

February 12, 2015

LOWELL METROPOLITAN POLICE COMMISSION

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The Lowell Metropolitan Police Commission met in regular session on Thursday, February 12, 2015 at the Lowell Town Hall.

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Commissioner Sharon Patterson, present

Commissioner John Piper, present

Commissioner Michael Mears, absent

Commissioner Ray Borchert, present

Commissioner Ricky Cooper, present

Chief Erik Matson and Attorney Bennett were also present

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, followed by a brief moment of silence.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES January 15, 2015 REGULAR SESSION.

Commissioner Piper made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 15th meeting, seconded by Commissioner Borchert. 4 ayes, motion passed.

IV. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS/EXPENDITURES

Commissioner Piper made a motion to approve the Claims and Expenditures and to send them to the Town Council for payment. Commissioner Borchert seconded the motion. 4 ayes, motion passed.

V. CHIEF'S REPORT AND THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEES OR MEMBERS

Chief Matson stated that Reserve Officer Dan Drexler has turned in his resignation and has been hired full time by the Schererville Police Department. The Chief stated that Officer Drexler was a great Officer and he will be a great Officer for Schererville. Chief Matson informed the Commission that Officer Drexler is the ninth Reserve Officer to be hired out of the Lowell Police Department in a full time capacity.

Chief Matson stated that the Reserve Officer process has begun and that out of the 24 applications turned in, 17 candidates showed up, and after a full day of written and physical testing, 7 candidates remain. The Chief stated that background investigations are now being processed, and also that the interviews should be ready to be scheduled and the next steps in the process determined, at the March Commission meeting.

Chief Matson requested that the Commission approve his enrollment in the Staff and Command School that will take place July 20th-November 20th on a two week on, two week off schedule. The Chief stated that the cost of the class will be \$3,750.00 and that he checked and the money for the class is in the training budget. The Chief also stated that this class has been recommended for him to attend by numerous people.

Chief Matson brought to the Commission as requested, the overall statistics on the need for the hiring of more Officers on the Lowell Police Department. He stated that the population has grown in the last 5 years by 1,500 people and that the call volume has gone up dramatically. He further stated that the FBI recommends that a town the size of Lowell, 9,381 (as of 2013), should have 20 ½ Officers on staff. The Chief also mentioned that if any annexation is going to happen, the Police Department must be ready. Chief Matson stated that Cedar Lake would like to annex down to 173rd and that they are boasting that they have the Officers to handle that much additional land. Chief Matson stated that he didn't know if Lowell could make that same claim and that the Police Departments main need is more manpower. President Patterson stated that the numbers back up the need for additional Officers.

VI. INTRODUCTION AND ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS

VII. OLD BUSINESS

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Piper made a motion to approve the resignation of Reserve Officer Drexler, seconded by Commissioner Borchert. 4 ayes, motion passed.

Commissioner Borchert made a motion to approve the enrollment of Chief Matson into the Northwestern Staff and Command School, seconded by Commissioner Piper. 4 ayes, motion passed.

Commissioner Piper asked if there will be a formal presentation made to the Town Council for the need for more Officers. Chief Matson stated that he has spoken to members of the Town Council and that they are aware of the need for more Officers and they have been very understanding of this need. President Patterson asked if Chief Matson wants the Commission to hold on to the information provided for now until the occasion arises that it is needed. Chief Matson replied that he does not want to recommend what the Commission does or overstep his boundaries, but suggested that maybe a letter could be sent to the Council just as a reminder that this is an issue the Police Commission is still worried about. Commissioner Cooper asked if the Commission would be the one to send the letter or the Chief. President Patterson stated that last year a resolution was made to the Town Council. Commissioner Cooper asked if there was a follow up done on the resolution and Commissioner Borchert replied that an Officer was hired. Commissioner Borchert made a motion that a letter be sent to the Town Council to bring the issue to the forefront as a recommendation. Attorney Bennett suggested that a more specific hiring request be sent, so that Town Council can reply to the request. Commissioner Cooper suggested that the Commission request three or four. Chief Matson stated that his goal is for the department to be at least at 18 Officers for the department to be safe. After some discussion the Commissioners agreed that a letter be sent to the Town Council requesting that three new Officers be hired by August of 2016, one each to attend the August 2015, January 2016, and August 2016 Academy.

Attorney Bennett suggested that Chief Matson include in the letter the urgency to hire more Officers, because of the ongoing issue of understaffing during prisoner transports particularly, and the Dispatch being gone soon and unable to help.

Commissioner Borchert made a motion to send a letter to the Town Council for the recommendation of hiring three new Officers by August of 2016, seconded by Commissioner Piper. 4 ayes, motion passed.

IX. PETITIONS, REMONSTRANCES, AND COMMUNICATIONS

X. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next Commission Meeting will be March 12, 2015 at 7 p.m.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Piper to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Borchert. 4 ayes, motion passed.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:19 pm

Sharon Patterson, President

John Piper, Secretary