

MEETING OF PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Wednesday, January 12, 2022

The Public Safety Communications Commission meeting was remotely called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Commission Chairperson Bernashe.

Roll Call: Fire Chief Egloff – Present
Police Chief Valliere– Present
Commissioner Cowles – Present
Commissioner Emmings – Present
Commissioner Bernashe – Present



Public Comment: No one from the public wished to address the Commission and there was also no communications sent beforehand.

Approval of Last Meeting Minutes: Commissioner Emmings made a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting which was held on November 10, 2021 which Commission Chair Bernashe signed on behalf of the full board. Chief Egloff seconded the motion. Roll call was taken.

Chief Egloff- Yes/ Chief Valliere- Yes/ Commissioner Emmings- Yes/ Commissioner Cowles- Yes/ Commissioner Bernashe- Yes
All approved.

New Business:

- a. Per Diem Pay Rate: Administrator Barszcz spoke about wanting to increase the wage from its current twenty dollars an hour for the per diem dispatchers that work in the center. She explained that she has had one per diem who is approaching four years working in the center with multiple years of experience in public safety, another per diem in training who works full time in the City of Springfield, and a third prospective who is currently a full time dispatcher in the center who has given his resignation. Administrator Barszcz went over when this pay rate was previously raised and gave the current per diem/ part time rates of other like agencies in the state. She proposed raising the rate to match and follow the full timer's pay scale at step 4 which is currently \$23.82 an hour. She also explained that the Personnel Director and

Mayor were given this information prior to the meeting and the Personnel Director specifically said he was in support of the raise. Chief Egloff confirmed that the Commission had the authority to change the rate. Administrator Barszcz elaborated that this proposal would have to go to the Dispatcher's Union as an MOA to sign off on before it can go into effect. Commissioner Emmings followed up by asking if the PSC budget can accommodate the raise this fiscal year, to which Administrator Barszcz said that with grant reimbursements replenishing each salary line, there would be funding for the raise. Commissioner Emmings also asked if there was a cap on hours that a per diem could work. Administrator Barszcz said that there wasn't a cap and the most a per diem had worked in a bi-weekly pay period was approximately 50 hours.

Commissioner Emmings made a motion to set the per diem dispatcher hourly pay rate to match and follow step 4 in the wage scale of a full time dispatcher, contingent on the Mayor and Personnel's approval. Chief Egloff seconded the motion. Roll call was taken.

Chief Egloff- Yes/ Chief Valliere- Yes/ Commissioner Emmings- Yes/
Commissioner Cowles- Yes/ Commissioner Bernashe- Yes
All approved.

- b. Full Time Resignation to Employed as Per Diem: Administrator Barszcz reported that full time dispatcher, Jason Menaker, who has worked for the department for two and a half years has given his resignation. He secured a job in insurance and his last working day in the center will be January 23, 2022. Administrator Barszcz advises that he was a trainer and respected dispatcher and is leaving in good standing. She had asked him to stay on to work per diem shifts which he wanted to do. Administrator Barszcz requested a vote from the Commission to approve. Chief Valliere made a motion to approve Jason Menaker to work as a Per Diem Dispatcher for Westfield Public Safety. Chief Egloff seconded the motion. Roll call was taken.

Chief Egloff- Yes/ Chief Valliere- Yes/ Commissioner Emmings- Yes/
Commissioner Cowles- Yes/ Commissioner Bernashe- Yes
All approved.

Old Business: No new business.

Director's Update:

Text to 911 and Silent Call Procedure Education: Informational cards with letters were sent out to each City department about the ability to text 911 in an emergency as well as

how to alert a dispatcher on an emergency call if the situation requires the caller to be silent. The letter asked the departments to post the educational sheets in public places or where employees could see them so that citizens become aware of these features. COA Director Tina Gorman even asked Administrator Barszcz to film an interview conducted by Harry Rock on “Westfield COA Presents” show to explain these uses to the older adult population of the City.

Site File Database Updates: Lead Dispatcher Hartmann initiated letter sending to all City businesses along with an emergency contact form to be filled out and sent back. This will help the dispatch center keep sites up to date in case of emergency situations were a key holder would need to be called.

Center Staffing: With one full time resignation, two positions are open and need to be hired for. Applications have come in through Indeed.com and are being sorted through. Next step is to test candidates using Critical1 and then hold interviews. The Commission should expect a special meeting to appoint two new hires at the beginning of February.

Dispatch Regionalization Update: Administrator Barszcz stated that the radio project to upgrade Southwick’s system is still in the process of being procured. The radio vendor has come in to quote the installation of two control stations so that Westfield dispatch will be able to take over radio communications quickly if the need arises for Southwick. Their center is dropping in staff and if Westfield were to take on communications earlier, we would need this equipment in. Southwick will be paying for this work with a grant they secured. The FY23 Development Grant application is being worked on. The deadline for submissions is March 3, 2022.

Per Diems in Southwick: Since Southwick Dispatch’s staffing is dropping, they have asked if any employees from Westfield would like to train and fill the role of a per diem dispatcher in their center until the cut over to help with shift coverage. So far there has been two Westfield dispatcher’s interested in doing that.

PSC Commission Future: Administrator Barszcz advises that the Commission cannot be dismantled until there is a change in City ordinance. The PSC Commission falls under the Fire Department’s Ordinance and the Mayor would need to initiate that change. Administrator Barszcz has already had communications with Mayor McCabe about the change and feels as though he is in support of making it.

Next Regular Meeting: Announcement was made for the next scheduled meeting on March 9th, 2022.

Motion to Adjourn: It should be noted that Commissioner Cowles left the meeting before the motion to adjourn could be made at approximately 5:20 pm. At 5:30 p.m., Chief Egloff made a motion to adjourn, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Emmings. All Commissioners in favor; meeting adjourned.



Commission Chairperson Lenore Bernashe