

The stated meeting of the Public Safety Committee of the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Abington was held on Wednesday, February 1, 2017 at the Township Administration Building, Abington, PA., with Commissioner Schreiber presiding.

CALL TO ORDER: 8:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: Commissioners SCHREIBER, DiPLACIDO, BOWMAN, SPIEGELMAN, KALINOSKI

Township Manager LEFEVRE
Township Solicitor CLARKE
Assistant Fire Marshal ROHRER
Chief of Police LIVINGOOD
Traffic Safety Officer POSEY

Also Present: Commissioners LUKER, KLINE, HECKER, FARREN, MYERS, ROTHMAN, SANCHEZ, ZAPPONE, GILLESPIE

MINUTES: Commissioner Schreiber made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Spiegelman to approve the minutes of the November 30, 2016 Public Safety Committee Meeting.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Police Department Report:

Chief Livingood reported that on January 20, 2017, the District Attorney's Office distributed a press release regarding five men from Montgomery County charged with 15 area burglaries including Jeweler's Row fence, and he would like to update the Board on that investigation. There was a case in Abington Township in August 2015 where a home on Jericho Road was burglarized, which was the beginning of that investigation.

Since then, a fence was identified on Jeweler's Row and a search warrant was served on three jewelry stores included that jeweler's home and the jeweler was arrested and was incarcerated on \$250,000.00 bail in which he subsequently made. However, Abington Police assisted in serving those search warrants and there were six safes in those three jewelry stores and the owner of the store refused permission to open the safes, so each one was cut open over the entire weekend. That task was shared with Montgomery County District Attorney's Office and Lower Merion Township Police Department and taken were several thousand pieces of jewelry from those three stores. Lower Merion Police took custody of the jewelry working with two of our officers photographing and cataloging all of that jewelry.

Some of that jewelry was still in pillow cases from those stores and this case involved many other burglars. This was a long, tedious investigation in which Abington Police were involved from the beginning and will continue to be involved until the end.

Also, the tragic Grace Parker case is not over that initiated in Abington Township and we will continue being involved with that case until the end. Preliminary Hearing for both suspects is scheduled for February 24, 2017 at the Bucks County Court House.

On tonight's agenda, there are motions to hire two new officers and promote two officers to sergeant. Normally, the department has 92 officers, but currently there are 87. Normally, there are 20 supervisors and currently there are 17.

In the coming months, we will develop a plan to possibly redistribute and reassign those positions, and by doing so, determine whether we would be able to reduce that number at the lieutenant level as requested by the Board. Also, Commissioner Schreiber suggested putting a report together explaining officer positions for review by the Board, which will be done shortly.

Next week, February 6th, 7th and 8th we will be giving a lieutenants exam, and on April 1st, we will be giving an exam for police officer. Applications will be available online only after February 13th and that link will be sent to the Board of Commissioners to send out to constituents.

Also, there will be another Citizens Police Academy beginning March 1st through April on every Wednesday from 7-9 p.m. He urged the Board of Commissioners as well as their constituents who may be interested to attend as it provides a better understanding about the daily activities of the police department. Officer Gillespie of Community Policing is our contact for this program.

Commissioner Schreiber acknowledged representatives of the Second Alarmers and Fire Marshal's office who were present to answer any questions by the Board.

Ordinance No. 2134 – To Amend Chapter 156 (Vehicles and Traffic), Article III (Parking Regulations), Section 26 – (Parking Prohibited During Certain Hours)

Commissioner Schreiber made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Kalinoski to adopt Ordinance No. 2134 amending Chapter 156 (Vehicles and Traffic), Article III (Parking Regulations), Section 26 – (Parking Prohibited During Certain Hours) at the regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Commissioners on February 9, 2017 at 7:30 p.m.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any comments from Commissioners or staff. There were none.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any public comments. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Conditional Appointment – Probationary Police Officer

Commissioner Schreiber made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Kalinoski to appoint candidate Nico Belardo from the Certified Civil Service Eligibility List to the position of Probationary Police Officer provided he successfully completes the Background, Physical and Psychological tests and all entry requirements of the Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training Commission for Act 120 Training. Appointment will be effective February 13, 2017.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any comments from Commissioners or staff. There were none.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any public comments. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Conditional Appointment – Probationary Police Officer

Commissioner Schreiber made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Kalinoski to appoint candidate Christopher Petras from the Certified Civil Service Eligibility List to the position of Probationary Police Officer provided he successfully completes the Background, Physical and Psychological tests and all entry requirements of the Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training Commission for Act 120 Training. Appointment will be effective February 13, 2017.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any comments from Commissioners or staff. There were none.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any public comments. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Conditional Promotion to the Rank of Sergeant

Commissioner Schreiber made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Spiegelman to promote Officer Roger Gillespie to the rank of Probationary Sergeant effective February 20, 2017 providing he successfully completes the remaining portions of the promotional process.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any comments from Commissioners or staff. There were none.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any public comments. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Conditional Promotion to the Rank of Sergeant

Commissioner Schreiber made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Spiegelman to promote Officer Drew Kent to the rank of Probationary Sergeant effective February 20, 2017 providing he successfully completes the remaining portions of the promotional process.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any comments from Commissioners or staff. There were none.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any public comments. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Appointment of Emergency Management Coordinator

Commissioner Schreiber made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Spiegelman to appoint Thomas McAneney as Emergency Management Coordinator for Abington Township effective immediately.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any comments from Commissioners or staff.

Commissioner Farren referred to the previous action listed on the Board Action Request in regards to Chief Kelly being appointed as Emergency Management Coordinator by the Board of Commissioners back in 1988 and questioned why procedure is being changed from that model to current model.

Chief Livingood replied this was his suggestion. He has been the first Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator; however, since we have brought on, Tom McAneney, he has been much more involved and has more knowledge in that area than himself or Chief Kelly and Tom has done an excellent job.

Commissioner Luker questioned whether there will be any impact on Tom's pay status.

Chief Livingood replied no.

Commissioner Kline added that Mr. McAneney's pay is split between the Township and Penn State University and that will not change.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any public comments.

Lora Lehmann, 1431 Bryant Lane, commented that she was opposed to the motion.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Appointment of Alternate Member of the Civil Service Commission

Commissioner Schreiber made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Spiegelman to add one Alternate Member to the Abington Township Civil Service Commission.

Commissioner Schreiber noted that there could be three alternate members and questioned whether the Board would like to keep it as one.

Commissioner Spiegelman added that this is a three-member Commission.

Commissioner Schreiber agreed and the motion is to add one alternate and the alternate needs to attend the meetings as a member, but they have no vote. Is that correct?

Chief Livingood replied that is correct.

Consensus by committee was in favor of one alternate.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any other comments from Commissioners or staff.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any public comments. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Commissioner Schreiber asked for any general comments relating to Public Safety.

Commissioner Gillespie asked about the new police radios.

Chief Livingood replied there was a flaw in Motorola's new radios, and since it was their issue, there will be no cost to Montgomery County. The radios need to be reworked and redistributed and continues to be a work in progress, which is another project Tom McAneney is overseeing.

Lora Lehmann, 1431 Bryant Lane, expressed concern that she feels she does not receive information that she has requested.

Public Safety Committee Meeting

February 1, 2017

ADJOURNMENT: 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael LeFevre, Township Manager

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