

Minutes of a Meeting of  
City of Bay Village Civil Service Commission

Held September 17, 2015

4:00 p.m.

Members Present: James Potter, Chairman, Marty Krebs, Dr. Dennis Lekan

Also Present: Police Chief Spaetzel

Audience: Nancy Trainer, representing the League of Women Voters.

Chairman Potter called the ninth meeting of the Civil Service Commission in the year 2015 to order at 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Potter called for approval of the minutes of the meeting of the Civil Service Commission held September 2, 2015. **Motion** by Krebs, second by Potter, to approve the minutes of September 2, 2015 as prepared and distributed.

**Roll Call Vote: Yeas – Potter, Krebs, Lekan.**

**Motion carried. 3-0.**

**Civilian Police Dispatchers**

Mr. Potter advised that the meeting was called this date for further discussion relative to Civil Service classification for Civilian Police Dispatchers. The Commission adjourned their last meeting so that they might be able to study this more closely and allow the third member of the Commission, who was not present at the last meeting, to state his views.

Mr. Potter stated that in the interim period, he conducted a great deal of research. He talked to a number of cities that are using Civil Service for their police dispatchers, some as far away as Fairlawn and Kent, and some as close as North Olmsted and Avon Lake, and cities in between. All were tested by Pat Ramsey and Associates for the position. Mr. Potter stated that his decision is that Civil Service for police dispatchers works. Mr. Potter learned from the other cities that only full time dispatchers are Civil Service, however, part timers must also take the test and can be on the eligibility list should there be an opening for full time. There was very little turnover in the position. Sixty to ninety percent of the dispatchers are female. There are only a few times that they have had to change and bring in people from the eligibility lists, which are good for one year and can be extended to two years. Some of the people who took the test had dispatch experience; some did not but were trained on site by the existing dispatchers including police officers and other dispatchers. It seems to work well. Mr. Potter spoke with a Police Chief, a Communications Specialist, three Civil Service Commission Chairmen, a Civil Service Commission Secretary, and a dispatcher. All of the discussions and research point to the fact that Civil Service for the Police Dispatchers in Bay Village could work.

Mrs. Krebs complimented Mr. Potter on the work he did.

Mrs. Krebs asked if there was any downside revealed on the part of the communities.

Mr. Potter stated that most of the cities had been using dispatchers for a number of years. There was no question about establishing it for the first time. The City of Kent has a female Police Chief with whom Mr. Potter spoke, and she spoke very highly of their dispatchers.

Mr. Potter called for comments by the other two Civil Service Commissioners.

Dr. Lekan stated that it was agonizing to read all of the thoughts and positions of the Police Chief because he is empathetic to his feelings. He noted that it is difficult to make a decision on what you think is right versus the relationships and trust that you have with the individuals. He finally came to the conclusion that 1) this position can be tested, and 2) there is no reason not to include dispatchers under Civil Service. A reasonable exception cannot be found based on skills or testing. Dr. Lekan assured Police Chief Spaetzel that the Civil Service Commission will do everything they can to make this efficacious and to make his job as easy as possible. One thousand percent cooperation will be extended on the part of the Civil Service Commission to get the examinations done, and the people lined up for the position.

Mr. Potter stated that Pat Ramsey and Associates has run 90% of all the tests for dispatchers. She can adjust the examination to make it difficult or easy. She has had one test in Fairlawn, where 20 out of 22 passed. She conducted one in North Olmsted where 50% of the people passed. Everyone that Mr. Potter spoke with about the testing highly praised Pat Ramsey and Associates for her work with the Civil Service Commission and the Police Department to make sure the tests were germane to the tasks expected of the dispatchers.

Police Chief Spaetzel stated that Civil Service does have the option of making this position classified or unclassified. That is clear by the Law Director's opinion. Chief Spaetzel stated that he certainly respects the fact that you can test for this. However it would be done, there was going to be a testing portion for multi-tasking and stress management. The most important trait being sought is personality, and the ability to handle the public. The decision by the Commission to have the position be classified will cause a delay in hiring. The Chief stated he is struggling with manpower right now. There are 21 officers available to the Chief at this time, and the department is running over on the overtime budget. The goal was to have dispatchers by November. With all these delays, that will not happen. While time is an issue, it must be done right. Civil Service will also limit the pool of applicants in the Chief's view, and his biggest concern is the vacancy, if there is a vacancy. Chief Spaetzel stated that while he respects Mr. Potter's research, he did similar research and found opposite reaction. The biggest concern is having a list that might be limited and needing to pull someone off that list and, if you can't find anybody, having to give another test. Meanwhile, there is an open slot that must be filled by part timers. With limited manpower this could cause a tremendous burden.

Chief Spaetzel continued, stating that the realities of managing this function is much easier if the part time and full time dispatchers are both not under Civil Service. He proposed the following

compromise. There may come a situation when they have a very qualified part timer who has not taken the test. Mr. Potter stated that there won't be a part timer who hasn't taken the test. Everyone who wants to be a police dispatcher is going to have to take the test.

Chief Spaetzel stated that part time is difficult to fill. Those are the positions where you can find someone working in another City who did not take the test, and is now available for part time, but cannot be used.

Mr. Potter stated that the Chief indicated that the candidate he is looking for is one that has great people skills. He will have to determine that through the interview process. Ten candidates will be given to the Chief to look at initially from the eligibility list. Additional candidates will be provided as required. In the recent Patrolman eligibility list, the Chief had to go down to Candidate No. 32. Mr. Potter noted that he was unhappy with that test. Seventy percent of the people who took that test passed. Maybe if there is a more restrictive test resulting in a better cadre of candidates, the Chief wouldn't have to go down that far in the list to find a good candidate. However if a good candidate is found, they could be with the department for a long period of time.

Mrs. Krebs stated that there was discussion in previous meetings about having part timers not be Civil Service. Mr. Potter stated that it would be advantageous to have the part timers take the test, pass the test, and be eligible to be full time if an opening takes place. The part time position would not be Civil Service until they are full time. But, they would be working 12 to 16 hours per week and could move in should there be a full time opening, with the advantage of already having taken the full time test.

Mrs. Krebs noted that with the Police and Fire part time personnel there is not a requirement for them to have taken the Civil Service test. Mr. Potter stated that by virtue of being an officer in another community and later becoming available for the deputy position, they have taken Civil Service tests.

Dr. Lekan suggested making a test optional for part time dispatchers who may want to become full time at a later time. Mrs. Krebs stated that she does not like the idea that some of the part time dispatchers may have taken the test, and some may not have taken the test. Dr. Lekan stated that he would see the optional suggestion as a way to meet some of the Police Chief's immediate needs for manpower. The Civil Service Commission could always revisit the issue after a couple years of experience, but the Chief's immediate issues must be dealt with. Mrs. Krebs stated that she does not agree with the point of immediacy.

Mrs. Krebs **MOVED** that any dispatcher hired would be part of Civil Service, be required to take the Civil Service examination, both for full time civilian dispatchers and part time civilian dispatchers.

Dr. Lekan proposed an amendment to the motion by Mrs. Krebs that only full time dispatchers must pass a Civil Service test and be placed on an eligibility list.

Mrs. Krebs stated that all part time and full time dispatchers must take a Civil Service examination to qualify for employment.

Mrs. Krebs amended her original motion that those people wishing to work full or part as a police dispatcher must take the Civil Service examination. Those that pass the Civil Service examination and are hired as a full time dispatcher would be covered under Civil Service. Those that are part time would not be covered under Civil Service, until such time as they take a full time position as police dispatcher. **The motion, as amended, was seconded by Mr. Potter.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Yeas – Potter, Krebs**

**Nays – Lekan.**

**Motion carried 2-1.**

Mr. Potter requested that the Secretary of the Commission establish a review of a test conducted by Pat Ramsey and Associates for the Police Chief and set up a date and time for the test for entry level dispatch employees, and the Law Director be requested to review the rules and regulations of the Civil Service Commission to include full time dispatchers under the Civil Service classification.

**Roll Call Vote: Yeas – Potter, Krebs, Lekan.**

**Motion carried. 3-0.**

**Entry Level Police Officers Testing**

The Secretary advised that the Bay Village High School has been reserved for testing for entry level police officers on Saturday, November 21, 2015. Applications will be made available on Monday, November 2, and must be returned by 4:30 p.m. on Friday, November 13, 2015.

The Secretary asked approval to hire Pat Ramsey and Associates for the testing. Mr. Potter stated that the Police Chief needs to review other testing agencies that have been used for the police officer entry level test, such as CPS Services and the Ohio Police Chiefs' Association. Mr. Potter would like the Police Chief to review samples from those companies.

Mr. Potter asked about the cost of advertising. He noted that Mayor Sutherland must be sent a request for a budget to run ads for both the Police Officer and Civilian Dispatcher position. A quotation has been received of \$1,386.60 to post one ad for three days, which will include exposure on Cleveland.com for thirty days. Mr. Potter asked that Mayor Sutherland be requested to provide a budget in the amount of \$2,700 for both advertisements: Police Entry Level and Civilian Dispatcher.

Mr. Potter called for adjournment at 4:27 p.m.

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James R. Potter, Chairman

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Joan Kemper, Secretary