

A meeting of the Towanda Borough Police Civil Service Commission was held on February 22, 2024 in the Council Room of the Municipal Building located at 724 Main St, Towanda PA. The meeting was called to order at 11:05 a.m. by Commissioner Alec Garden.

Present were Commissioners Alec Garden, Mark Henery, and Ryan Eberlin; Police Chief Randy Epler. No visitors in attendance.

Minutes

The minutes of the January 17, 2024 meeting were approved upon a motion by Commissioner Ryan Eberlin, seconded by Commissioner Alec Garden. Motion passed to approve the minutes as approved.

New Business

- **Patrol Officer Testing**

Chief Epler reported the Patrol Officer testing on February 3, 2024 went well. Chief Epler stated doing it all in one day, he probably wouldn't want to do all the testing in one day with a large group. The written test was conducted first; a 15-minute break; followed by the oral interview. The oral interviewers were the Proctor of the Written Test, Jene Conklin; Keith Brown, who was also administering the Physical Test; Lou Alteri, Chief Epler, and Justin Popovich, Bradford County Probation Chief.

Chief Epler explained that applicant Carter Michael Pries had withdrawn from testing taking a job with the Sayre Police Department part-time. Applicant Clinton Lyle Vermilya finished with an 82% overall score on the written test, 88.45% overall on the oral interview, and passed the physical test with a rough time in the swim and finished the run well within the time limit. The math portion of the written testing had the same complaint that there is not enough time to complete that section. In response, Chief Epler feels the testers don't know how to sort out the information they don't need in order to answer the multiple-choice question quickly.

- **Certification List**

The recommendation to the Towanda Borough Council to hire Clinton Lyle Vermilya as a full-time Patrol Officer was approved on a motion by Commissioner Eberlin, seconded by Commissioner Henery. Motion passed.

Chief Epler stated that he had the Borough Manager Lauren prepare a conditional offer of employment to present to Mr. Vermilya making him more comfortable because he was leaving a full-time position with the Canton Police Department; he is giving them a two-week notice effective the 23rd.

- Recommendation Approval – Trevor Wills

The Towanda Borough Council approved the recommendation to move Trevor Wills from part-time to full-time at meeting of February 5, 2024 under Resolution 2024-4.

Old Business

- Corporal Position

Chief Epler reported he has reached out by email to the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association for information on appropriate testing they may offer. Chief Epler reported according to the rules there would be three eligible for the Corporal position – Officers Bryan Bellows, Josh Lake, and John Hennessy based upon required two years of full-time service; Campbell and the others would not have the years of service. Chief Epler will put out the word to those eligible of the testing for Corporal and if you wish to apply, send him a letter stating their intention.

Commissioner Ebelin asked Chief Epler that you're basically leaning on the test scores whoever scores the highest. Chief Epler answered yes, the written test and the oral interview, there is no physical fitness test. The oral interview is different from the interview given to a new officer applicant because it is forbidden to ask them police only question; the questions to a Corporal will be very detailed police questions. Chief Epler will use only senior police officers to do an interview on a first-line supervisor.

Chief Epler will direct the Secretary, Laurie McGuire, to order the tests based upon the number of applicants who have notified him they want to test. The Commission appoints Chief Epler to assemble the persons to conduct the Oral Interview Board for the Corporal position.

Commissioner Henery read aloud highlights of Section 34.B Items 6 and 7 of the Rules and Regulations which covers the scoring percentages of the written and oral exams; and, Section 34.C covering the Commission after the written and oral examinations have been administered and graded submitting a Certification List to the Council with the names of the applicants receiving the three highest weighted/combined scores in the descending grade order; ending with Section 34.D Veteran's preference points shall not be added to any weighted/combines score.

Next Meeting

No meeting date set; it will be decided upon after the administration and grading of the Corporal testing.

Chief Epler suggested it be checked into if the advertising of a meeting in a newspaper is actually required and could be removed from the Rules and Regulations; perhaps, the requirement may

only be publishing it on a social media site. Laurie McGuire stated she would follow-up with the Sunshine Laws.

General Discussion

Commissioner Garden questioned if the police force was now full at eight officers. Chief Epler answered yes, stating it is about all financially Towanda Borough can handle. Chief Epler also reminded that Officer Derek Campbell will leave in May for approximately nine months of deployment, returning to the force in March 2025. Officer Campbell will not be paid by the Borough while he is deployed. School Resource Officer John Hennessy will again return to the patrol force at the end of the school year until school resumes the end of August. Possibly a part-time officer from the Canton Police could be used to fill in.

Adjournment

Commissioner Ryan Eberlin adjourned the meeting at 11:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie L. McGuire

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Recording Secretary