



BOARD OF FIRE AND POLICE COMMISSIONERS
Thursday, October 11, 2018, at 10:00 am
Carbondale City Hall, 200 South Illinois Avenue
Conference Room A
Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

The City of Carbondale Board of Fire and Police Commissioners held a meeting on Thursday, October 11, 2018, in Carbondale City Hall Conference Room A, 200 South Illinois Avenue. Chairman Kerry Braswell called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Roll Call

Present: Kerry Braswell, Randy Burnside, Gerald Edwards, and Herman Williams

Absent: Harvey Welch

Acknowledgement of Guests

Also present were Deputy City Clerk Clinette Hayes, Police Chief Jeff Grubbs, Deputy Police Chief Stan Reno, Human Resources Manager Tara Brown, Diversity and Compliance Officer Alicia Jackson, and City Manager Gary Williams.

2. Approval of meeting minutes from September 10, 2018

MOTION: R. Burnside moved, H. Williams seconded, to approve the meeting minutes from September 10, 2018. VOTE: All voted Aye. No Nays. Motion declared carried.

3. Discussion of Police Officer Recruitment Strategies

Human Resources Manager, Tara Brown apprised the Board of recent efforts to recruit candidates to participate in the October 4, 2018, Entry-Level Police Officer examination as well as seek out candidates who may qualify for Lateral-Entry Police Officer. The Human Resources office attended job fairs, reached out to other police departments, colleges, and universities in the surrounding area, both in and out of state, through phone calls and social media. There were also postings on websites that targets minorities in law enforcement. Unfortunately, the effort did not produce as well as anticipated as there were only fifteen applications submitted for the entry-level police examination and four to five lateral-entry applications. Although the effort was there, this was Human Resources first real “push” to promote Carbondale Police Officer positions. It was stated that in order to maintain relevance in recruiting, the efforts must be consistent and building relationships and developing contacts will help increase recruitment.

Human Resources Manager Tara Brown also apprised the Board of the current status of minorities on the Carbondale Police force. Over the last few years, the number of minority officers has declined. At this point, out of about 66 sworn-in Carbondale Police officers there are approximately five minorities on the force. Recruiting minorities is a priority for Human Resources and Ms. Brown wanted to make the Board aware of the current situation and reiterated the aforementioned plans for improvement. Commissioner Edwards shared his experiences with the same issue while he was employed as a police officer. He and other City staff visited other cities, colleges, and universities to attract minorities to the area. His previous efforts mirrors that of the Human Resources department today.

4. Discussion and Approval of Substituting Military Service in Lieu of Education for Entry-Level Police Officers

The following issues and concerns were presented during the discussion of substituting military service in lieu of education:

- Militarizing the police force
- Creating a special class of people
- Public image of the police force
- Replacing a requirement for one group with a non-requirement for another group
- Combat experience versus policing experience
- Military training versus police training
- Protector role versus warrior role
- Higher risk of candidates with PTSD
- Disparate impact on a particular group and the potential legal issues
- Carbondale police officers currently on active duty and its impact on the City

After the Board expressed their concerns it was suggested that the main focus at this point should be recruiting and targeting minority police officer candidates. After establishing better recruitment strategies to help diversify the police force then the focus can be shifted back to find a way to include military experience. The Board agreed to defer action on this item until a date later to be determined.

MOTION: G. Edwards moved, H. Williams seconded, to defer action on approving the substitution of military service in lieu of education for Entry-Level Police Officers until a date later to be determined. VOTE: All voted Aye. No Nays. Motion declared carried.

5. Discussion of the Requirements for Lateral Entry Police Officer Eligibility

According to the Governing Rules, a lateral-entry candidate must have at least two years' experience as a full-time sworn officer. Alternatively, if a candidate has less than two years of experience, he or she may be considered if 60 hours of college credit has been completed or two years of active duty military experience. Recently a candidate for Lateral-Entry Police Officer was interviewed by the Board. This candidate had less than one year of experience as a police officer, but earned at least 60 hours of college credit. The lack of experience was a great concern for the Board even though the candidate met the minimum requirements. The Board decided to have a discussion about adjusting the requirements for the position.

It was suggested to establish a minimum to avoid attracting candidates with just a few months of experience. However, doing this could potentially turn away a candidate that may be a good fit for the department because of their years of service. In addition to completing the police academy, candidates are required to go through the police department's field training program. Therefore, if deemed a good fit, a candidate's lack of experience can be made up through training. Rather than mandate a minimum amount of years it was suggested that this section of the Governing Rules remain the same and leave it up to the Board to judge whether a candidate's experience should or should not be taken into consideration.

6. Citizens' Comments

None

7. Board Comments

None

8. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Clinette C. Hayes, Deputy City Clerk

Approved by the Board on _____