

TOWNSHIP OF SALISBURY
Lehigh County, Pennsylvania
MINUTES FROM THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
June 23, 2021 – 3:00 PM

A special meeting of the Township of Salisbury Police Civil Service Commission was publicly held on Wednesday, June 23, 2021 at 3:00 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; Attorney Dimmich, Counsel; and Sgt. Sabo. Mr. Katz was excused. No members of the public were present.

The Civil Service Commission Meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 20, 2020

Mr. Wied made a motion to approve the May 20, 2020 Civil Service Commission meeting minutes as submitted. Mr. Lande seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Proposed changes to the Civil Service Rules and Regulations (Resolution 1-2021)

- ❖ **Amendments to Sections 4.6 & 4.8; Repeal of current Appendix 1 (Recommended Disqualifications) and inclusion of new Appendix 1 (Automatic Disqualifiers)**

Regarding the amendment of Section 4.6, Atty. Dimmich noted that he was informed by the Township Chief of Police to go back to having the Township's own police officers conducting the oral exams in order to expedite the process. Concerns were raised by the Township about not being able to recruit as many of the top candidates due to the current lengthy testing process. Atty. Dimmich cautioned about potential difficulties, in the case of an appeal, in proving objectivity when using Township police officers as opposed to an independent agency. It is very competitive when trying to get to the best candidates.

Chief Soberick expressed his confidence in the in-house police officers' abilities and qualifications that would be conducting the oral examinations. He noted that there were instances where other outside police agencies have performed the exams and those departments were able to hire some of the better candidates very swiftly.

Mr. Lande inquired whether there was a number of quality candidates that have gone on to other departments. He asked shouldn't an experienced police officer be on the panel as opposed to a lineman. He expressed concern about the impacts of having the police chief being present during the interviews as well. Chief Soberick commented that

a level a trust in needed that the individuals he would place on the panel would be qualified and experienced.

There was a lengthy discussion about some of the disqualifications list in Appendix 1. Mr. Lande noted that in the past, some of the items would have been much stricter. Atty. Dimmich proposed that the recommended disqualifications be treated as automatic disqualifiers.

With respect to the background investigations, Atty. Dimmich suggested that the language in Section 4.8 be changed to include: “up to three (3) and not more than six (6) unless more are requested by the Police”. Mr. Lande commented that he is not in favor of giving conditional offers of employment before the completed background investigation.

❖ **Repeal of Section 3.10 and the addition of Appendix 2 (Essential Functions for a Police Officer)**

Atty. Dimmich proposed that a list of the essential functions for a Police Officer be added as an Appendix to the Rules and Regs in order to make it easier to change in the future as opposed to having the entire list included within the text of the Rules and Regs.

❖ **Insertion of new provision (c) under Section 3.11 with current provision (c) becoming provision (d)**

Atty. Dimmich suggested language to be added to section 3. An applicant shall automatically be removed and disqualified if that person fails to meet all of the provisions of Appendix 1 which is hereby fully incorporated herein.” Said list shall not be considered exclusive.

Motion made by Mr. Wied to approve CSC Resolution No. 1-2021 and forward same to the Board of Commissioners with respect to the changes to the Rules and Regulations specifically, Amendments to Sections 4.6 & 4.8; Repeal of current Appendix 1 (Recommended Disqualifications) and inclusion of new Appendix 1 (Automatic Disqualifiers); Repeal of Section 3.10 and the addition of Appendix 2 (Essential Functions for a Police Officer); and insertion of new provision (c) under Section 3.11 with current provision (c) becoming provision (d). Mr. Lande seconded the motion. Motion passed by a vote of 3-0.

Selection of an Agency to Perform the Oral Examinations for the Creation of an Entry-Level Police Officer Eligibility List

Motion made by Mr. Wied to select a panel of Salisbury Township Police Department officers to conduct the oral interviews of any eligible candidates this year for the creation of an entry-level police officer 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

A brief discussion ensued on the upcoming rounds of testing to be performed by the consortium.

Chief Soberick proposed eliminating Act 120 requirement which will allow for more candidates. There's a 75% tuition reimbursement from the State. The Township would want to have a two-year commitment or else the candidate must reimburse the Township.

Atty. Dimmich noted that candidates are initially brought on as an employee and they are only sworn in after graduating the academy. A brief discussion ensued.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Mr. Wied, seconded by Mr. Lande. The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.