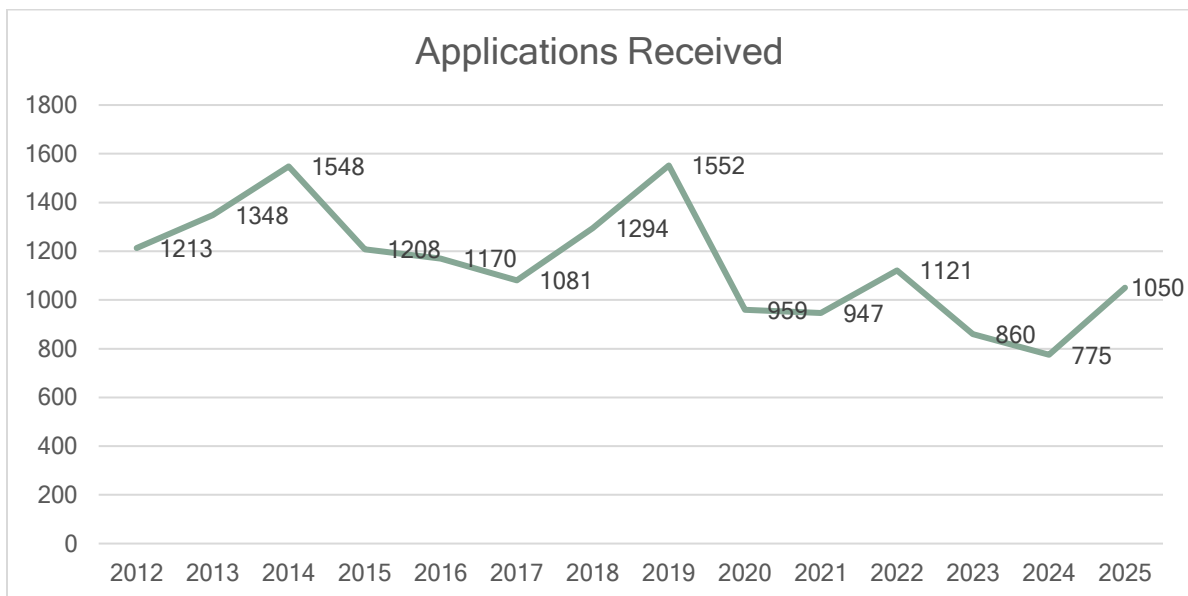
RECRUITMENT ADVERTISEMENT SOURCES BY GENDER

Heading Key:
 F: Female
 NB: Non-Binary
 M: Male
 NA: Prefer not to answer

Source	F	M	NB	NA	Unknown	Total	Total%
Bulletin board*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
City of Fitchburg Website	138	174	7	16	3	338	32.19
College Job Center	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Commercial	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Edgewood College	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Facebook	7	14	0	0	0	21	2.00
Handshake	20	23	2	3	0	48	4.57
Indeed	111	119	3	3	4	240	22.86
Internet website	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Job Fair	3	6	0	0	0	9	0.86
Job Interest Card	2	1	0	0	0	3	0.29
LinkedIn	5	12	0	1	0	18	1.71
Local Newspaper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Other	46	77	2	0	2	127	12.10
Outreach Event	0	5	0	0	0	5	0.48
Professional Organization Website	7	31	0	1	1	40	3.81
UW College Board	2	6	0	0	0	8	0.76
Word of Mouth (Family, friends, employee, etc.)	42	113	4	3	0	162	15.43
Unknown	3	26	0	0	2	31	2.95
Totals	386	607	18	27	12	1050	100
Total %	36.76	57.81	1.71	2.57	1.14	100.00	

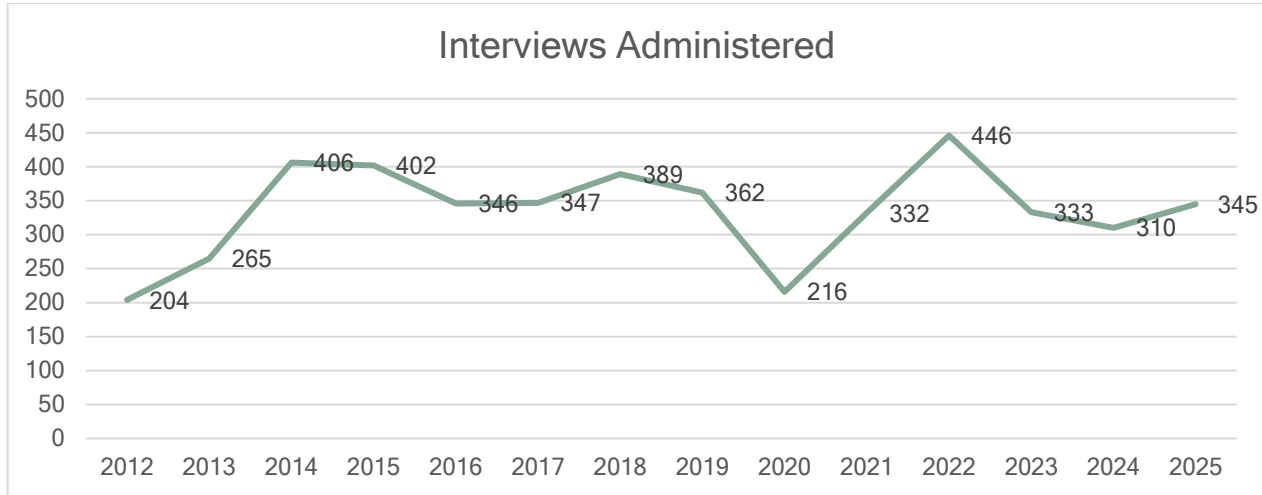
The City’s website, Indeed, professional organization sites, and word of mouth continue to be our best recruitment source across all ethnicities and genders.

HR will typically begin receiving applications within a couple of hours of the posting first appearing on the City’s website and other advertisement sources. The following chart shows the number of applications received in past years through 2025.



INTERVIEWS

Human Resources held 345 interviews for City departments. Coordination of interviews involves setting up interview dates, sending out correspondence to candidates, reviewing proposed interview questions, and setting up second interviews if needed.



MOST POPULAR JOB POSTINGS

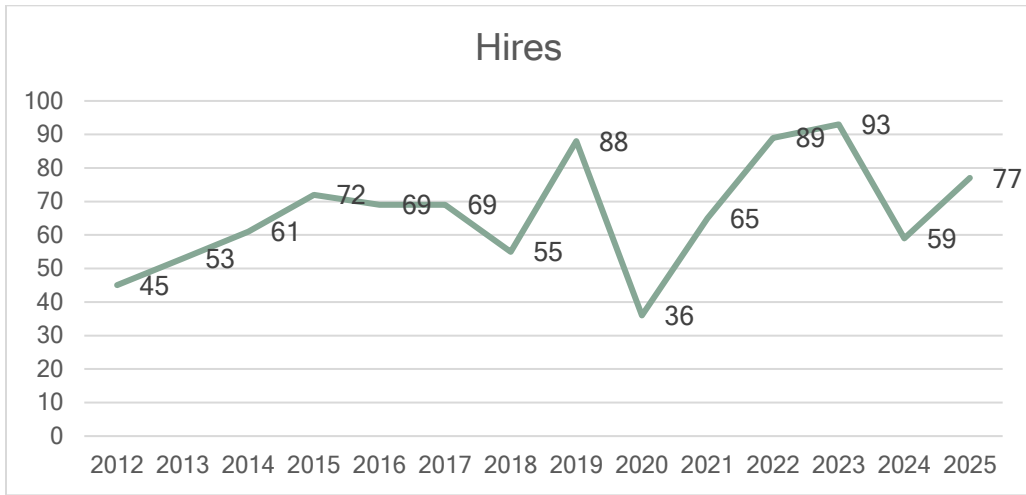
The following list shows the jobs with the highest hits during the year and their respective percentage of the total.

Top Job Postings

<u>Job Title</u>	<u>Hits</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Police Officer	6142	14.7%
Paid-On Call Firefighter	1922	4.6%
Fire Chief & Emergency Management Director	1851	4.4%
Library Assistant -Youth	1596	3.8%
Code Enforcement Inspector	1511	3.6%
Career Firefighter	1462	3.5%
Library Shelver	1415	3.4%

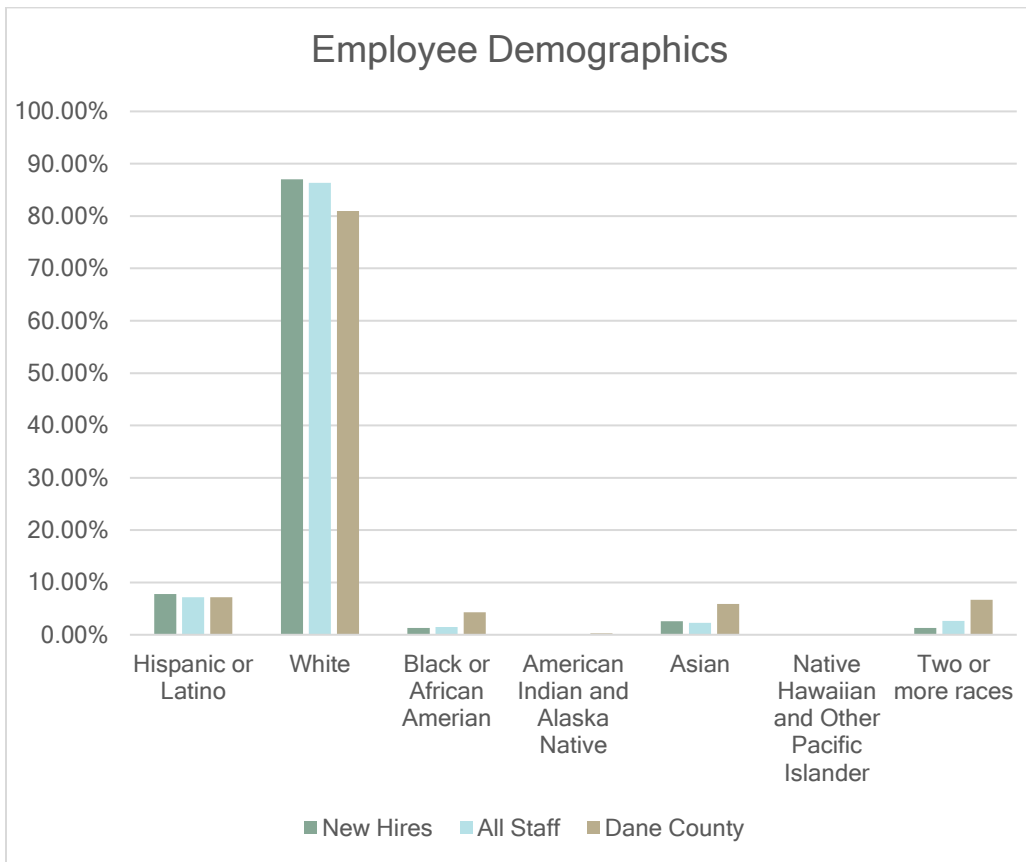
HIRING STATISTICS

We hired and/or promoted 77 individuals in 2025. This includes individuals across all departments, regular full and part-time staff, seasonal employees, and paid on-call Firefighters. We had more hires than requisitions which occurs when we hire multiple people off of one requisition. This will be more common with continuous recruitments in which we have multiple positions to fill.



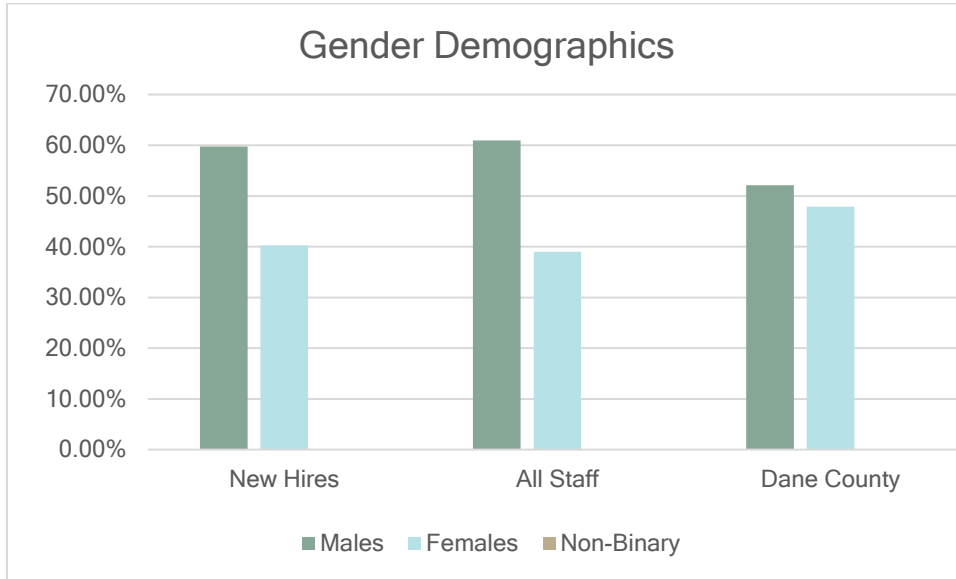
EMPLOYEE DEMOGRAPHICS AND WORKFORCE AVAILABILITY

The charts below show the demographics of employees hired by the City in 2025 compared to the availability of those in the Dane County workforce in 2024 per the State of Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development Affirmative Action chart: <https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/wisconomy/query>. Graphs include employees as of December 31, 2025.



Ideally, all three of these measures would be equal in the chart above.

2025	Hispanic or Latino	White	Black or African American	American Indian and Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	Two or more races
New Hires	7.79%	87.01%	1.30%	0.00%	2.60%	0.00%	1.30%
All Staff	7.20%	86.36%	1.52%	0.00%	2.27%	0.00%	2.65%
Dane County	7.15%	80.97%	4.29%	0.25%	5.86%	0.09%	6.69%



2025	Males	Females
New Hires	59.74%	40.26%
All Staff	60.98%	39.02%
Dane County	52.12%	47.88%

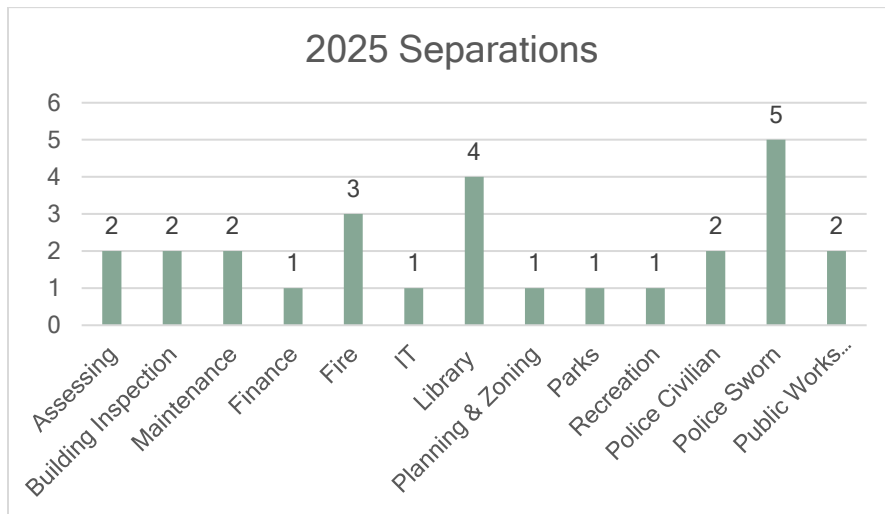
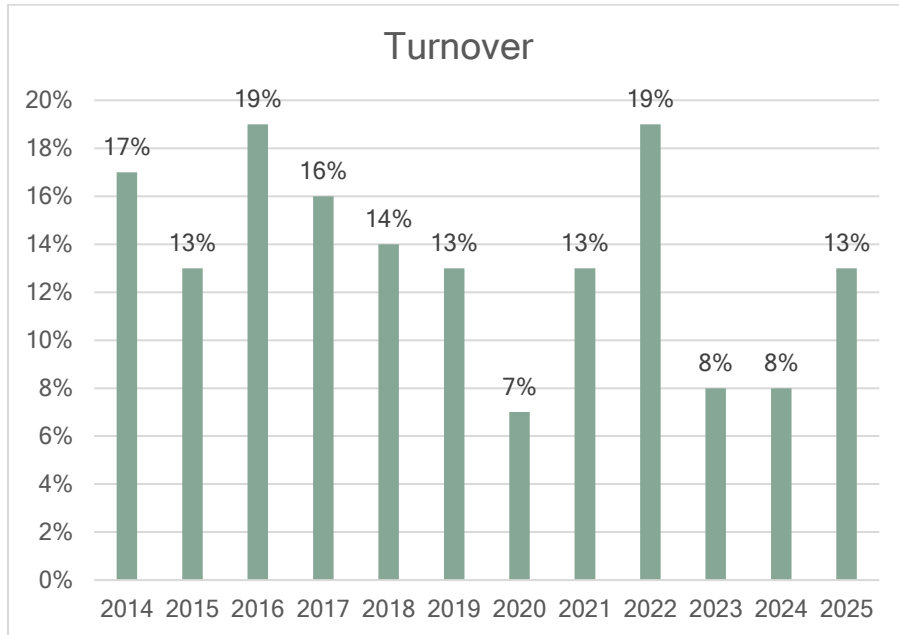
In 2022, we added the option for an applicant to check non-binary on their employment application. Dane County statistics do not have the option for someone to select non-binary and are only tracking gender statistics using male and female at this time.

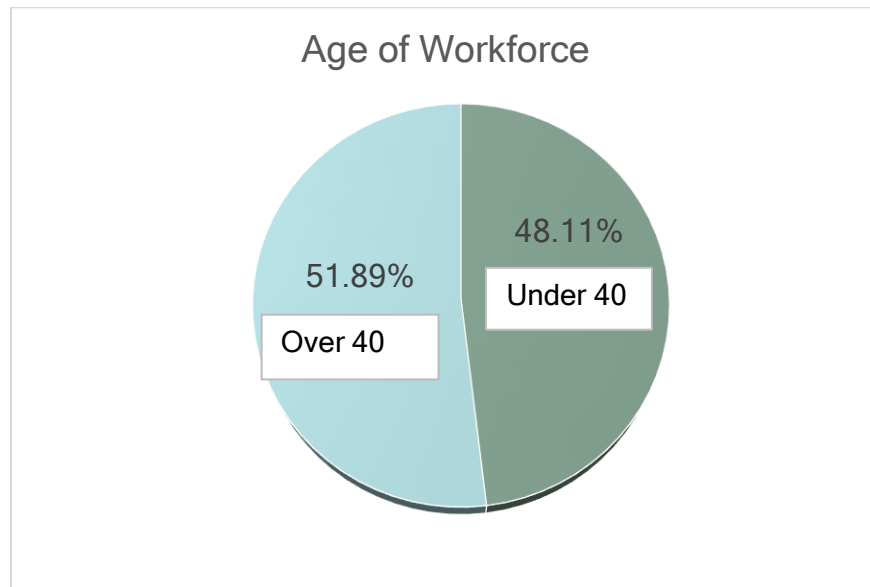
Snap from International Women’s Day



TURNOVER

27 regular full and part-time employees separated during 2025. Our turnover rate was higher than the last two years. Reviewing the departures, two departures were due to the City's first permanent layoff; six of the employees accepted a promotional opportunity elsewhere; a record six retirements and then we had four that relocated away from Fitchburg. The remaining departures equate to our typical and expected turnover rate each year.





BENEFITS, JOB CLASSIFICATION, COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, AND WORKERS COMPENSATION

Human Resources is responsible for the management of the City's compensation and benefits package. This includes managing employees' progression on the various pay plans through processing cost of living adjustments and merit increases, determining eligibility for benefits and maintaining proper salary classification for all positions. Human Resources is also responsible for assisting with the collective bargaining process and managing workers compensation required documentation and reporting.

BENEFIT ADMINISTRATION

Human Resources meets with new hires on their first day to give a thorough orientation to our benefit offerings and enroll employees into their chosen benefits. HR is also responsible for the reconciliation of the monthly benefit bills. Every fall is the opportunity for Open Enrollment which is a period of time in which employees can drop, add or make changes to their health, dental, vision and flexible spending accounts.

JOB CLASSIFICATION

The City had five position studies completed resulting in the creation of the following classifications: Recreation & Community Services Director, Finance Specialist, Parks & Forestry Manager, Support Services Supervisor and the Support Specialist 1-3.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

We were successful in ratifying the contract with the WPPA for the years of 2025 – 2027. We started preparations to go to Arbitration with IAFF.

WORKERS COMPENSATION BENEFITS AND THE CITY'S SAFETY TEAM

One key area of responsibility is Worker's Compensation, specifically claims analysis and management. How well the City manages the worker's compensation claims and worker safety initiatives is reflected in the modification factor.

A modification factor is a factor applied to the policy premium for a risk to reflect variation from the experience of the average risk of a similar type. From the risk's own past experience, the experience modification rate is determined by comparing actual losses to expected losses. This comparison of future losses results in a premium reduction (credit) or a premium increase (debit). The goal is to have a mod factor rate of under 1. We had one costly claim in 2022 that resulted in a mod rate above 1.00 in 2024 and that mod factor will impact us through 2026.

Plan Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Modification Factor	1.08	0.77	0.88	0.79	0.68	0.57	0.78	0.86	0.85	0.85	0.86	0.85	1.03	1.19

Are you looking for additional data, measures and outcomes? Please don't hesitate to reach out.



Sarah Olson, HR Director

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