

A meeting of the Towanda Borough Police Civil Service Commission was held on August 21, 2023 in the Council Room of the Municipal Building located at 724 Main St, Towanda PA. The meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m. by Commission Chairperson Alec Garden.

Present were Commissioners Alec Garden, Mark Henery, and Ryan Eberlin. No visitors in attendance.

Minutes

The minutes of the December 7, 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. Noted the meeting scheduled for February 13, 2023 was cancelled.

New Business

Mr. Eberlin stated two of the three candidates from the last time were both hired; the third failing the physical agility test. What has come to light is Officer Ryan Edsell will be leaving the force with his winning of a Magistrate seat and the PA State Police are pursuing the newest hire which is Garret Smith. Mr. Garden asked if Officer Smith has been through the State Police academy. Mr. Eberlin answered he does not know any of the particulars just that Officer Smith will have a decision to make so we are in the position to definitely fill one upcoming vacancy and potentially two. The reality is we need to start the same process of almost one year ago.

Mr. Eberlin recalled the last time we posted a request for an applicant pool giving notice that Towanda Borough is seeking pool applicants for Patrol Officer positions, full-time, part-time. The advertisement was run for approximately three weeks. Discussion followed on the timeline and where to run the same advertisement from last year.

Mr. Henery made a motion to proceed with the applicant pool with the notices to be publicized beginning September 1, 2023, a termination date of September 29, 2023 on the Borough website, Facebook, and same newspapers used prior. Seconded by Mr. Eberlin. Motion passed.

Ms. McGuire will update the advertisement and email it to Mr. Eberlin to proof-read and approve the advertisement; the Borough Manager Lauren Egleston has access to an Indeed.com account to post it there.

A meeting date of October 5, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. at the Municipal Building was set by Mr. Eberlin with all in agreement.

Mr. Henery contacted Mrs. Jene Conklin after the last Written Examination testing to see how it went and to thank her for her service since he was the one to contact her initially; she was very pleased to help out and happy for the opportunity to give back to the Borough. Mr. Henery will reach out to her to administer the written examination again with a test date potentially in October 2023.

➤ Act 120

Mr. Eberlin mentioned Act 120 as a requirement for application and it's not that anybody would or wouldn't know it on our posting because we don't necessarily state it there so he doesn't know if we received any applicants last time that were not Act 120 certified.

Mr. Eberlin stated it is again at the request of the Police Committee and the Borough Council that the Police Civil Service Commission consider removing Act 120 as a requirement for applicants as it is currently stated. Removal of Act 120 does not mean that it's not still a requirement to be an active Officer; they could not be scheduled until they pass Act 120 training and be certified. Mr. Eberlin added as far as having it as a prerequisite for application, the Police Committee and Borough Council are hoping the Civil Service Commission consider removing.

Mr. Garden asked if we run the Ad and receive an applicant already certified, is it an instant hire? Mr. Eberlin answered yes as we did with the last two who were already Act 120 certified, however, they must still pass all the Borough testing. Mr. Henery also added the Borough testing is required regardless of Act 120 certification. Mr. Eberlin stated Act 120 certification is also state law but it doesn't state that you have to have it to call in an application.

Mr. Eberlin stated It was discussed in Council that removal of Act 120 at application would essentially be a recruiting tactic where you could offer financial assistance to complete the training and upon successful completion you would then become a Towanda Police Officer with all the legal ease worked out and in place before hire. Solicitor Smith would have to be involved to draw up a legal document. The source for Act 120 certification in this area is the academy in Mansfield. Mr. Henery asked Mr. Eberlin if the Council wants the Commission to make a motion and if the whole process to remove the Act 120 certification at application begins with the Commission? Mr. Eberlin answered yes the process starts with the Commission, but he was hoping to get Chief Randy Epler's opinion before making a decision and taking the recommendation to Borough Council. Mr. Eberlin stated the Council could choose not to take the recommendation.

Mr. Henery would be happy enough to make a motion for the Commission to approve waiving the Act 120 certification as part of the requirement for application with the understanding the

individual would pass the Borough testing and the Borough would compensate them for the cost of completion of the Act 120. Mr. Eberlin said basically if they are a top candidate for hire and are not Act 120 certified, we would have some agreement with them to send them to the academy. Mr. Henery would recommend that the Borough underwrite that with the understanding that they in turn give the Borough back X number of years in service.

After further discussion on the Commission's recommendation to remove Act 120 certification prior to application, no formal motion was made on this matter.

Old Business

No discussion.

Other Discussion

Mr. Eberlin looked up on his phone information on the Mansfield Academy; the cost is \$2,737.00 and the student must demonstrate the ability to perform in the 30th percentile; course length is six and one-half months.

At the October 5, 2023 meeting, it will be known how many written exams will need to be ordered. Ms. McGuire will order the appropriate number of tests.

Adjournment

Mr. Eberlin motioned the meeting be adjourned at 4:43 p.m. Motion seconded by Mr. Henery. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie L. McGuire

Laurie L. McGuire
Recording Secretary