

# Police Chief Secures Pay Raise to Recruit New Officers to Department

BY JENNIFER BURNHAM  
 HAMPTON CHRONICLE

Hampton Police Chief Mark Morrison secured a big pay raise for their reserve officers during the March 26 city council meeting.

He made the request during their March 23 workshop in response to the police department recently losing two full-time officers, which has left them scrambling to cover open shifts. Up until now, their reserve officers — who typically work on the weekends — have been paid 15 dollars an hour, and Morrison asked the council to double that in an effort to recruit more help as they work to fill their two full-time positions.

Morrison said he hopes that this pay

jump encourages their current and potential reserve officers to pick up more shifts throughout the week.

Before voting, councilors Barry Lamos and Jerre Grefe questioned whether 30 dollars an hour was too much, wondering if they could settle for something slightly lower.

"I think the pay amount of 15 dollars an hour was almost insulting for them, and this was long overdue," said Morrison. "I think 30 dollars an hour is a fair rate of pay, especially this day and age and how hard it is to find officers. At this point, communities are battling each other over finding people, and right now, we're in a unique situation where we are down two. We're almost short a third of our department, so we're trying to attract officers from other communities

that maybe want to pick up a shift or two to come here and reward the ones that are here and get them to work more hours."

City councilor Lamos said he felt they gave it a rubber stamp, as he didn't think they discussed it enough earlier in the week. City Manager Ron Dunt told him they had a chance to discuss everything at the workshop, which is why it was on their agenda.

At the end of the March 26 meeting, Morrison thanked the councilors for their approval of the pay raise, calling it a "good investment" for the police department.

If interested in a position with the Hampton Police Department, call 641-456-2529.

(Right) Hampton Police Chief Mark Morrison addressing the city councilors during their March 26 meeting.



Hampton Police Chief Mark Morrison addressing the city council during their March 26 meeting.

# Hampton Woman Celebrates Becoming U.S. Citizen

BY JENNIFER BURNHAM  
 HAMPTON CHRONICLE

Areli Primrose has some good news to share: she is officially a citizen of the United States.

With help from the team at La Luz Centro Cultural, she navigated her way to the finish line, finally attending her oath ceremony at the USCIS Des Moines Field Office on

Wednesday morning, March 25.

Primrose — who lives in Hampton with her husband and their beautiful daughter, Catalina — told the Chronicle that this means everything to her.

"This means I can be with my family without being worried," she said. "I now have the right to vote and see how I want my child's future to be."

She added that she couldn't have done it alone.

"Thank you to my amazing husband who really pushed me and helped me study for my citizenship," she said. "I wouldn't have been able to do it without my family or even Val from La Luz and Rosemarie who helped me study every week."

Her family and friends attended the oath ceremony, along with La Luz's DOJ Accredited Representative, Valeria Gonzalez, who assisted her throughout the process.



Areli Primrose with La Luz's Valeria Gonzalez after the oath ceremony on March 25.



From left to right, Tania Castaneda, Areli Primrose, Leticia Rodriguez, Cecilia Castaneda and Yadira Castaneda at the oath ceremony.



Areli with her husband, Andrew Primrose.

**OFFICE HOURS**  
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35

# Carlson Tree Farm Receives Grant for 'Little Barn Market'

BY JENNIFER BURNHAM  
 HAMPTON CHRONICLE

The folks at the Carlson Tree Farm recently learned that they will be receiving a \$7,286 grant from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship.

The tree farm is one of thirty groups to receive the grant, which was created to help Iowa farmers, small businesses and organizations located across the state.

The crew at the Tree Farm will be using the grant money to purchase an A-frame building for a "Little Barn Market." According to Cathy Carlson, this new building will allow customers to check out their many offerings, such as Christmas porch decor, in a comfortable new space, which will be located north of their production barn.

"We were keeping our fingers crossed about the grant and we were so excited when we were finally notified the other day," she said. "For us, it'll be an opportunity to expand our marketing and farm sales and not only our greenery, but hopefully other products as well."

Carlson said she learned about the grant opportunity through the Iowa Christmas Tree Association, which they are involved with.

According to a press release from Sec-



The production barn at the tree farm.

retary Naig's office, grant recipients were eligible to receive up to \$25,000 in cost-share funding per project to increase the availability of Iowa grown, made, and raised food, beverages and ag products. This year, \$500,000 in value-added grants

were awarded to leverage a total investment of \$1,711,356.82 by grant recipients across the 30 projects. The Iowa Depart-

See **TREE FARM:**  
 Page 2

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