

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 16, 2026

STATEMENT OF THE CITY OF GREENFIELD

GREENFIELD, WIS. - The following statement was issued by City of Greenfield Mayor Michael Neitzke:

On August 18, 2026, the City of Greenfield Common Council unanimously authorized Mayor Michael Neitzke to file a Statement of Charges against Chief of Police Jay Johnson as the Mayor deems appropriate. The Mayor shared the Statement of Charges with Chief Johnson's legal counsel before filing them to allow Chief Johnson to explore his options.

On August 28, 2026, Mayor Michael Neitzke formally filed a Statement of Charges against Chief of Police Jay Johnson with the City of Greenfield Police and Fire Commission, seeking the removal of Chief Johnson for the good of the police service. The process is now in the jurisdiction of the Police and Fire Commission and subject to the procedures set out in Sections 62.13(3) and (5) of the Wisconsin Statutes, which require a public hearing before the Commission. The City's investigation revealed numerous concerning findings. The Statement of Charges prepared by Mayor Neitzke presents only a handful of those findings, as other charges are under criminal investigation outside of the City process. The Mayor reserves the right to file additional Charges against Chief Johnson to the extent doing so would not interfere with the independent criminal process. Charges seeking Chief Johnson's removal are necessary to protect Greenfield residents, our Police Department and employees.

It is important to emphasize the distinct nature of the two processes Chief Johnson is subject to at this time. The criminal process is fully under the jurisdiction of outside law enforcement entities and the court system, whereas the termination process is fully under the jurisdiction of the City's Police and Fire Commission. Outside law enforcement authorities must prove the criminal allegations against Chief Johnson beyond a reasonable doubt, whereas the Mayor has a much lower evidentiary burden.

Under Wisconsin law, the process for releasing the Statement of Charges will not begin until it is requested as a public record. Such a request prompts a notification to Chief Johnson, after which he has five business days to review and, if he so chooses, augment the Charges. After five business days, the Statement of Charges becomes a public record.

However, in recognition of the significance of this action and the requests for information, we want to make clear that the City's investigatory findings revealed significant, highly concerning actions and patterns of behavior that we believe warranted this filing.

Chief Johnson is entitled to due process by rebutting the City's investigation findings at his Police and Fire Commission hearing. As required by Wisconsin law, the Commission will render the final decision whether the City's investigation findings are sufficient to justify discipline and, if so, what penalty is appropriate to protect our community, our Police Department, and our employees.