



MINUTES OF THE POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSION

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2021, 3:30 PM
Virtual Meeting. Public may join via Zoom.

A. ZOOM MEETING INFORMATION.

I. This item contains documents which provide call in information and instructions for the Zoom meeting.

B. ROLL CALL.

Present: Marian Boyle-Rohloff, Rod Goldhahn, Warren Wanezek, Rashad Cobb, Melissa Cheslock,

Excused: None

Others Present: Police Chief Andrew Smith, Fire Chief David Litton, Police Lieutenant Brad Strouf, HR Operations Manager Melanie Falk, HR Generalist Jen Smits and others.

C. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.

Moved by Commissioner Wanezek, seconded by Commissioner Cheslock to approve. Motion carried.

Yes- Marian Boyle-Rohloff, Rod Goldhahn, Warren Wanezek, Rashad Cobb, Melissa Cheslock, No-None, Abstan-None

D. REGULAR BUSINESS.

I. Consideration and possible action regarding the Police Chief recruitment and selection process

(Review of 2015 Process).

No action taken. The Commission will meet on March 4, 2021 to review the recruitment process, advertising sources and finalize the timeline.

2. Interim Police Chief Discussion. The Commission may convene in closed session pursuant to Section 19.85 (1) (c), Wisconsin Statutes, for the purpose of considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility. The Commission may thereafter reconvene in open session pursuant to Section 19.85 (2), Wisconsin Statutes, to report the results of the closed session and consider the balance of the agenda.

Moved by Commissioner Melissa Cheslock, seconded by Commissioner Warren Wanezek to go into closed session. Motion carried.

Yes- Marian Boyle-Rohloff, Rod Goldhahn, Warren Wanezek, Rashad Cobb, Melissa Cheslock, No- None, Abstain- None

Moved by Commissioner Melissa Cheslock, seconded by Commissioner Marian Boyle-Rohloff to return to open session. Motion carried.

Yes- Marian Boyle-Rohloff, Rod Goldhahn, Warren Wanezek, Rashad Cobb, Melissa Cheslock, No- None, Abstain- None

Out of closed session it was reported that the Commission discussed several options for Interim Chief, and will be following up on a few items. There will be further discussion at the next meeting.

E. ADJOURNMENT.

Moved by Commissioner Warren Wanezek, seconded by Commissioner Melissa Cheslock to adjourn. Motion carried.

Yes- Marian Boyle-Rohloff, Rod Goldhahn, Warren Wanezek, Rashad Cobb, Melissa Cheslock, No- None, Abstain- None

VERBATIM MINUTES

- Thumbs up, all right. Thank you all. I'd like to call the Thursday, February 25th Special Meeting of the Police and Fire Commission to order. We'll start with roll call. Vice-president, Boyle-Rohloff.

- Here.

- Commissioner Cheslock.

- Here.

- Commissioner Cobb.

- Here.

- Commissioner Wanazek.

- Present.

- All right, all Commissioners are present. First order of business is approval of the agenda. You received the agenda in the mail yesterday. Any issues with the agenda? If not, I'll entertain a motion to approve.

- So moved.

- So moved.

- Moved by Commissioner Wanezek. Melissa, are you second? Okay. Seconded by Commissioner Cheslock. Any further discussion? Hearing none. All those in favor?

- Aye.

- Are there any opposed? None opposed. Okay. Two items on the agenda, and Chief Litton I see you're signed in there. This meeting is all about the police department and the police Chief, so if you care to have other things that you would rather be spending this time on, that would be fine. I want to check with Jen, we're still planning on having our regular meeting next week, correct? Because, we'll have some backgrounds to review and potentially interviews to do. So Chief Litton, we'll have our regular meeting next Thursday at 3:30.

- I'm just here as an interested Fire Chief and citizen.

- Oh, okay. Great.

- Yeah, love it, love it.

- Chief, I thought you were applying for some bookend chief job, you'd in both ends of the spectrum.

- All right. Well, very good. My intent in getting us together, quickly, is because none of the rest of the Commissioners have been through this process before. So, I thought it would be worthwhile to take a walk back through what we did, asked Chief Smith and and talk about the decision points that we have, what the structure might look like what the looked like and get started on those things, and then we can continue this conversation next week in our regular meeting, along with any follow up that we wanna have in between that. So... Assess last time as well. So, they have a lot of the experience and good information as well. So, I intend this part of the meeting to be an open discussion. So, feel free to ask questions, give advice, give opinions. This is us starting that process. I'll begin by saying that according to State Law, Statutes 19.85, we have the responsibility to conduct... the price. So, we're an independent commission and so we do that independently, although we can look for input from other sources and figure out a process to do that. But, at the end of the day the decision rests with us and our commission alone, per State Statute. So, in your packet Melanie provided the background process information that we used in 2015. So, if you have access to that and can look at that, it looks like we had the application process open for six to eight weeks. And so I'll

ask Melanie and Jen, the six weeks to two months, what's the background and the reason for that long a process?

- Sure. It's primarily, Rod, to ensure that we've hit all of our advertising, our publication dates, our deadline dates, and we did refresh that advertising chart that was in your packet. I think we would be safe with, you know, recruiting from four to six weeks. If you wanted to accept applications we would still be able to meet and be able to run our ads for that length of time with all of these sources. So, if you wanted to cut that down a little bit, at four to six weeks would certainly cover that timeframe for us sufficiently.

- Okay. I'll throw the floor open to people that have applied in the past to Chief jobs in Green Bay. So, Chief Litton and Chief Smith, from your opinion of being a candidate for an office like that, six weeks sound sufficient?

- Yeah, I certainly think on my part, I think six is more than enough, you're gonna get a wide enough reach. These jobs, when they do get advertised they tend to go national. And so, you're definitely gonna get... You know, I think back when I was hired, I think you had 40 candidates all together from across the country. So, yeah I think six weeks is fine.

- Okay. Chief Smith, you were on mute when you, I mean, when you tried to reply.

- Sorry. Yeah, I agree. I think six weeks is fine, you know. If they all go out in one big blast, people will have plenty of time and I'm sure you'll get plenty candidates.

- Okay. All right.

- I did not get any packet from Melanie, unless I'm looking at the wrong email.

- Yeah, that would have come from Hailey Heath in our office, Melissa.

- Okay.

- Yeah, it was attached to the... Yeah, the invitation.

- Yeah, and Wednesday at 2:35. Melanie, I think I'm gonna pass the hat and get you some new toner for your copier. The copy of the one from 2015, about half of it didn't copy, or didn't print right.

- Oh, I'm sorry to hear that.

- No, no, it's all right. It's not legible 'cause the first page of the two dozen, I'm just being a smart aleck about the-

- No, no.

- You should look at it.

- We will do that.

- All right, so with that, having a six week open window sounds sufficient for the other Commissioners? Okay, all right.

- Sounds good.

- Well, what we'll do is talk about our preferences. We'll get everything together and then our meeting next week, we'll make a decision and do an actual vote on that. So at this time, we'll talk preferences... send a final document. So, at this time our preference will be six. Going out, one of the things we'll have to do is establish the criteria, and so also in your packet was the job description that was used last time.

- Would it be wise, Rod, to have the Chief, Chief Litton was willing to do it as well, this is, you know, a police position. See if there's anything in there that needs to be supplemented or updated, based on him performing for five years, five plus years. I don't know, would you be willing to do that, Chief?

- I'm gonna learn to sign language here. Absolutely, I'm happy to do that. Whatever I can do to help you out throughout this process, I'm...

- I mean, there may be some really rudimentary things or maybe some... You know, but you would realize her duties every day or regular or monthly, what have you. So, 'cause I think you did a real good job of communicating with us with your weekly update. Maybe that's always been the case but I thought your communication with the Commission was good, has been good. Well, great.

- Okay, I think that's a good suggestion. If there are no wishes then we'll ask Chief Smith that- Chief Smith, can you take a look at that between now and our meeting next week and provide any feedback you have on what's in that?

- Certainly can, and I get emails from across the country for chiefs jobs, so I can look at what people have been sending me from other agencies throughout the country and give you a... See how ours compares to that.

- Okay, that'd be great.

- Perfect.

- Just for the commission, last year when we used the one that you see in front of you, we did get one comment from one of the council members that wanted to know why we weren't requiring a master's degree. And I think you can see in the other document that Melanie provided to us, no other police jurisdiction that we have the data for in Wisconsin requires that. We listed it as a preference, but in our mind why exclude people? So you list a minimum requirement, you list a preference but you allow then a wider number of people to apply, and you get a chance to actually look at a greater number of individuals. So, my recommendation would be that we leave that as just a preference and not a requirement. But, we can talk that in more detail at the next meeting when we also have Chief Smith's input. So again, that will start our process. So once we're finished with that, then the advertisements will go out. And Melanie provided a pretty... ..wide places in which to advertise.

- Mmm-hmm. Rod, in addition to the advertising sources chart we will also, and we did this for both Fire Chief and Police Chief, we'll do a direct recruitment. Which means we will send our advertising flyer to police departments throughout the State that have a population of 50,000 or more.
- Okay. And then after reviewing that, I have no knowledge of other organizations or other places where we would want to advertise these. Any of the rest of you?
- No.
- I think it'll be important for us to use some of, maybe, of our own networks as well to send stuff out if that's possible, or does that interfere with any of the State Statutes?
- No, we'd be happy to take a look at your suggestions.
- Okay.
- Yep.
- Was there a requirement or a preference that they attended the FBI Academy?
- Yes, there was. As it is listed... I have to find it here. A certificate and a graduate of the FBI National Academy, the Senior Management Institution of Police, the Southern Police Institute, Northwestern Management Program, or Executive Development Institute Program which is a State of Wisconsin program, desired. So, it's not a requirement, but one of those or some type of certification is preferred.
- Then I would suggest possibly sending out the including these organizations to the list to whom we're going to send out the bulletin or the advertisement.
- And I believe we have proof on that list.
- Yes. Because we could always have someone from, I don't know, out in California who might want to come home.
- Plenty of Wisconsinites there.
- There are.
- So, Melissa is the thinking behind that that those organizations continue to have a communication network with the graduates of their program, and so that will reach some folks that these others may not, okay.
- Correct, correct.
- Yeah, that'd be fine.
- Okay.

- And then the next process is the one that, it gets very time consuming for the Commissioner. So as we think back, that's what we did in 2015, the advertisement went out, the the window was open for those six to eight weeks, and then once all the applications were in... Received access to a confidential server where we were able to go in and review every application, and the expectation to review every application. And I know when we hired Chief Smith, there were 50 different applications. Chief Litton mentioned when we... hired a whole lot of others, there will be a significant number of applications. My guess is, with the maligning of police departments in some parts of the country, there may be even more than 50 this time. Folks wanting to move to Green Bay, given our community standing and level of crime and things. So, we need to ensure that in the process we put sufficient time in for us to review all these because this is not your full-time job, so you have to fit this work in with the rest of what the commission is doing, and we wanna make sure we have adequate time to allow everyone to review all those applications. And then from that process, last time, then we met and we reviewed our top... I believe it was our Top 10 or maybe our Top 20 of each individual, and then we had to talk the ones that were different, and then came up with a final number that I believe... It was phone interviews with each of those individuals, and then following that, we culled that down to about five or six that we wanted to bring in for in-person interviews. And then also with the in-person interviews, we also conducted background investigations on that group as well, and then did the in-person interviews. So, that segment of time is where the lion's share of our work and our time is going to go in. So, one of the things that I would like to have each Commissioner do between now and next Thursday is take a look at schedules, plans, so that we can determine how much time we think we'll need for all that, so that we can give the- That'll be part of our decision process, and then also give the city an idea of how long we think this process is going to take.

- Yep.

- I didn't receive the packet either in the mail, ahead of the meeting. I just had a question about process. Last time, was there room in the process for bringing in the Chief, and I'm sorry, I'm babysitting a dog that isn't mine. Was there a place in the process for community input?

- Yes. I was gonna thinking the same thing.

- Yeah. We did, at the beginning of the process, we used a survey process to allow interested community members, police department members, city council members, to provide input into what kind of things they would like to see. So that, yes, that's open to us as well.

- Is it possible to hear a little bit about the survey process? But then also I think one of the things that's been frankly beautiful about what Chief Smith has done was just the in-person... Since potentially having an opportunity in the same way that we're doing community meetings right now, at specific locations in the community, like really trying to provide that same type of opportunity. I don't want anyone, so let's just assume that the survey is disseminated via email. I don't want to disenfranchise anyone who doesn't have access to email, to really give those opportunities for people to be able to come in face-to-face. I feel like hiring a Chief is important at any time, 1984, '92, but I feel like against the backdrop of what's going on in the world, we wanna be able to say that when we're done with this process and bring in the new Chief that we've had an opportunity or provided an opportunity for all members of our community in a way that works best for them, and so what I'm thinking of, like, town halls. I think it's important to offer something for people who work nine to five, but then we also have a lotta community members in Green Bay who wouldn't be able to make a six o'clock meeting. I'm gonna show up on the weekends. I'm willing to show up at 8 or 9:00 PM to listen

to our community, talk about what's important to them. I think it then gives us the ability to confidently say that we've heard the community... did things professionally where we offer one community listening session at 5:30 PM because it works for our schedule, and it just doesn't feel good when we walk away because we haven't provided ample opportunity for all people to weigh in. We've got a lot of community members that work second shift, third shift, and so if at all possible, I think it's imperative to the work that we're doing here to provide opportunities for people to weigh in, in a number of ways. And again, I don't have the packet so all of my comments are without access to that information, but giving our community an opportunity to weigh in, in a... crucial to us being able to stand in front of whoever we select is next and say that, like, we heard you, we have our own opinions and input, but we heard you. And we didn't just hear you one time for one hour, on a Tuesday that was convenient for us as a commission, there were just multiple times.

- Mmm-hmm. I agree with you Rashad, I think, you know, thinking back of the survey that we did, one of the things you don't get out of the survey is the context and the ability to have the two-way discussion and that back and forth. So yeah, no I think that's a great suggestion and I think something that we should strongly consider.

- And then, I'm sorry.

- Okay.

- Okay, just a quick question. As far as the, not the requirements, but some attributes that we would like about the candidates, is experience working with a diverse population. I think that's- Especially now given the timing of everything, having someone that has worked, not only with a racially diverse, but culturally and religiously diverse population.

- Good point.

- And Rashad, if you're at your computer, in the invitation that included the Zoom link for the meeting, the packet of pre-work materials was attached to that. So, you might want to check that and you may have access to that. All right, any other thoughts, ideas, or things you want to make sure we consider?

- I can... Certain example of finding locations, you know, we've got connections in just about every corner of the city from religious, to LGBTQ, to different ethnicities. We've got all kinds of connections with the Spanish speaking community. We could certainly facilitate or give you those connections so it would make it easy for you to pick and choose and decide which of those you're gonna reach out to, or all of them, and I'm happy to help out with that.

- Thank you, Chief.

- And wouldn't you think that we'd have to be a little careful excluding or not including anybody? I mean, if we would get all of those from you Chief I think we almost are compelled to reach out to all of them or we're somehow making a, you know, we're picking and choosing who we think should be part of the process. I mean, if there's a contact person in an organization, Chief, I guess my thought would be we should be reaching out to all of them for input, if that's what we're gonna do.

- I think that's a great idea and there's no reason why we couldn't combine different populations. If there's a need for interpreters, we can arrange for that in advance. Spanish or Somali or something like that.

- And then the other question I had too was if at any point if there's any discussion around, and I know that we all come to the table as individuals, I mean, together we are a commission, but we come to this as individuals and we're all are going to make our own, provide our own input as individuals, but at any point do we have any discussion around what our vision or what it is that we all want to collectively see in the next Police Chief? So that I'm not coming to the conversation thinking that this is way more important than that. So is there, at any point, do we have discussion as a commission about, maybe values is the wrong word but is it worth a discussion for us to have as a commission around what we, what's the word people use? A rubric, like, I don't wanna use a rubric per se but we necessarily, should we have a conversation around what our vision is for the next Chief of police in Green Bay?

- And Melanie and Jen chime in here as well. Rashad, where I saw that happening the last time was when we got into the discussion points of the applications and started... What we were seeing in the applicants, what things we were looking for, what we were missing. So we'll have, once we get into the review of the applications, we will likely have multiple PFC meetings where in closed session, we'll review individual candidates and we'll talk about those things. Now, that doesn't mean we can't have a separate meeting beforehand to have those same kind of discussions, but yes, I agree with you that it gives us a chance to... this is the kind of thing that I'm looking for such that you don't get into a case where your 20 are different than Melissa's 20, are different than Warren's 20, are different than my 20, and then we're kind of starting over from scratch there.

- Right, right. The job description is, that's more, you know, the technical skills, the education background. But I think to your point, Rashad, that if the commission before, probably before we start screening, you know, aside from the hard qualifi... these qualities, characteristics, you know... All of those things, what are you looking for in a candidate? So, that we're all on the same page when we're screening those applications as well.

- Although, I mean, that brings it back to a rubric. And I think to your point, Rashad, you were trying to stay away from that because we all bring something different to the party. And so what we're bringing, it's just important that we understand what each of us are looking for so that as we get through those discussions and say, okay, I can see why you like this candidate and I can agree with those things, so now I'm gonna change my opinion. I'm gonna move this candidate into my plus pile and not in the excluding pile.

- Thank you for that. And I think the only other thing that I wrote down ahead of this that I wanted to contribute was, you know, I listened a little bit about a timeframe for applications being open, which totally makes sense but just also hoping that we're not bound by time. If we say that we want to have a new Chief in place by July 1, random date, if the work and the process says that that's not the right time,

- Are we comfortable enough to extend that to August 1st or September 1st, if the process requires that? I just don't wanna pick a person based on we have to have a person by a certain date, because that could force us to make a decision that we necessarily may not want to make.

- Right.

- Yeah, yeah. I think that's fine, Rashad. I think we need to have a general timeline just to provide some rigor and some discipline in the process. But at any point, if we as a group say we need more time, then that's fair to do that. Yeah, we we should not be time bounded in this choice.

- Thank you, that's everything I had.

- All right. Is there any other input that folks have? Okay. So to sum up where we are, we're looking at roughly a six week open application window. We're going to review the previous job requirements. Chief Smith is going to take a look at those and provide his input, and the rest of us will take a look at those as well and we'll add that in the agenda for next week's meeting. We will... Melanie will update the sources of where we would advertise with contacts of those... The academies that people may have access to.

- Yup.

- And that we will also bring our rough schedule so we can put together the rough timeline of how long we think this process may take... So that we can adjust that if need be as we get into that process. Any other input, suggestions on that part of it from any of the commissioners or any of the visitors listening in, as potential candidates, past candidates?

- I just have one more question. I thought I was done, I'm sorry. Just doing a little bit of digging around about processes like this in the past, I've seen that some cities have set up or have been able to set up a place on the City's website for people who may not be able to make Town Halls to just, maybe, provide questions or some sort of- Do we have that capacity? Or is that too much of a stretch to do? Because some people also don't feel comfortable appearing in public to voice their opinions due to fear, for whatever reason. Do we have the ability or the capacity to have a landing spot on our page or on the City's website or the police department's website, where individuals can just ask questions anonymously or submit questions anonymously, or thoughts?

- Yeah, I think we may be able to set something up. I will check with our City I.T. and then... maybe with respect to the P.D. website.

- Yeah, our Facebook website gets a ton of traffic and if we had a space there where someone could submit a question or a statement that they want to make, we could turn all those over to...

- Chief, does that give them the ability to do it anonymously, if they choose?

- Yeah, they can use whatever name they want by putting it on their . There's a lot of people with made up names on there. I think if this is Facebook though, and they're using their own Facebook account, then they would... They would come out, it would show who sent it. So maybe, I don't know, maybe I'll talk with our I.T. folks and see if there's a way they can do it anonymously.

- Okay.

- Along those lines with what Rashad said, I'm assuming that this would be a virtual Town Hall?

- We have the ability to do whatever we want. So, if we want to do virtual halls we can, if we wanna do some in-person ones, we can do that as well. Along the lines of what Rashad was saying, there may be some people that want to do it in person that aren't willing to talk in large groups. So, one of the things we might think about is how we provide some access for people to have confidential conversations with a Commissioner or with the contact in there. So yeah, we can do it multiple ways in an effort to get out all the input that we can. All right. If there's nothing more there and we'll come back to it with one more kick at the cat during the meeting, the next item was to talk about an interim police Chief while this process proceeds. And with that, the commission may convene in closed session pursuant to sections 19.85, paragraph one, sub. Wisconsin Statutes, for the purpose of considering employment, promotion, compensation... or have any public employee, over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility. The commission may thereafter reconvene in open session pursuant to sections 19.85, paragraph two, Wisconsin Statutes to report the results of the closed session and consider the balance of the agenda. Is there a motion to go into closed session?

- So moved.

- Move by Commissioner Cheslock. I saw your lips move, Melissa, your mic was off but I saw that, you were first. And is there a second?

- Sure, second.

- Okay, seconded by Commissioner Wanezek. Any further discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor of going into closed session, say aye.

- Aye.

- Aye.

- Are there any opposed? Okay. In session, as soon as Jen gives us the high sign.

- And I have to get to a 4:45 as well.

- Okay.

- I apologize.

- That's fine. All right, we're back in open session. While on closed session, we discussed different options for the interim Chief process, when Chief Smith does retire and we have some follow up steps and we will continue that discussion at our next meeting. With that, that's the completion of our agenda. So, is there a motion to adjourn?

- So moved.

- Moved by Commissioner Wanezek.

- Second it.

- Seconded by Commissioner Cheslock. Any further discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor?
- Aye.
- Opposed. Opposed. All right we are-