Police chief's goal: Reduce officer turnover

By Travis Gulbrandson travis.gulbrandson@plaintalk.net

Vermillion Police Chief Matt Betzen announced that he wants to reduce officer turnover to 10 percent by 2016.

That would mean going from losing 4 ½ people each year, to losing less than 2.

Betzen discussed the issue March 3, when he presented his annual year-end report to the Vermillion City Council during its special noon meeting.

Part of the solution will be to change the police department's hiring focus, Betzen said.

"All law enforcement suffers from what I call 'big agency syndrome,'" he said. "The big agencies have the money to do research, they have the money to hire lawyers, they have money to spend a lot of time figuring out the minutiae and the details. So, little agencies adopt the big agencies' models, even when they don't necessarily work for us. Hiring is one of them.'

Most police departments actively recruit the highestperforming students from schools "that are designed to create really good officers," Betzen said.

The problem is, most of those students want to be officers in cities where they can serve on SWAT teams and other specialized areas of law enforcement.

"We don't have those types of experiences," Betzen said. "So they come here, and other places like here, and they spend two or three years here, if that, and then they get the job (elsewhere) and they move on."

For this reason, the police department has changed its hiring policy to one that maintains minimum hiring standards, but looks for people who would fit well in Vermillion and want to work

"We're trying to market to what our strengths are," Betzen said. "Our strengths are that we are a relatively low-crime community, and that you can address issues and raise your family here. We're trying to appeal to those types of things.

I'm hoping we have."

Several officers already have been hired this way, Betzen

"They don't necessarily score at the top of the tests that we give them, but they do fit in very well with the community, I think," he

The department also has gone from military-based training to problem-based training.

"We've turned out much better officers because of it, and part of that model is, they have to invest in the community," Betzen said. "They have to come up with some way to make the community better in their first six months."

For example, Patrol Officer Isaac Voss organized 15-minute sessions to educate convenience store clerks about ID compliance

Another project comes from Patrol Officer Chet Moser, who wants to organize retailers to address theft and property loss.

Officer retention is important for the department for many reasons, one of the biggest being

Betzen said the hard cost to replace a single officer is \$32,000, although he added that when the department loses an experienced officer the costs are harder to pin

Last year, the Vermillion Police Department hired four new officers and trained five.

The cost of training is now being guaranteed in part by a reimbursement contract new employees are required to sign.

"We say, 'If you leave within four years, you need to pay a certain percentage back on that that reduces each year," Betzen said. "That has worked for some, but not for everybody.'

Betzen added that when officers are in training, the department has to pull out services to enable that training to

DWI is a highly proactive thing. You have to go out and hunt for DWIs. When you see a fall from 120 last year to 38 this year, we aren't out there hunting for those DWIs because we're busy training brand-new people, who also don't know how to hunt for

DWIs yet," Betzen said.

House parties are another example, he said, adding that officers were able to start putting more of an effort into checking them in November and December.

"Basically, we went and chased people off," he said. "Now we're able to put enough people in where we can actually address the

At a recent party, officers wrote 49 tickets, Betzen said.

"On years ... when you have a full staff, you're able to address those proactive types of things," he said. "Whenever you're not up to staff, you spend overtime covering minimum staff, rather than overtime developing your people. (Eventually) people stop wanting overtime."

Betzen said his overall goal is to foster a positive, retentive work environment.

"I want officers to be happy to come to work," he said. "Happy employees need 20 percent better pay to leave. Unhappy employees will take a pay cut to leave."

FOR THE RECORD

30 days

Cases Disposed 2/28-3/6/2014

Janeese Martin, 508 W. Clark St., Vermillion; Municipal speeding, \$19.00 plus costs

Katy Suing, 217 Franklin St., Vermillion; Following too closely, \$54.00 plus costs Jill Ellen Mockler, 30451

464th Ave., Centerville; County speeding, \$19.00 plus costs Tia Rae Hemiller, 901

Rose St. #137, Vermillion; Seat belt violation, \$25.00 Michael Judson Mabee, 3803 W. 11th St., Yankton;

Speeding on a state highway, \$39.00 plus costs John Allen Heisler, 4904 S. Pheasant Ln., Sioux Falls; Speeding on a state

highway, \$39.00 plus costs Robert J. Peitz, 808 Grandview Circle, Yankton; Speed on four-lane in rural

areas, \$39.00 plus costs Teresa Marie Bordeaux, 256 Elm St., Saint Francis, SD; Operator assure passengers 5-18 wear seat

belts, \$25.00 Ricky Thomas Stead, 721 Cottage Ave., Vermillion; No drivers license, \$54.00 plus costs

Taylor James Peters, 1326 Madison St. #101, Vermillion; Speeding on other roadways, \$19.00 plus costs

Nicholas Wayne Engbers, 1805 S. Grange Ave., Sioux Falls; Renewal registration during assigned month, \$54.00 plus costs

Gary Joe Copperstone, 44873 309th St., Gayville; County speeding, \$45.00 plus costs

Lila Rose Leadercharge, 120 S. Adam St., Mission; Speed on four-lane in rural areas, \$39.00 plus costs

Alexander O. Mogensen, 01 W. 15th Street, South Sioux City, NE; Speed on four-lane in rural areas, \$39.00 plus costs

Audrey Jean Fuks, 1307 Oakwood Dr. #1, Yankton; Speeding on other roadways, \$39.00 plus costs

Nash Carver Wergin, 400 Carr Street #6060, Vermillion; Fail to stop or slow down for school bus, \$54.00 plus costs

Mandy R. Marshall, 1004 Eastside Dr. Lot 5, Yankton; Operator assure passengers 5-18 wear seat belts, \$25.00; Operator assure passengers 5-18 wear seat belts, \$25.00

Brenda Kay Haneklaus, 310 S. 1st Ave., Sioux Falls; Speeding on a state highway, \$19.00 plus costs

Don Ray Byers, 31055 430th Avenue, Tabor; Speeding on a state highway, \$39.00 plus costs Sarah A. Taggart, 45949

Liberty Road, Vermillion; Failure to make proper stop at stop intersection, \$54.00 plus costs

Rikesh P. Patel, 128 Muirfield Ct., Vermillion; Failure to stop, \$54.00

plus costs Jonathan Terris Tayborn, 120 Franklin,

license, \$54.00 plus costs Ryan Charles Sutton, 815 E. Duke St. #204, Vermillion; Seat belt violation, \$25.00

Vermillion; No drivers

Lynsey Rae Reese, 80 141st St., Woodstock, MN; Obey traffic device unless directed by policeman, \$54.00 plus costs

Aaron Lee Kainrath, 1022 Kim Lane, Vermillion; Speed on four-lane in rural areas, \$39.00 plus costs

Auston Johnson, 1006 Rice Drive, Vermillion; Making unreasonable noise, \$104.00 plus costs

Garrett Lee Hirsch, 31368 453rd Avenue, Gayville; Renewal registration during assigned month, \$54.00

plus costs Damarius E. Johnson-Cheeseman, 530 Elm #77, Vermillion; Unauthorized use of vehicle by restricted licensee, \$54.00 plus costs Janet M. Palensky, 1220

E. Clark #1, Vermillion; Renewal registration during assigned month, \$54.00 plus costs

Jakob Dillon Parmley, 702 E. Cherry St. Beede #131, Vermillion; Use or possession of drug paraphernalia, dismissed

Benjamin Lee Houser, 112 E. Cherry Street #101, Vermillion; Seat belt violation, \$25.00

Russell James Reiner, 5213 S. Summerfield, Sioux Falls; Speeding on a state highway, \$234.00 plus costs; Fail to maintain financial responsibility, dismissed

Jaime J. Headdy, 833 E. Duke Street #42, Vermillion; Compulsory school attendance, \$100.00 plus costs, five days jail suspended based on the conditions of the court

Karil T. Lecher, 1505 College Street, Yankton; Driving with suspended (not revoked) license, \$339.00 plus costs; Speeding on other roadways, \$122.00 plus costs; Fail to maintain financial responsibility, dismissed

Jace Jensen, 29091 448th Avenue, Viborg; Speeding on other roadways, \$39.00 plus costs

Jill Jane Stewart, 1807 S. Henipen, Sioux City, IA; Driving with suspended (not revoked) license, \$204.00 plus costs

Judge Tami Bern presiding Sara Joann Jensen, 208

Forest Avenue #7, Vermillion; Disorderly conduct, \$100.00 plus costs, 14 days jail suspended based on the conditions of the court

David Hahn, 217 Franklin St., Vermillion; Fail to maintain financial responsibility, \$64.00 plus costs, license suspended

for 30 days

Emily Grace Riggie, 6238 190th Ave., Belview, MN; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30 days

Joshua David Max, 3012 15th Ave. SW, Watertown; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 90 days, 14 days jail, 12 suspended based on the conditions of the court

Jessie Priestley, 800 Jefferson Apt. 15, Vermillion; Driving under influence-1st offense. \$350.00 plus costs, license revoked for 30 days, five days jail suspended based on the conditions of the

Joshua David Max, 802 N. Plum #203, Vermillion; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 60

Sarah Annamarie Soles, 802 N. Plum #234, Vermillion; Reckless

driving, \$350.00 plus costs Jacob David Messner, 47731 275th St., Harrisburg; Driving under influence-1st offense, \$350.00 plus costs, license revoked for 90 days

Duane Lynn Bultje, 626 Cottage Ave., Vermillion; Driving with revoked (not suspended) license, \$300.00 plus costs, three days jail

Devin Reiners, 501 Walnut St., Harrisburg; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30

Karly Sifferath, 702 E. Cherry, Vermillion; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30

Troy Jonathan Hofer, 901 Rose #171, Vermillion; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30 days

Jordyn Agnes Cleveland, 202 E. Cherry Street, Vermillion; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30 days

Dalton R. Prince, 800 N. Plum #420, Vermillion; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30 days

Bradley Muller, 522 West 4th Ave., Mitchell; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30 days

Erik James Robinson, 2779 38th Ave., Columbus, NE; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for

Susan Mary Richards, 302 N. Dakota, Vermillion; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30

Holly Anderson, 800 N. Plum St., Vermillion; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30

Taylor L. Anderson, 1200 S. State St. Jerde Hall, Aberdeen; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30 days

Tyler Spies, 700 E. Cherry #321, Vermillion; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30

Piper Jade Roach, 484 Bluestem Trail, Dakota Dunes; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30 days

Cole R. Morgan, 1301 Eitel Drive, Mitchell; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30

Julie Mingo, 416 N. Pine #221, Vermillion; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30 days

Shaina McCullough, 702 E. Cherry #327, Vermillion; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30 days

Cara McCain, 416 N. Pine St., Vermillion; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30

Kaitlyn Breidenbach, 211 Mickelson, Vermillion; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30

James Litrenta, 901 Rose St. #213, Vermillion; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30

Carley A. Huisenga, 702 E. Cherry St. #331, Vermillion; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license

plus costs, license suspended for 30 days

Tyson T. Graham, Jr., 901 Rose #440, Vermillion; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30

Kelly E. Stewart, 901 Rose St. #241A, Vermillion; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30 Teagan Eberle, 901 Rose

#345, Vermillion; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30 Emily Jean Smith, 901

Rose #211, Vermillion; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30 days Margaret Joan

McCloud, 901 Rose St. #139, Vermillion; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 30 days Mason Marcotte, 702 E.

Cherry Street, Vermillion; Use or possession of drug paraphernalia, \$204.00 plus costs; Ingest intoxicant other than alcoholic beverage, \$371.00 plus costs; Possess two ounces of marijuana or less, dismissed

James Allen Mullinix, 46564 306th St., Vermillion; Driving under influence-1st offense, \$350.00 plus costs, license revoked for 30 days, five days jail suspended based on the conditions of the

Shayla Helen Kiertzner, 1105 W. Clark Street, Vermillion; Driving under influence-1st offense, \$350.00 plus costs, license revoked for 120 days; Seat belt violation, dismissed

Brett Claire Chase, 400 E. Sherman Street #4, Elk Point; Having an altered or invalid license in possession, \$500.00 plus costs, five days jail suspended based on the

conditions of the court

Tanner Todd Akland, 47160 304th Street, Beresford; Petty theft-1st degree-more \$400, \$300.00 plus costs, 30 days jail suspended based on the conditions of the court; Entering property-after notice, dismissed

Eddie L. Marshall, Jr., 530 Elm Street Apt. #45, Vermillion; False report to authorities, \$116.00 plus costs, 30 days jail suspended based on the conditions of the court

Jason Christian Peterson, 952 Sunset Drive, Vermillion; Entering property-after notice, \$100.00 plus costs, 14 days jail suspended based on the conditions of the court

Donata Drappeau, 1305 Lincoln Street #201, Vermillion; Simple assault, \$300.00 plus costs, 30 days jail suspended based on the conditions of the court; Domestic abuse – simple assault, recharged

Nicholas A. Taggart, 904 E. 13th St., Yankton; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$54.00 plus costs, license suspended for 120 days, 30 days jail; Reckless driving, \$284.00 plus costs; Driving with suspended (not revoked) license, dismissed; Speed on fourlane in rural areas,

dismissed Michael Duane VanBeek, 515 N. Main Street, Aberdeen; Driving under influence-1st offense, \$1,000.00 plus costs, 2 days jail; Illegal lane change, dismissed

Andrew Greg Lane, 823 W. 22nd St., Sioux Falls; Consume or mix alcoholic beverages in public place, \$54.00 plus costs

Taray Lynn Solomon, 205 N. Harvard, Vermillion; Possession of alcohol by minor, \$134.00 plus costs, license suspended for 60 days, 14 days in the penitentiary, 12 suspended based on the conditions of the court

KNUTSON

FAMILY DENTISTRY

Dr. Richard Knutson

Dr. Matthew Knutson

