

BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING
JULY 28, 2009

1. Chairman S. Smith called the Special Meeting of the Naugatuck Police Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

The following were in attendance:

POLICE COMMISSION:

L. Mayfield (arrived @ 7:01 p.m.)

Chairman S. Smith

Mayor R. Mezzo

J. San Angelo

B. Whitaker

W. Bertotti, Alternate

C. Ford, Alternate

DEPT. HEADS:

Chief Christopher Edson

OTHER:

Sgt. S. Hunt

ABSENT:

R. Roper

D. Branco, Alternate

A. Barnes, Alternate

2. Chief Edson addressed the Commission on behalf of Human Resource Director, Jeanette Deschesnes, in her absence with regard to the Police Officer candidate selection process. Chief Edson stated that in the last two years as Chief, the Commission hired excellent candidates as Police Officers. Also, Chief stated that our Human Resource Director has to update our Affirmative Action Plan Borough-wide on a yearly basis and add addendums to the plan making every effort to show we are creating an employment environment that is equal to all candidates, i.e. recruiting at college campuses, advertising outside of the Borough. We have to demonstrate that we have done everything possibly in the way we are hiring to make sure that qualified minority candidates have the same opportunity as non-minority candidates. We can try to amend the point system to make it not geared to residents of Naugatuck.
3. Chairman Smith asked the Commissioners to express what their feelings are on the point system.
4. Commissioner San Angelo stated that he doesn't feel we have to change anything, as he feels giving 5 points as a Naugatuck resident is not a bad idea as they live here and pay taxes here. Commissioner San Angelo agreed that the language could be changed.

5. Chief Edson feels we should look at this as risk management as the diversity of the community is changing, and the police force should reflect the population we are serving and through our hiring process, we should hire diverse people.
6. Mayor Mezzo arrived at 7:14 p.m.
7. Chief Edson asked who sets the policy for how the Borough of Naugatuck hires its' employees. Commissioner San Angelo stated that the only person who could answer that would be the Deputy Chief Hunt as he has been around a long time as he was very involved in the hiring practices.
8. Mayor Mezzo addressed the Commission and stated that they spent a lot of time going over this situation with Human Resource, and Jeanette looked at what similar towns of size and population did and discovered we are the only community adding the additional points with the certified test. Mayor Mezzo also stated that the issue of exposure comes if there is ever a hiring practice suit and there is a liability we are ignoring by doing it that way.
9. Chief Edson stated that potentially we could put be in a situation exposing ourselves to liability by using this point system. Commissioner San Angelo stated that through our interviews is where our final decision is made as the choice is of the Police Commission.
10. Alternate Commissioner Ford spoke with regard to the testing process whereby every item on the point system is and can be discriminatory including military service and spoke about being responsible as a Commissioner should a lawsuit be brought.
11. Commissioner L. Mayfield concurred with Commissioner Ford, and feels the Commission should get rid of all the points.
12. Alternate Commissioner Whitaker spoke with regard to Military Service. Chief Edson informed him that after the certified testing process is complete is when the points are given. Alternate Commissioner Whitaker stated that if you have an Affirmative Action goal, that is totally different from bilingual points. Also, Alternate Commissioner Whitaker stated that he is against certain categories and we do need an educational category as well. Chief Edson stated that we have broadened the scope of where we are trying to attract candidates from by advertising on the web, going to colleges and different newspapers.
13. Alternate Commissioner Bertotti stated that we should think of the future as this system is archaic, and the point system should go.
14. Chairman Smith stated that the point system drastically changes the order of the candidates, and feels he wants the best candidate. Chairman Smith feels that the point system does disservice to obtaining the best candidate.

15. Chief Edson stated the present hiring process whereby POST Standards requires that the candidates be given a physical agility test, a written exam by an accredited testing agency and an oral board consisting of officers from the hiring department moderated by that accredited testing agency. You then take the score from the written and the score from the oral and assign a weight to them. This year we assigned 50% for written and 50% for oral take that combined score and that is their score, then that combined score goes to the H.R. Director and they would assign the points from the categories to the candidates. The added points would be applied to the weighted scores and that would be the final score as to where they are on the eligibility list. The Commission would then if there is one opening bring in three candidates or if two openings would bring in five candidates. All three would be brought in for an interview if there was one opening, and the Commission would select the candidate that they feel is the best candidate.
16. A discussion was held among the Commissioners with regard to the questions asked at the interviews. Chief Edson stated that they have adopted the process of asking the same questions from all of the candidates.
17. Mayor Mezzo stated that the H.R. Director was hired to set up hiring practices and to examine the process.
18. Chief Edson stated that when ads go in the newspaper, we also state that we will consider certified officers. That individual could come in without scores.
19. Chief Edson informed Chairman Smith that he could start interviewing once this decision is resolved. This decision requires urgency due to the fact that we have reserved academy positions in October.
20. Sgt. Steven Hunt stated that Deputy Chief Hunt reported that under Mayor Barth in 1997, the point system was started under the Police Commission with the feeling that individuals should be rewarded extra points such as Police Explorers who volunteered their time in the community and being bilingual such as Portuguese, Polish and Spanish. Over time, the Commissioners added other categories to this system.
21. Motion made by Commissioner L. Mayfield and seconded by Mayor R. Mezzo to amend the Officer Eligibility List by removing the point system.

For:

R. Mezzo
L. Mayfield
S. Smith

Against:

B. Whitaker
J. San Angelo

Abstain:

None

22. It was the consensus of the Commission to continue with the Standardized Testing questions that we currently have. Chief Edson stated that we are looking to assist with

the process to have the process be more consistent. Chief Edson reported that there has to be an objective process as to how the interviews are done to avoid liability for the Borough.

23. Motion made by Mayor R. Mezzo and seconded by Commissioner L. Mayfield to adjourn the Special Meeting at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Commissioner S. Smith

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