

## MICHIGAN CITY POLICE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING – MARCH 18, 2009

The Police Civil Service Commission of Michigan City, Indiana, held its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, March 18, 2009, in the Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 100 E. Michigan Blvd., Michigan City, Indiana.

### **DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**

A quorum was present to conduct business.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Commissioner Michael Palmer called the meeting to order at 6.05 p.m.

### **ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS**

Present: Commissioners Michael Palmer, Deloise Howse and Michael Buda.

Also present Commission Attorney Pamela S. Krause, Chief of Police Ben Neitzel and Chief of Operations Mark Swistek.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Howse moved the minutes of the monthly meeting on February 10th and special meetings on February 21st and March 7, 2009 be accepted as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Palmer. Motion carried 2-0-1. (Commissioner Buda abstained since he was not at the meetings)

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **PROBATIONARY OFFICER REPORTS**

Assistant Chief Swistek reported the following:

Probationary Officer Steven Wiegel has been assigned to the first phase of the field training officer program on the 2<sup>nd</sup> shift with FTO Officer Mark Raymond. His training is progressing well and is proving to be a valuable asset to the department.

### **APPLICANTS IN PROCESS**

#### **POLYGRAPH REPORTS**

Thirteen applicants have been sent for their polygraph. Results should be available by the next meeting.

#### **BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS** - None

#### **PHYSICAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL**

Chief Neitzel stated his understanding from the Pension Board Secretary was he has received the results of the physical/psychological examination on applicant Equia and will schedule a meeting of the local pension board to review the results next week. Once approval from the pension board is given the application will be forwarded to PERF for final approval.

Chief Neitzel updated the Commission on a change at the most recent pension board meeting. It was decided that the local police pension board should fall in line with the other agencies throughout the state and pay the full cost for applicants' physical and psychological examinations instead of the applicant paying half and the pension board pays the other half.

Commissioner Buda asked Chief Neitzel about the recent appointment of new board members on the local Pension Board. Chief Neitzel informed the Commission that Jim Elwell ran unopposed for the expired term of a retired member and two other vacancies were filled by Officer Cooney and Officer Forker.

PERF – Nothing to report.

### **APPLICANT TESTING RESULTS**

Commissioner Palmer had put together a statistical analysis of how many applications were received, how many tested, how many passed, along with other general information to review.

### **ORAL INTERVIEW EXAMINATION**

Commissioner Palmer said that the oral interview, as part of the promotional process, will take place on April 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. Chief Neitzel has secured the Country Inn & Suites conference room for the interviews, as well as lodging for the interviewers, everything to be handled in one location. The testing company has put together an Oral Interview Guide which had been mailed to each of the Commissioners, and the Chief hand-delivered to each Officer taking the test so that they will know what to expect, since this is the first time it has been included in the promotional process. Chief Neitzel confirmed that he had issued to the officers their time slots so that they are fully aware of their schedule. Twenty-two officers are going through the interview process. One had expressed he did not have interest in that portion of the process but he has been scheduled and issued a study guide in case he changes his mind.

### **PAST PERFORMANCE REPORTS**

Commissioner Palmer reported that we have completed grading 73 of the 85 reports received and Captain Harris dropped off the remaining 12 today. The remaining twelve will be graded in the next couple of days and we will get the scores to the officers as soon as they are finalized.

### **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**

- Letters from Chief Neitzel and Mayor Oberlie, congratulating Detective Kenneth R. Drake and Officer Timothy Hazel on completion of 10 years of service on the department;
- Letter from Board of Commanders advising of their progress with the endorsements of 73 past performance appraisals and that they will reconvene on Monday, March 9, 2009 to complete the process;
- Copy of letter from Captain Mark Harris confirming that Probationary Officer Wiegel will report to the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy on Friday, April 3, 2009 for the ILEA Fitness Entrance examination;
- Copy of the results from the Board of Captain accident review board meeting;
- Letter of resignation from Officer KC Hayden effective February 13, 2009;
- Letter of resignation from Officer Steven Bailey effective February 13, 2009;
- Copy of letter from Assistant Chief Mark Swistek confirming the transfer of Officer Shane Washluske from Traffic to Shift II effective Saturday, February 14, 2009 as a result of the recent vacancy on Shift II due to the resignation;
- Letter from Officer Douglas Samuelson;
- Copy of General Order 35.1 from Chief Neitzel to all personnel regarding Off Duty Employment;
- Supervisor Evaluation report on Lt. Tim Richardson for January 13 thru' February 10, 2009;
- Updated copies of Seniority lists by rank and date of hire;
- Letters from two applicants following their second interviews with the Commissioners on March 7, 2009;

- Bills to be paid totaling \$2808.00.
- Also received were Supervisor Evaluation reports for February for Lt. Tim Richardson, Sgt. Royce Williams and Cpl. Tim Baker.

On motion of Commissioner Buda, seconded by Commissioner Howse, bills in the amount of \$2808.00 should be paid. **Motion carried 3-0.**

On motion of Commissioner Buda, seconded by Commissioner Howse, the resignation of Officer KC Hayden was accepted effective with the close of business on February 13, 2009. **Motion carried 3-0.**

On motion of Commissioner Buda, seconded by Commissioner Howse, the resignation of Officer Steven Bailey was accepted effective with the close of business on February 13, 2009. **Motion carried 3-0.**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **NEXT APPLICANT TESTING DATE**

Commissioner Palmer had been advised by A/C Swistek that we have applied for a grant which will allow us to hire three additional officers above our normal complement. Chief Neitzel said that through the American Recovery and Retirement Act OF 2009 funds are available to hire police officers around the country. We want to take advantage of this and cannot hire them to cover the number already budgeted for. We are presently five short which would need to be hired before the grant could be applied. The grant would cover pay and benefits for three officers for three years with the only requirement being that we keep the officers for at least one year after the three year period. Commissioner Buda commented that we should test as soon as possible and Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> was set for the next applicant testing date. A/C Swistek said that the department has taken a serious marketing campaign and sent out fliers to the academy, universities and local churches, and has spoken on the FYI program and at neighborhood group meetings. We need to hire eight in the next year. Chief Neitzel added that we have done a great job and urged anyone who has an interest in the profession to apply.

### **ETHICS ORDINANCE**

Commissioner Palmer referred discussion of the Ethics Ordinance to Attorney Krause who explained that the Ethics Ordinance form recently sent to the Commissioners must be completed and returned to the Personnel office by May 1<sup>st</sup>, whether or not a conflict of interest exists. Any item which does not apply would be answered N/A and the form signed and dated.

### **REPORT FROM CHIEF NEITZEL**

Chief Neitzel informed the Commission that on April 1<sup>st</sup> we will come out with a press release and urge people to log on to Citizens Observer.com and become a subscriber free of charge. A little bit of information is required as to whether you want to get the information by email or by texting. It is an interesting site and we have high hopes that by communicating with the public and businesses they will find out major things that may happen in their neighborhood. If we have a network to get out the information when it first comes to us we may be able to minimize losses for businesses in the community. It is all anonymous and comes to us through a third party. We hope it is well used. We have purchased it for a two year period and will monitor its usage. Its success is dependent upon how much we all use it.

### **COMMENTS FROM ASST. CHIEFS**

A/C Swistek added to Chief Neitzel's report by reminding the public to keep in mind the Crime Information Tip hot line. The Narcotics Task Force with Drug Enforcement Administration recently made several arrests and indictments due to heroin trafficking within the city. This is a tribute to the Crime Hot Line 873-1488. We are now receiving additional tips of a new group that has been identified, and working more new suspected narcotics traffickers within the community. We feel the number is very beneficial.

### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS** - None

**ATTORNEY COMMENTS** - None

**COUNCIL COMMENTS** - None

**PUBLIC COMMENTS** - None

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting date will be Tuesday, April 14<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:29 p.m. on motion of Commissioner Howse, seconded by Commissioner Buda.

---

Michael Buda, Secretary

ATTEST:

---

Michael D. Palmer, President

---

Deloise Howse, Vice-President