

TOWNSHIP OF SALISBURY
Lehigh County, Pennsylvania
MINUTES FROM THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
September 29, 2021 – 5:00 PM

A special meeting of the Township of Salisbury Police Civil Service Commission was publicly held on Wednesday, September 29, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. in person at the Salisbury Township Municipal Building, 2900 South Pike Ave., Allentown, PA. Present were members Commissioners Wied, Darrohn and alternate member Lande. Also present were Ms. Bonaskiewich, Township Manager; Mr. Soberick, Chief of Police; and Attorney Dimmich, Counsel. Commissioner Katz was excused. Township Police Officer Whitehead was also present. No members of the public were present.

The Civil Service Commission Meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 23, 2021

Mr. Wied made a motion to approve the June 23, 2021 Civil Service Commission meeting minutes as submitted. Mr. Lande seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

NEW BUSINESS

❖ **Motion to disqualify two (2) candidates from inclusion on the eligibility list and send 10-day notification letters**

Chief Soberick provided reports of the background investigations of the two candidates that he recommended be disqualified from inclusion on the eligibility list. There was a brief discussion on some of the findings of the two individuals' backgrounds. Mr. Lande expressed concerns on the Commission being able to defend its decision in the case of an appeal. Atty. Dimmich indicated that he will send letters to the individuals of their disqualification.

Mr. Wied made a motion to disqualify two (2) candidates (1. Bejtullah Mehmeti; 2. Kyle Kromer) from inclusion on the eligibility list and to authorize sending 10-day notification letters. Mr. Lande seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

❖ **Motion to remove two (2) candidates from further consideration for failure to complete application, including necessary supplemental documentation**

Atty. Dimmich spoke at length explaining about the measures the Commission can take for removing candidates that do not provide complete information on their applications for the civil service process.

Mr. Wied made a motion to disqualify two (2) candidates (1.Nathan Smith; 2. Christopher D'Andrea) from inclusion on the eligibility list and to authorize sending 10-day notification letters. Mr. Lande seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

❖ **Motion to accept the withdrawal of seven (7) candidates from consideration and send confirmation letters**

Atty. Dimmich noted that there were a number of candidates that voluntarily withdrew themselves from the civil service process with the Township.

Mr. Darrohn made a motion to accept the withdrawal of seven candidates from consideration and to authorize sending confirmation letters to 1. Joseph Gallagher; 2. Jared Green; 3. Isaac Jiminez; 4. Quentin Knecht; 5. David Matozzo; 6. Christopher Pforter; and 7. Michael Rardin. Mr. Wied seconded the motion. Motion passed by a vote of 3-0.

❖ **Creation of a new Entry-Level Police Officer Eligibility List**

- ❖ **Review of Scores and Ranking**
- ❖ **Certification of the Eligibility List**
- ❖ **Approve submission of top 3 names to Board of Commissioners for consideration**

Ms. Bonaskiewich noted that the list is now comprised of three (3) final candidates out of the starting number of candidates following the exams, disqualifications and withdrawals. It was noted that the Township anticipates hiring two (2) new police officers this year which all of the remaining three candidates have gone through the police academy.

Motion made by Mr. Wied to approve the creation of the entry-level police officer eligibility list containing the top three individuals. Mr. Lande seconded the motion. Motion passed by a vote of 3-0.

Motion made by Mr. Wied to authorize the submission of the top three names of the candidates on the entry-level police officer eligibility list to the Board of Commissioners for their consideration. Mr. Lande seconded the motion. Motion passed by a vote of 3-0.

Atty. Dimmich noted that the Board is required to hire the candidate with veterans' preference.

❖ **Motion to Authorize Proceeding with Testing Process for the Creation of an Eligibility List for Promotion to the Rank of Sergeant**

Atty. Dimmich noted that there are two exams for the sergeant promotion process – both written and oral examinations.

Chief Soberick recommended using the PA Chief's Association for the conducting both examinations.

Mr. Lande inquired about past processes for promotion and inquired whether there is a one-year probationary period.

The Township provides the preparatory materials to the applicants. Mr. Lande inquired whether veterans' preference points come into play for promotions. Atty. Dimmich explained that they are not able to be used for promotions; only in the initial hiring phase.

Motion made by Mr. Wied to approve the PA Chief's Association to administer the written and oral examinations for the creation of the sergeant promotional eligibility list. Mr. Lande seconded the motion. Motion passed by a vote of 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one from the public commented.

OTHER BUSINESS/ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

There was a discussion on the lack of potential candidates. The lists are getting shorter. Atty. Dimmich noted that the backgrounds could potentially be held off until conditional job offers are issued. Mr. Lande commented that the Township may have options when it comes to getting a pool of candidates for future openings in the police department. He noted that the Township could lower the qualifications or else vet the calls coming into the Police Department and not necessarily respond to certain types of calls.

Atty. Dimmich noted that candidates can be conditionally hired and then put through the academy and do not get put on the street until they have gotten the Act 120 certification. A lengthy discussion ensued. A change would need to be approved by the Civil Service Commission and the Board of Commissioners to allow dropping the Act 120 requirement for hiring eligibility. Atty. Dimmich will draft language for consideration at the next meeting.

Chief Soberick explained with respect to the staffing of the Township's police department, over the next few years there will be promotions as well as a number of officers retiring. There will be an ongoing need for the civil service process for hiring new officers.

Mr. Lande inquired whether Chief Soberick preferred having the Township doing the examination process as it was done in the past or going with the consortium. Chief Soberick stated that he prefers the consortium although he did like that the Township had handled the oral examinations which gave them more insight on the potential candidates and their thought processes.

There was a discussion regarding whether the Civil Service Commission decides to create a new list and can void prior lists if the list hasn't expired.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Mr. Wied, seconded by Mr. Lande. The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

DRAFT