

**TOWNSHIP OF SALISBURY**  
**Lehigh County, Pennsylvania**  
**MINUTES FROM THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**  
**July 17, 2024 – 5:00 PM**

A regular meeting of the Township of Salisbury Police Civil Service Commission was publicly held on Wednesday, July 17, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. in the Township Municipal Building located at 2900 South Pike Avenue. Present were members Commissioners Darrohn, Lande, and Taylor. Also present were Ms. Bonaskiewich, Township Manager; Mr. Sabo, Chief of Police; Attorney Ashley, Counsel; Atty. Jason Ulrich, Township Solicitor; Police Detective Reese; and Township Commissioner Rodney Conn. No members of the public were present.

The Civil Service Commission Meeting was called to order at 5pm.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – May 15, 2024

Mr. Taylor made a motion to approve the May 15, 2024 Civil Service Commission meeting minutes as submitted. Mr. Lande seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- **HEARING – Appeal of Perez, Luis**

Atty. Ashley gave a brief summary that the candidate Mr. Perez had previously been disqualified by the Civil Service Commission based upon a report from the Police Chief's or designated Police Officer's report which indicated that Mr. Perez had met one or more of the automatic disqualifiers listed within the civil service rules and regulations.

Mr. Perez was sworn in by Atty. Ashley. Mr. Perez began to briefly explain his childhood background.

Atty. Ashley presented a number of questions to Mr. Perez including whether he had received the notification from the Township that he was being disqualified and removed from being placed on the certified eligibility list for entry-level police officer. Mr. Perez was provided another copy of the notice and he confirmed that he had received a copy previously. The copy of the notification letter was entered into the record.

Mr. Perez expressed confusion with respect to the reason given for his dismissal that there was information he omitted during his background investigation. Mr. Lande inquired whether any specific information was provided in writing to Mr. Perez and whether Mr. Perez had contacted Chief Sabo or a sergeant to get more specific information.

Atty. Ulrich also posed a number of questions to Mr. Perez about whether he completed and submitted the application and polygraph examination and questionnaire document. Mr. Perez acknowledged that the responses he gave to the polygraph examiner differed from the responses he gave

in the written questionnaire. Mr. Perez explained that he has had issues with a family member who has a long history with getting in trouble with the law. Mr. Perez also noted the he himself had at least one physical altercation during his years in college although he admitted he did not include the information on the questionnaire. Mr. Perez expressed his belief that he was discriminated due to his age compared to the other candidates who appeared younger.

Atty. Ulrich called Detective Diano Reeves as a witness in this matter. Det. Reeves was sworn in. Atty. Ulrich presented a number of questions to Detective Reeves. Det. Reeves acknowledged that he performed the background investigation of Mr. Perez. Det. Reeves gave a summary of his findings with respect to Mr. Perez's background which included numerous physical altercations as well prior questioning by law enforcement for a specific incident.

There was a brief period where there was closer inspection of the polygraph examination questions and comparing them to the questions in the questionnaire packet. Particularly the question about whether an individual has ever been questioned by law enforcement and if it is open to interpretation. If a person is questioned but could just be a witness as opposed to being a potential suspect or having involvement.

Police Chief Sabo was sworn in. He explained about the questionnaire packet which is approximately 30 pages is initially given by the police department to the candidates as well as a pre-polygraph questionnaire which gets completed by the applicant and then is sealed prior to the polygraph examination. If the polygraph examiner determines any areas of either deception or being untruthful, the examiner will go into greater depth with the individual to get a better of understanding of the issue.

Chief Sabo noted that although Mr. Perez was more candid and truthful when undergoing the polygraph examination, his responses should have been the same when it came to the completion of the written questionnaire. Mr. Perez should not have omitted any information and this is the primary issue.

Mr. Lande noted that it is very important that the candidates provide as much truthful information in the written questionnaire. He expressed the importance that police officers must have integrity.

The commissioners recessed into an Executive Session at 5:49pm.

At 6:32pm, the commissioners reconvened the meeting.

Atty. Ashley briefly summarized the matters of the appeal of Mr. Perez and explained that the Civil Service Commission will now need to make a decision on whether to reverse their prior decision and certify Mr. Perez to be eligible as a candidate for entry-level police officer or to reaffirm their decision to disqualify Mr. Perez.

Mr. Taylor made a motion to reaffirm the disqualification of candidate Luis Perez from inclusion on the eligibility list. Mr. Lande seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

The Hearing was ended and the appellant, witnesses and solicitor were dismissed.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS/ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION**

There was a brief discussion about whether to include more specific details in the notification letters sent to candidates about the reasons they are being disqualified for.

Ms. Bonaskiewich noted that the Civil Service Commission meeting scheduled for September 18, 2024 should be canceled due to sergeant promotional examinations and instead have a meeting of the Civil Service Commission scheduled for Wednesday, October 16, 2024.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public was present for comment.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Mr. Taylor, seconded by Mr. Lande. The meeting was adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

**NOTE: The Civil Service Commission meeting scheduled for September 18, 2024 is canceled. A special meeting of the Civil Service Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, October 16, 2024 at 5pm.**