

WEST LAFAYETTE POLICE MERIT COMMISSION MINUTES  
November 10, 2014

The West Lafayette Police Merit Commission met in regular session in Room 211 at the Morton Center on November 10, 2013 at 7:00 pm.

PRESENT: Commission President Shafer, Commissioners Corrigan, Troyer and Kirkpatrick.

ABSENT: Commissioner No

ALSO PRESENT: Commission Attorney Brooks, Chief Dombkowski, Deputy Chief Leroux, and Lt. Watson.

Commission President Shafer called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commission President Shafer asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the October meeting. Commissioner Troyer made a motion for approval of the minutes of the October meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Corrigan. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS:

Commission President Shafer had asked Chief Dombkowski previously for a briefing on our procedures for the number of people applying/number of people showing up whether or not the early call for the physical readiness as well as the written test was a wise thing at this point, and is there anything we can do in the future to have more applicant attendance. Chief Dombkowski asked Lt. Watson to speak on this subject, as he is the contact person in the applicant hiring process. Lt. Watson said that we had five applicants apply and he actually contacted half of the applicants to confirm a test date and time because the test pool was so small he wanted to set something up so those people would be able to attend. The result was one person showing up for testing. This is becoming the trend for all police departments. One candidate backed out on Friday and another backed out on Saturday morning with the others two not showing with no explanation. He explained that we just came out of a big process with 30 or 40 applicants and we took applications for three or four months. The most recent process we only took applications for a month. Lt Watson has been involved with running this process for seven or eight years and the numbers just keep continuing to go down.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick questioned whether there is enough advertising in regard to having more applicants apply. Deputy Chief Leroux's opinion is that this particular process was so short there wasn't enough time. He feels that there are people applying when we go to a larger application time period, but the problem is the applicants showing up for the testing and that is the puzzling part of this. Deputy Chief Leroux commented that because of the change made to the application process, with it being more labor intensive that would encourage true applicants, people that really wanted to become part of a police department. This process has not proven to be working like they had hoped it would. Brooks questioned if we should take applications all the time. Chief Dombkowski believes that smaller application time and shorter processing of applications is the way of the future. We have been hampered by having a long process, and have lost a lot of applicants because of that. He believes that the smaller processes are beneficial because other local departments have smaller processes. Corrigan commented that WLPD didn't hire for years because the department was a younger department and now that the department has people of retirement age, maybe WLPD should test more times a year so that we always have a list. Chief Dombkowski agreed with that. Chief Dombkowski believes that is the answer, with having the smaller pools to choose from. It was agreed that this past time frame was too short, but it was done because of the needs of the police department. WLPD is down two employees with no list of potential applicants. Commissioner Kirkpatrick asked if it was possible to follow up with the candidates that didn't show up and Lt. Watson said that he did talk to them. The minority candidate didn't want to uproot the family, he backed out. The other candidate that notified us, had other plans, so this wasn't a priority. This isn't anything new on getting a fraction of applicants to show up. The last time we had the one page applications, we had 300 applicants and still ran 30 to 40% on people saying they were coming and out of 300, 100-150 saying they would come and 60 applicants came for testing. Commissioner Troyer commented that because the economy is better now, the applicants are fewer. Jobs are plentiful now. His suggestion is to try to recruit from other departments. Chief Dombkowski will not recruit from other agencies. Chief Dombkowski believes that the patrol officers do a good job of networking.

Chief Dombkowski recommends that we do a quarterly program of the hiring process now. President Shafer asked when the first test for 2015 can be done. He also discussed whether getting a story in the paper in regard to the search for officers and if that would help in the quest for new applicants. Shafer wants to have an outside meeting to discuss this issue. Chief Dombkowski said that there is an agenda on the table to test more frequently, quarterly. Brooks suggest that we set dates now for testing. President Shafer would like to vote on having the WLPD set the testing dates. Troyer made a motion to have the police department set the dates for testing. Kirkpatrick seconded this motion. It was a unanimous voice vote.

Chief's Report:

October was a busy month and focused on traffic enforcement with 13 Operating while Intoxicated arrests. Officers were highly visible in construction zones and school zones, making 135 stops in active schools zones.

There were two new officers hired in October. Elizabeth Romstadt, a 3 year veteran of the Lafayette Police Department and Octavio Gaeta, a recent veteran of the US Air Force. They both will start this month.

West Lafayette Officers participated in several PR events this month including breast cancer prevention, YWCA domestic violence awareness and the Red Ribbon week.

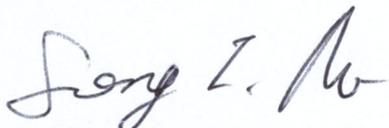
Commissioner Kirkpatrick asked about the amount of domestic violence in the area. There was discussion in regard to the amount of calls that WLPD have in regard to that.

NEW BUSINESS:

Commissioner Corrigan asked about the PEP test. Deputy Chief Leroux spoke with Lt. Harris and it was decided that the PEP test would no longer be administer to the new recruits. There was discussion among the committee in regard to the relevance of that particular test.

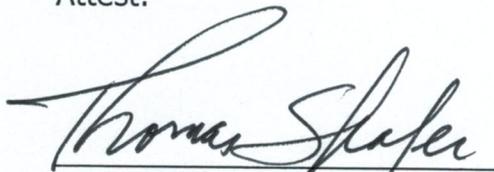
Commissioner Troyer moved that the meeting be adjourned and Commissioner Kirkpatrick seconded it. It was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

The next meeting will be held on January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at 7:00 pm at the Morton Center.



Dr. Song No, Secretary

Attest:

  
Thomas Shafer, President