RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of **Merit System Commission** Held **June 6, 2024**

Call to Order

Merit System Commission Meeting Call to Order at 11:00 AM

Mary Woeste	Chair	Present
Jim Kempe	Member	Present
Dave Rodehaver	Member	Present

Staff Members Present: Deputy Police Chief Jason Neubauer and Clerk of Council Amy Brown

Approval of Minutes

Merit System Commission Meeting Minutes - May 2, 2024

Mrs. Woeste asked if there were any changes or corrections to the May 2, 2024 MSC meeting minutes. Hearing none, the minutes were approved as submitted.

Business

Entry Level Police Officer Advertisement

Deputy Chief Neubauer stated he was presenting the MSC members with two processes for the Entry Level Police Officer position for their review. He explained they are trying to expedite the application and testing process.

Mrs. Brown reported there is a memo on page five in the packet regarding the requested change and two proposed advertisements for the Entry Level Police Officer also included.

Deputy Chief Neubauer noted they are finding in today's job market that by the time they run a full process, the applicants who have submitted materials early in the process have already found a job by the time they can actually get the candidates in for an interview. He explained they were hoping to change the process, so it would be similar to the lateral process in that they could receive the names at the beginning of the process and have a competitive board interview. He stated they already have a process they have been using in their board interviews to give them a numeric value. He commented that their thought was they could receive and compile those scores, create the list, and present it to the MSC to certify the potential applicants.

Mrs. Woeste confirmed that he was talking about no more testing, and just having an interview.

Deputy Chief Neubauer replied that the competitive nature of it would be the board interview with a numeric score.

Mrs. Woeste asked if that was that in agreement with the MSC rules.

Mrs. Brown commented that they had talked with Chief Richardson that once the board interview was completed, she was under the impression that a written exam would be given, but the interview would come first as opposed to the exam.

Mr. Rodehaver confirmed they were just changing the order with the interview first so they could weed out some of the weaker applicants to get better quality applicants.

Deputy Chief Neubauer stated that in talking with Chief Richardson, if they could do a process

that is just a competitive interview and forego a written test, he thinks that is something that Chief would like to try. He reported the biggest problem they are having is the time-lapse in the process making things more complicated. He commented that they would like to try to expedite the process by being able to contact the candidates at the beginning of the process to set up interviews. He noted that some other agencies are giving conditional offers of employment just based on submitting an application, and added they are trying to stay competitive in the job market.

Mrs. Woeste noted that in order to skip the testing, the rules would have to be changed. She commented the rules state there has to be a competitive test and they couldn't implement this without a rule change.

Deputy Chief Neubauer asked if the competitive interview could be considered the competitive test since it would have a numeric score.

Mrs. Woeste replied they would have to consult the City's Law Director.

Mr. Rodehaver asked if this has gone before the City's Law Director.

Deputy Chief Neubauer replied, no.

Mr. Kempe noted that each phase of the current process is supposed to bring important and needed information in the process of evaluating a candidate, and added he understood the need or desire to shorten up the time frame.

Mrs. Woeste commented that they shouldn't lose any of the parts of the process, but they can discuss streamlining the process.

Mr. Rodehaver stated it would definitely have to be discussed with the Law Director for her review.

Deputy Chief Neubauer replied that he didn't want it to appear that they are trying to eliminate any of the validation processes. He noted they want to follow the rules and get a valid candidate pool.

Mrs. Woeste responded it would be her suggestion to come up with exactly how they would like to streamline the process, and have the Law Director review it.

Deputy Chief Neubauer stated he completely understood, and added he didn't want them to think they are trying to skirt the rules because that is not how they conduct business. He noted it was just about presenting a different opportunity because it is hard to be competitive right now. he asked if they had any opinions about having an open application process.

Mrs. Woeste answered they could do an open application process, but they would still have to take the test at this point. She stated they could go along with that when an application is received, she saw no harm in bringing them in for an interview, but they would still have to take the NTN test.

Mrs. Brown noted that she thought in the discussions with Chief Richardson previously that he had created an in-house test. She commented she thought in this process, it would be the interview portion first, and then the list of names that had passed the board interview would be certified by the MSC. She stated it was her understanding that they would then move onto the in-house testing portion of the process.

Deputy Chief Neubauer replied that they did talk about that, but he spoke with the Chief for

further clarification, and he wanted to see if they could just strictly stick with a board interview. He noted if they wanted to do a board interview and then have a written in-house test, they could try that also. He stated they are open to exploring what avenues could get them a better candidate pool.

Mr. Rodehaver commented he didn't see a big problem in rearranging the order if it helps to expedite, but he wasn't in favor of doing away with the test.

Deputy Chief Neubauer stated that with the two submitted proposed Entry Level Police Officer advertisements in the MSC packet, they would not be ready to move forward with either of them today because there would have to be some language changes in the advertisement.

Mrs. Brown noted they do have the first reading of a rule change today, and they have to have seven days in between readings, so if the members are willing to meet next week for the second reading, they could have the advertisement ready for next week.

Deputy Chief Neubauer stated they could possibly have it ready for next week.

Mrs. Woeste commented that Chief Richardson could write up how he would like to streamline the process and have the Law Director look over it. She noted if a rule change is needed, it could be ready to have the first reading next Thursday.

MSC Rule Change - Police Patrol Officer Lateral Entry

Deputy Chief Neubauer stated he wasn't sure of the previous conversations regarding this rule change, but they have received calls from potential candidates who are out of state regarding a lateral move to their department. He noted this rule change would allow them to get the person with experience in the door, and added he appreciated the member's consideration on this item.

Mrs. Woeste read the proposed rule change. She read, *Rule 19, Section 5(b), Police Patrol Officer Lateral Entry Criteria, certified as a law enforcement officer by the Ohio Peace Officers Training Commission or substantially similar and equivalent police training program, and/or certification from another state or federal agency, and be current with all applicable continuing education requirements.*

Other Business

The members were in agreement to have the next MSC meeting next Thursday, June 13, at 11:00 AM.

Adjournment

Adjournment at 11:19 AM

Mary Woeste

Mary Woeste

ATTEST: Clerk of Council Amy Brown