

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of Merit System Commission

Held April 1, 2025

Call to Order

Meeting called to order 9:00 AM.

Mary Woeste	Chair	Present
Jim Kempe	Vice Chair	Present
Tom Watts	Member	Present
Gina Delph	Member	Present

Staff Present:

City Manager Michael Davis	Law Director Martina Dillon
Police Chief Craig Richardson	Deputy Fire Chief Mike Guadagno
HR Administrator Brittany Runnels	Street Superintendent Chris Dunn
Public Information Officer Aaron Vietor	Clerk of Council Karen Powell

Approval of Minutes

Merit System Commission Meeting Minutes - March 24, 2025

Chair Mary Woeste asked if there were any changes or corrections to the March 24, 2025, Merit System Commission meeting minutes. Hearing none, the minutes were approved as submitted.

Business

Police Division Hiring

Full-Time Police Officer (Lateral Entry)

Sgt. Andrew Parish provided the list of applicants. He said there have been a handful of new applicants since the last Merit System Commission meeting, a few applicants are in progress, and there are several that either did not meet the qualifications or withdrew from the process. He said the Police Division is awaiting documentation from three applicants who are in progress. He reported that this list goes back to 2024.

Mrs. Woeste stated that the commission does not certify a Lateral Entry list.

Full-Time Police Officer (Entry Level, No OPOTA Required)

Sgt. Parish reviewed the applicant list with the commission. He noted there are more entry-level applicants in the process than with the other processes. He said one applicant is pending a pre-employment offer polygraph this week and he is at the background investigation stage. He said a few of the applicants have returned the required documents and are beginning the background investigation stage.

Mrs. Woeste asked if any of the listed applicants are currently working as law enforcement officers?

Sgt. Parish replied that the majority are not current officers. He said there may be some who just received their certification but do not have the one-year experience, but he has not seen many that have experience and/or certification.

Mrs. Woeste asked if any have OPOTA?

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Sgt. Parish said there may be a couple of applicants from the January applicants who have OPOTA.

Mrs. Woeste confirmed for Mr. Watts that the commission is dropping OPOTA requirements in certain cases because the City of Moraine is in dire need of officers. She said years ago, Moraine always covered the OPOTA and sent applicants through the appropriate academies.

Mr. Watts moved to certify the Full-Time Police Officer (Entry Level, No OPOTA Required) list; Mr. Kempe seconded the motion.

RESULT: Passed (*Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0*)
MOVER: Tom Watts
AYES: Mary Woeste, Jim Kempe, Tom Watts, Gina Delph
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

Mrs. Woeste said that since this list has been certified, no new names can be added to the list.

Sgt. Parish said a few applications have been received since Sunday that have not been added to the list.

Mrs. Woeste said those names need to be added to a new list. She said, as always, if someone is not a viable candidate, please list in the application folder the reason why.

Full-Time Police Cadet

Mrs. Woeste said five candidates are in progress and this Full-Time Police Cadet list has not yet been certified.

Sgt. Parish said there are six qualified candidates; five are noted in progress, and one is noted that a background check is in progress. He said that Cadet is quite far in the process.

Mr. Watts asked if the six candidates met the Police Division's qualifications?

Sgt. Parish said he is confident the Police Division will be able to hire someone from this list. He said if the Number 1 candidate does not pass the background check, the Number 2 candidate is a very good candidate. He confirmed for Mr. Watts that only one Cadet will be hired.

Mrs. Woeste said there is currently a Cadet who will be a full-time Officer in May. She said the Cadet hired from the list will replace the current Cadet position.

Mrs. Delph asked why the City is hiring only one Cadet if the City is in such need of officers?

Mr. Watts replied there can only be one Cadet at a time.

Mr. Kempe moved to certify and release the Full-Time Police Cadet candidate list; Mrs. Woeste seconded the motion.

RESULT: Passed (*Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0*)
MOVER: Jim Kempe
AYES: Mary Woeste, Jim Kempe, Tom Watts, Gina Delph

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NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

Police Sergeant Promotional Process

Sgt. Parish said the Police Division asked for a promotional process for Police Sergeant. He said this process was attempted last year and only a few Officers were qualified and there were no applicants. He said the Division is trying again and is hopeful there is a viable candidate to take the promotional process.

Mrs. Woeste said she looked over the release and what the Police Division requires and asked Sgt. Parish if all the information is correct?

Mr. Aaron Vietor replied that some of the dates were shifted.

Sgt. Parish said the dates shifted one week, and this is an in-house promotion.

Mrs. Woeste said even though this is in-house, there still needs to be an internal ad. She noted the proposed ad is in the packet that was distributed.

Sgt. Parish provided the commission members with a copy of the ad and noted the dates have changed. He reported the opening date was moved up to April 7, the end date moved up to the week of April 25, the test date will be the week of May 15, the protest date is May 22, and the certification date is June 4, 2025.

Mr. Watts moved to approve the advertisement for the promotional process with corrected dates; Mr. Kempe seconded the motion.

RESULT: Passed (*Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0*)
MOVER: Tom Watts
AYES: Mary Woeste, Jim Kempe, Tom Watts, Gina Delph
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

Mr. Watts asked if the questions for candidates are the same 100 questions in random order?

Mrs. Woeste confirmed yes and explained the process.

Mr. Kempe asked how the protest is made if it cannot be made by number as the questions are in random order?

Mr. Vietor explained that the individual's protested question number can be matched up with the text.

Fire Division Hiring

Full-Time Firefighter (Entry Level)

Deputy Chief Guadagno referred to the advertisement in the packet opening on April 4, 2025, and closing on April 25, 2025.

Mrs. Woeste confirmed everything on the advertisement is correct. She confirmed with Mr. Vietor that the ad will be posted on April 9 and April 16.

Mr. Watts moved to accept and release the proposed advertisement; Mr. Kempe seconded the

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motion.

RESULT: Passed (*Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0*)
MOVER: Tom Watts
AYES: Mary Woeste, Jim Kempe, Tom Watts, Gina Delph
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

Deputy Chief Guadagno thanked Mr. Kempe and the Commission for representation at the Lieutenant Assessment Center that was completed the previous week. He stated that was the second step of a three-step process. He noted interviews are scheduled for April 11, 2025.

Mrs. Woeste asked for the list to certify the Assessment Center scores and she explained that the commission needs to certify each step of the process.

Neither Mr. Vietor nor Ms. Powell received the scores prior to this meeting. Mrs. Woeste stated the list needs to be certified in order to move on to the next phase. Deputy Chief Guadagno emailed the list to Mr. Vietor who printed the list and provided copies to the commission members.

Chief Guadagno said all three applicants did well in the assessment, and the Assessment Center was eye-opening to the applicants. He noted that in addition to the Lieutenant process itself, the Assessment Center provides information on how to tailor training to individuals and the department. He said the Miami Valley Fire and EMS Alliance ran the Assessment Center.

Mr. Kempe discussed his observations while proctoring at the Assessment Center.

Deputy Chief Guadagno described the individual assessments.

Mrs. Delph made a motion to approve the Assessment Center results; Mr. Watts seconded the motion.

RESULT: Passed (*Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0*)
MOVER: Tom Watts
AYES: Mary Woeste, Jim Kempe, Tom Watts, Gina Delph
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

Street Department Promotion (Street Maintenance Worker to Equipment Operator I)

Mr. Chris Dunn said there was a gentleman employed as an Operator I who is no longer working for the City of Moraine. He apologized that the next item, Entry Level, was placed on the agenda as the Street Department is not yet ready to hire an Entry Level employee. He said at this time, he is trying to promote a Street Department Maintenance Worker to Operator I and then a Facility Groundskeeper to a Street Maintenance Worker. He said the Street Department needs two promotional processes to open up the Facility Groundskeeper position later and place a new hire in that position. He asked for guidance on how to proceed. He said the testing is in place, and he thinks all the Street Maintenance Workers are eligible to be promoted to an Operator I position.

Mrs. Woeste said it has been a while since the Street Department has given a promotional test, and Mr. Dunn will need to check the questions to make sure they apply to the current equipment.

Mr. Dunn confirmed that he is confident the questions are relevant to this promotional process.

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Mr. Watts confirmed the Street Department positions with Mr. Dunn, who listed the positions as Street Maintenance Workers, Operator I, and Operator II.

Mr. Dunn said there is also a Facility Groundskeeper position which does not require a CDL and that position was brought in to appeal to younger applicants. He said he will be looking at that position to see if the Division wants to stay the current route or bring the CDL requirement back into the process. He noted there is a testing facility through the Miami Valley Communications Council that offers a discounted rate if the employees want to pursue a CDL. He said the class is only available to municipalities, and consists of three classroom days and two to three days of driving. He said within a week to six days the employees are certified to take the test. He discussed the pros and cons of requiring and not requiring a CDL. He said there are more applicants when the CDL is not required, but then the City would need to help the employees to obtain the CDL.

Mrs. Woeste informed Mr. Dunn that he needs to come up with a timeframe, review the current test, and then provide all the study material.

Mr. Watts asked what Mr. Dunn's timeframe is to have this process completed?

Mr. Dunn said losing an employee was unexpected, and being a person down in the busiest season is difficult.

Mr. Vietor said he and Mr. Dunn can work together, prepare an ad, review the testing material, and present the full ad with test dates by the next meeting date.

Mrs. Woeste reviewed the timeline of the process and stated it may be July or August before a promotion is made.

Mr. Watts said this timeline stretches out six months before Mr. Dunn can hire a new person.

Mrs. Woeste said, due to the rules of the commission, the departments are under an obligation to the amount of time a position is advertised, the amount of allowed study time, etc.

Mr. Watts said the commission has to come up with an easier way to streamline this process. He said six months out to hire someone is ridiculous, and by the time the City is ready to hire, that person already has a job. He said we are in modern times, and something has to be done to expedite the process.

Mrs. Woeste explained that the promotion process has to be completed before the Street Department can hire anyone.

Mr. Dunn said if people are looking for this job, they are actively looking for another job somewhere else. He remarked that the department does not need more employees, it just needs to be able to maintain the current positions. He discussed the possibility of having two Facility Groundskeeper positions, knowing only one position will stay filled and the other is there to have someone prior to an employee being promoted. He noted that making promotions first is what is dragging out the process. He said it may not be an option because the position would have to be placed on the Table of Organization.

Mr. Watts suggested that the Merit System Commission make a recommendation to Council to take a look at the Table of Organization and Mr. Dunn's recommendations.

Mrs. Woeste said the commission could not make that recommendation to Council. She did inform Mr. Dunn that the commission would set a time to meet as soon as needed to expedite

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the promotional and entry-level processes. She said the commission can shorten the process with frequent meetings to certify results, leading to having someone hired by possibly July.

Mrs. Delph asked if Moraine is the only city following this process?

Mrs. Woeste said other cities follow the Ohio Revised Code guidelines.

Mr. Dunn said he would get together with Aaron Vietor and try to have something ready for the next meeting.

Street Maintenance Worker (Entry Level)

Mr. Dunn addressed in the previous item that the Street Department is not ready to fill this position.

Rule 2 Amendment

Law Director Martina Dillon reported that on March 6 she reworded the appointing authority rule. She stated that during the discussion, it was decided that the best route to take would be to adopt the same language that Council adopted via legislation for the Personnel Manual with respect to appointing authority definition. She reviewed the changes which would read, "The appointing authority is authorized by law to make personnel appointments to City positions.

The City Council is the appointing authority for the City Manager, Clerk of Council, Director of the Department of Finance, and Director of the Department of Law. The City Manager is the appointing authority for all other City positions." Mrs. Dillon reiterated that is the language that Council adopted for the Personnel Manual via Ordinance last fall and that is the recommended language to replace the Appointing Authority Rule 2 definition for the MSC Rules. Mrs. Dillon confirmed for Mrs. Delph that this language clarifies who is the ultimate appointing authority for City employee positions and does not negate the Merit System Commission. She said the reason she originally suggested the language change was to make the Personnel Manual consistent with the Charter language. She said after that, she noticed the same language carried over to the MSC Rules, and she wanted to correct that. She asked Ms. Powell to check the Planning Commission Rules to see if this language exists.

Mrs. Dillon administered the first reading of the amendment.

Mr. Kempe moved to accept the first reading; Mrs. Woeste seconded the motion.

RESULT: Passed (*Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 0*)

MOVER: Jim Kempe

AYES: Mary Woeste, Jim Kempe, Tom Watts, Gina Delph

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

Other Business

Ms. Powell said the day of the week of the MSC monthly meetings needs changed due to member scheduling conflicts. She confirmed that there are no conflicts with the first Wednesday of the month. The next Merit System Commission meeting was scheduled for May 7, 2025.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:49 AM.

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Mary Woeste

Mary Woeste

Karen Powell

ATTEST: Clerk of Council, Karen Powell