

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of Merit System Commission

Held June 13, 2024

Call to Order

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

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

Staff Members Present: Police Chief Craig Richardson, Human Resources Administrator Brittany Runnels, and Clerk of Council Amy Brown

Approval of Minutes

Merit System Commission Meeting Minutes - June 6, 2024

Mrs. Woeste asked if there were any changes or corrections to the June 6, 2024 Merit System Commission meeting minutes. Hearing none, the minutes were approved as submitted.

Business

MSC Rule Change - Police Patrol Officer Lateral Entry

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 Officer's 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.*

Mr. Kempe made a motion to approve the proposed rule change as read by Mrs. Woeste.

RESULT: Passed, (Yes 3, No 0, Abstained 0)
MOVER: Jim Kempe
AYES: Mary Woeste, Jim Kempe, Dave Rodehaver
NAYS: None

Entry Level Police Officer Advertisement

Mrs. Brown reported they do not have anything concerning a proposed rule change yet, so this advertisement is in line with the current rules for Entry Level Police Officer. She explained the test has already been set up with NTN, and added it would be posted on Tuesday, June 18. She stated since the July 4 holiday is on the Thursday when the normal MSC meeting would be, they could meet on Thursday, July 11, to certify the list and the advertisement could close on July 8.

Chief Richardson explained they don't have anything ready for a proposed rule change. He noted they were trying to brainstorm some ideas, but they didn't have anything definite. He commented that Deputy Chief Neubauer introduced some ideas at the last meeting, but they aren't sure what they really want to do. He stated they are currently not getting 200 candidates or even 20 applicants, and added a competitive exam isn't really competitive if they are only getting three applicants to take a written exam. He remarked they were discussing making the board interview part of the application process, and it wouldn't require a rule change because the MSC determines what the application process is. He noted that the police academy at Sinclair started last week, and before the entry level process is finished here, there will be a good number of them that already have offers from other places. He explained other agencies have moved their processes around to a point where they can streamline people through and

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of Merit System Commission

Held June 13, 2024

give them conditional offers.

Mrs. Woeste commented that is why they would like the Law Director's input, because according to the rules, the MSC has to certify the test before the names can be released.

Chief Richardson stated they were thinking of beginning the process with a board interview and background check and then have them take a written test. He explained that would weed out the vast majority of people so they aren't wasting their time with a lengthy process. He commented that there are some agencies that give conditional offers immediately before any other process takes place, and then those candidates stop looking at other jobs. He remarked he was trying to streamline the process.

Mrs. Woeste stated she agreed, but they would still need the Law Director's input because it's going against what the rules say.

Mr. Rodehaver commented he would like to say yes, but it seemed the way that Deputy Chief Neubauer presented it, they wanted to do away with the testing and just do the interview.

Chief Richardson replied they were discussing that idea because their board interview is one of the first steps in their process, and it has a scoring system based on knowledge, skills, abilities, and other different qualities. He noted it wasn't a written test, but they were thinking about it being the competitive portion of the process. He stated one of the ways they were looking at was to make the board interview the competitive exam because it is already a scored piece of the process, and added they could also make part of it have a written component. He explained the current board interview is a formal process with a formal scoring method because they could be liable for excluding someone without having a documented reason to exclude them. He remarked they are not trying to go around the rules or make new rules, they are looking at trying to make the whole process faster.

Mr. Rodehaver confirmed that they didn't want to do away with the written testing, it was just rearranging the way that it was done. He noted they would be interviewing first, and then completing a NTN test or whatever test is provided.

Chief Richardson responded they could come up with their own in-house test, and they could do it online since that is how they are currently doing the testing anyway. He confirmed they are not trying to circumvent the testing, they are just rearranging the manner in which it's done.

Mrs. Brown asked at what point the MSC would certify a list.

Chief Richardson asked the MSC members if they would like to certify the entire applicant pool or just people that can pass an initial background test during the application portion.

Mrs. Woeste noted that when the list is made, they are really only supposed to release the first 10 names. She asked if they are just given a list of applicants, how could it be determined who submitted first or last.

Chief Richardson replied they would still use Mrs. Brown and Mr. Vietor for the initial application process to gather that information. He commented that currently anytime an application is posted, it's time stamped and dated. He stated the current process includes a number of steps involving nondiscretionary actions in which the applicant applies, they follow the steps, and their name is put on a list, and added there was no discretion on anybody's part, it's completely open.

Mr. Kempe asked if there was any way to change that. He asked the first time they saw a candidate's name if they had gone through any discretionary selection process under the

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of Merit System Commission

Held June 13, 2024

proposed system. He asked if they had been selected in any other way to apply.

Chief Richardson stated if they wanted to see the entire applicant pool, then they would see that. He commented that if they wanted to see the candidates that had background issues, they could do that too, so they could see everybody.

Mr. Kempe responded, no, there would be no discretion. He noted there is a way the current system is specified, and he wanted to see if there was a way to get closer to what the Chief wants without changing what is currently an approved system. He stated they want to make sure that everything they do is court defensible.

Chief Richardson commented that they need things streamlined. He noted there are some departments that have entry level programs that are ongoing processes. He stated they are not getting a competitive pool of candidates, so they continually process applicants as they apply. He explained they could reword the ads, so there could be a continuous hiring process for 3, 4, or 6 months at a time. He added the testing is currently online, so that wouldn't change.

Mr. Rodehaver confirmed that they would be certifying and releasing a list, but they would be weeding out the unqualified people first.

Chief Richardson stated he was just trying to brainstorm, and if someone comes up with a better process, they would be willing to do it. He noted that it wasn't just them, it was every department receiving fewer applicants. He commented that the current process takes 4, 5, or 6 weeks and that is just too long now, because by the end of the process, the candidates have other job offers.

Mrs. Woeste agreed with the Chief, and stated they would still need the Law Director to look everything over because it doesn't go with the rules now, and added the ORC may also have to be looked at.

Chief Richardson replied that he didn't think they would be in conflict or violation with the ORC if they had an ongoing process. He added he didn't think they would be in conflict with the ORC if they had a scored weighted interview process as part of the application process.

Mrs. Woeste commented that the interview could be subjective.

Chief Richardson explained that they have a formal interview with at least three people, who each score the candidate. He reported that they come up with an average of those three scores, and added that they have a formal scoresheet as written proof.

Mrs. Woeste asked who sits on the board.

Chief Richardson replied, usually Deputy Chief Neubauer, and the person running the Field Training Officer program, and one of the detectives since they would run the background check. He explained they interview the candidate, make notes, and then score them at the end of the interview. He noted that the list that the MSC certifies gets re-sorted after the formal interview process. He stated he could talk with the Law Director, and maybe she could check with other agencies to see how they are handling it through their own Merit Service Commissions.

Mrs. Woeste stated she thought the ideas were great, but they have to make sure the rules are followed. She noted she liked the idea of getting the list and weeding out the people through background checks before they can move on.

Mr. Kempe asked if a big chunk of the time that they are trying to eliminate between the point

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of Merit System Commission

Held June 13, 2024

where people take a test and the point where the MSC sees it and approves the list.

Chief Richardson responded, yes, and noted from the day they put in the application to the time they get them through a panel or board interview is where they lose them.

Mr. Kempe asked how soon the scores were available once someone has taken the online test.

Chief Richardson replied it is immediate.

There was further discussion among Chief Richardson and the members regarding the timing of the process.

Mrs. Woeste asked Chief Richardson to submit to the Law Director exactly what he would be requesting, and if she finds it legal, she could write a rule to replace the current rule.

Chief Richardson stated he would speak with the Law Director to see what they could possibly do.

Mr. Rodehaver made a motion to table this discussion item until the members receive further information and feedback from the Law Director.

RESULT: Passed, (Yes 3, No 0, Abstained 0)
MOVER: Dave Rodehaver
AYES: Mary Woeste, Jim Kempe, Dave Rodehaver
NAYS: None

Chief Richardson reported they had four applicants for the Lateral Entry process, and they were not able to hire from that list. He stated two of them wouldn't return calls, and the other two were not suitable candidates. He noted they were still in need of at least three police officers. He requested an Entry Level process, and added it would be a good time because some of the academies are just starting now. He stated they would continue with past practice, with NTN giving the test and the current application process. He commented there were no changes to the ad except for the dates, and added this would be for an Entry Level officer with no OPOTA required, but they would receive bonus points if they do have their OPOTA.

Mr. Rodehaver made a motion to approve the advertisement for Entry Level police officer.

RESULT: Passed, (Yes 3, No 0, Abstained 0)
MOVER: Dave Rodehaver
AYES: Mary Woeste, Jim Kempe, Dave Rodehaver
NAYS: None

Other Business

The members determined the next MSC meeting would be on Thursday, July 11 at 11:00 AM.

Adjournment

Adjournment at 11:49 AM


Mary Woeste



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

	Minutes of Merit System Commission	Held June 13, 2024	
--	------------------------------------	--------------------	--

ATTEST: Clerk of Council Amy Brown