

Council backs Bane for police chief's job

By Will Brumleve

The Paxton City Council is planning to promote from within the ranks of the local police department to fill the duties of retiring Police Chief Ken Muchmore.

The city council's police committee Monday night voted 4-0 to recommend that the full council next week offer Muchmore's job to Capt. Robert Bane, effective upon Muchmore's May 12 retirement.

A straw poll taken following the committee's vote showed the entire council would be in favor of the promotion.

Also, Mayor Bill Ingold, who will be responsible for appointing the new chief, said he agreed with the recommendation.

"I agree with that," Ingold said. "We've always talked about trying to promote from within, and I think it's a good idea. Bob Bane has been a very good employee and a very good police officer for the city of Paxton for the past 19 years."

Ingold and the council interviewed Bane during a 1 1/2-hour closed session Monday night. During a break in the executive session, Bane exited the council chambers, speaking briefly to the press.

"I've put in 19 years (on the Paxton police force), and I feel that I am the best choice for the job," Bane said. "I know the town best, and everybody knows me."

Moments later, Police Committee Chairman Rick Wolfe told the

Record that the committee felt Bane was "probably our best choice" due to "his years of experience he's had" and because "he's well known in the community; he's well liked."

The 46-year-old Bane, a Paxton resident, has served as captain of the police department since last summer, when he filled a vacancy created by the resignation of Capt. Larry Hale. Hale resigned to serve as a civilian policeman in Iraq.

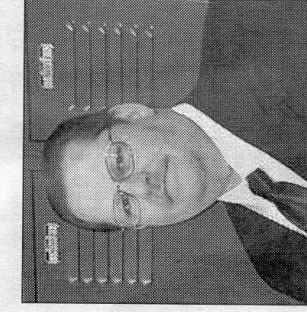
Bane had served as a youth officer/patrolman in Paxton for 18 years before he accepted the captain's post. Prior to that, Bane served several years as police chief of the LaSalle County city of Wenona. He graduated from the Police Training Institute in 1981.

Training needed?

Bane may need to undergo additional training if the mayor appoints him as police chief, Ingold said.

"I think that's something we're going to talk about," Ingold said. "I don't know that he's going to go to an academy for five or 10 weeks, but I'm sure there's going to be some classes — some one- or two-day classes — that Bob will find beneficial to him, that he's going to be able to get experience with."

Mutchmore, who announced his intentions to retire last week, would likely be available to train Bane on paperwork and other duties of the police chief before retiring, Ingold said. Also if Bane is hired, the council would likely try to hire from within.



Bob Bane

in the police department to fill the captain's post, Ingold said.

"I think so," Ingold said. "I mean, you always want to hire from within."

"I think to hire from within is a good thing. I think it shows the people that you have faith in them to do a good job."

"Obviously, there would be some training involved with that," added Ingold. "And we'll probably need a youth officer, and I think someone should be trained in that. And a firearms instructor ... somebody should be trained in that."

The council will vote on the committee's recommendation to hire Bane during the council's monthly meeting next Monday. The meeting, which is open to the public, begins at 7 p.m. in the council chambers at City Hall, 145 S. Market St.