

A meeting of the Towanda Borough Police Civil Service Commission was held on December 7, 2022 in the Council Room of the Municipal Building located at 724 Main St, Towanda PA. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Commission Chairperson Alec Garden.

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

Minutes

The minutes of the August 31, 2022 meeting were approved upon a motion by Mr. Eberlin, seconded by Mr. Henery, all in favor. Motion passed to approve the minutes as presented.

New Business

➤ Physical Agility Test

Chief Epler reported part of the Physical Agility test has been scheduled for December 17, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.; there is too much to the test to do it all in one day. The exception would be if the candidates asked to waive it because they are all there and are feeling okay to continue with the full testing in one day. However, Chief Epler feels if they failed they could challenge the test and it wouldn't count and would have to be completed another day.

Mr. Eberlin stated he has reached out to Keith Brown at the high school; he is lifeguard certified and teaches lifeguard classes. Chief Epler took Mr. Brown's phone contact information from Mr. Eberlin and will call him. Mr. Eberlin stated if Mr. Brown should not be available, he will know who would be next on deck.

➤ Oral Examination

Mr. Eberlin asked if the Oral Examination is next. Chief Epler stated it is and they should begin scheduling it now. Discussion followed the rules and regulations state there will be five oral examiners; the Commission should start looking for those persons now. Chief Epler stated he is typically one; in the past they have always used Lou Alteri, a retired Sergeant with the Pennsylvania State Police; one local teacher; and one or two other people in good standing in the community from different disciplines that are somewhat near the law enforcement profession but still a civilian. Chief Epler suggests not loading the examiner board real heavy with cop related occupations and broaden the base out.

Chief Epler stated he has questions that are asked during an oral exam; he usually shares them in advance with the examiners beforehand and asks them to either pick a question or develop one of their own as long as the Commission approves them. Generally, each examiner gets to ask one question of each candidate; the candidate is dismissed from the room; the examiners score the candidate followed by a discussion of the examination board before the next candidate is called in. This process helps to balance out the scoring and eliminate wide sweeps in the grading; it also helps the examiners to feel how the candidates answer the questions presented.

Mr. Eberlin stated it will be the Commission's job to assemble the examiners. Chief Epler will take suggestions from the Commission of possible oral examiners; he will not reach out to them until after the holidays. Mr. Garden suggested maybe a sixth examiner as an alternate in case someone cannot make it on the scheduled exam date.

Discussion followed on possible examiners. Chief Epler could easily find someone in law enforcement. Mr. Garden asked if the examiners have to live in Towanda Borough; Chief Epler answered no, however, in the past they typically tried to use Borough residents. Chief Epler stated Lorie Kapson was used in the past from the teaching profession; Jim Bowen has been used in the past and is actually now the Deputy Coroner and also lives in the Borough. Mr. Henery suggested Tim Geiger as a possible examiner. Mr. Henery will explore the teacher end and advise.

Old Business

➤ Written Examination

The National Police Officer Selection Test was administered on December 3, 2022 with Mrs. Jene Conklin of the Towanda Area School District as the Proctor/Administrator. Chief Epler was present during the testing; he explained the exam took around 1 ½ hours broken down into four segments, averaging about 20 minutes per section. The three applicants, Derek Campbell, Garret M. Smith, and Briar Jenkins all passed. Mr. Eberlin clarified the section scores don't matter; it is the overall score that matters; Chief Epler stated that is what has been determined as at one time it did not read that way in the regulations. After long discussions and review of the regulations, the passing of each individual section of was dumped.

Since the written examination, Chief Epler notified each individual applicant of his personal score only. Officer Campbell is military of the group; upon completion of the physical fitness he will receive 10 additional points.

➤ Other Discussion

Chief Epler suggests after completion of this hiring and the whole process is fresh in the minds of the Commission Board, they go back through the Rules and Regulations and modify to something more current and simpler for everyone to understand

Mr. Garden stated a recent newspaper article indicated the Borough Manager wants another officer on the squad. Chief Epler answered it is his understanding Council is intending to hire this person after all the testing is completed to bring them on board in mid-May. Mr. Eberlin agreed this is in the budget for mid-year. Mr. Eberlin asked if you can use the same applicants to fill another position should it open up. Chief Epler answered yes up to a year the applications stay active.

The Commission will meet again after all testing is complete. With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned by Mr. Garden at 5:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie L. McGuire

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Recording Secretary