

MINUTES OF MEETING
AVON CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
Held Monday, July 18, 2022

AVON CITY HALL

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 A.M. by Peter Kratt, Chairman of the Civil Service Commission.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Peter Kratt, Commissioner William Greaney and Commissioner Alan Wojciechowski

In attendance: Law Director John Gasior, Police Chief Fischbach, Safety Director Streator and Recording Secretary, Rose Seighman

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA:

Mr. Wojciechowski made a motion to accept the agenda as published. Mr. Greaney seconded and the motion passed 3-0.

APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING OF 6/6/2022:

Mr. Greaney made a motion to accept the minutes from the meeting of 6/6/2022. Mr. Wojciechowski seconded and the motion passed 3-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Mr. Kratt indicated he was looking at the Patrol Officer Entrance and Eligibility Lists in front of him and asked Chief Fischbach to speak about them. Chief Fischbach explained that the testing process we used was National Testing Network, the same testing process we used 18 months ago. To be on the Lateral list, candidates were required to have at least one-year full time police service within the last three years and they needed to already have police certification in order to be on that list. We also had the entrance list, which had no requirements other than education of high school diploma, or equivalent and be 21 years old. The exam results were accepted up until the deadline of June 24, 11:59pm. We did offer extra credit percentage points based on their raw score. Based on that information, Rose and our HR Specialist, Diane, calculated the final scores and created the Eligibility Lists that we are asking the Commission to certify today. Mr. Kratt asked if the column on the lists titled "Points", is the total extra credit points that were awarded to the candidate? Chief answered yes, those points were calculated as a percentage of their raw score. Those points are the total of extra credit points they received. He said they felt the total points

would be less confusing rather than to break down each type of extra credit because there are so many types of extra credit: OPOTA certification, education, military, city employment, etc. We have all of that information in a spread sheet but felt it would be better on the Eligibility List to just list total extra points. Mr. Kratt asked if Rose had anything to say. Rose shared that she feels going to the percentage for extra points rather than straight points helped out a lot with tie scores. In the past, we had a lot of tie scores and those ties were broken by giving the tie to the candidate who has military credit. If there was no military credit, then it went to the person that applied first. When giving out 5 points or 10 points, the scores tended to stay the same, but when giving a percentage of the candidates raw score, you can see the difference in the scores, the decimals on the scores are so different. There was only one tie on this entire exam. The other benefit to issuing a percentage of the raw score for extra points is that the total scores are lower than previous tests. On our last eligibility list, Rose believes the first candidate to score LESS than 100 points was candidate 37. The scores seemed inflated. Rose said she thinks this was a good rule change. Chief Fischbach agreed. He wanted to address the issue of having so many candidates with scores well over 100. On this current list, there are only 3 of the 64 candidates with a score of over 100. Chief said he would like to stick with this way of issuing extra credit rather than the old way of issuing a straight number of 5 or 10 points. Mr. Greaney agreed and said doing it this way would give a candidate that has none of the extra credit available a real chance. He mentioned there are 5 candidates in the top 25 that have no extra credit points, which is nice. He said this way, you can still test to the top of the list. Chief added the higher you score on the test, the higher your bump in extra credit. Other than the total number of candidates, he was very happy with the test. He would have loved to have seen three times the number of candidates on this list, but it is what it is. We tried to recruit as best we can, but this is what we're seeing nationally across the board. The list is good for one year and we may have to have early conversations about when we may need to put out another test. Having less than half the number of candidates as our last test, we may need to test more frequently. Mr. Kratt asked if Mr. Streator had anything to add. He said his only comment is that the trend is definitely that nobody is getting good numbers for law enforcement exams right now. We actually have done better than most, but we still aren't where we want to be. The process worked and it was a little smoother than the last time, we are trying to improve each time and learn from the last time. He thanked the Commission for their assistance with this exam. He wanted to thank Rose and Diane for their leg work. We had a few candidates that we needed to sit down and go over their extra credit, to decide if we should allow it or not. But having made the recent rule changes, it did make for a smoother process, so he thanks the Commission for those rule changes.

Mr. Gasior had a question – did both the Lateral and Entrance candidates take the same exam? Rose answered that they did, the exam from NTN was the same for both. He then asked if the same extra credit points applied to both exams. Mr. Streator and Rose explained that the only difference was that the OPOTA certification was extra credit on the Entrance, but NOT on the Lateral, as the OPOTA certification was REQUIRED to be on the Lateral. All other extra credit points were the same for both.

Mr. Gasior then asked how many candidates do we have openings for. Chief replied that we have immediate openings for 2, we have a conditional offer on the table to a candidate that was on our old list. Chief Fischbach was put on notice that he has at least three employees that intend on retiring before the end of the year. Mr. Gasior asked how many new officers were budgeted for this year. Chief replied four, but he has only hired one. We also have that conditional offer out right now, which would be the second employee hired. Mr. Gasior asked when the old list expires, Chief answered he wanted to discuss that. The list expires October 14th, 2022, but our rules do allow to have concurrent lists. He wants to abolish the old list, but not before he makes a final offer to the candidate that has the conditional offer right now. Once the final offer is made, he will ask the Commission to abolish the old list. Mr. Gasior had a question regarding ranking. He said you have 52 on the new Entrance and 12 on the new Lateral list. Are

they ranked together or separately? Chief said as he understands it, they are ranked separately on each list. That is how we handled it last time, two separate, certified lists. Mr. Gasior asked if they are separated like that because of the OPOTA training? Chief answered, yes, the Lateral list means all those candidates are certified, working police officers. As an example, the candidate that we just made the conditional offer to, she has not been through the Academy, so we have to put her through the Academy to be certified. Even if she makes it through the hiring process, he will not see her until early 2023 and then we have to put her through our own field training, so we won't see her until the summer. The benefit of having the Lateral list, which we started a couple years ago, is that every person on that list is ready to go. Mr. Gasior said that any candidate you hire from the Entrance list won't be ready for duty until next summer. Chief answered, not necessarily. For the majority of them, that is the case, but some do have their OPOTA certification and are current police officers, but they do not have the full year of employment, which is required to be on the Lateral List. Mr. Gasior asked then if it's a two-year process to get an employee ready for duty and Chief said no, it is six months in the Academy and then three months of field training, which can be extended longer, if necessary. Mr. Gasior said that in a perfect situation, it could be nine months of training, Chief said that was correct. Mr. Gasior said that when you hire off the Lateral list, then the person can be hired and put into the position the next day. Chief answered that was correct. Mr. Kratt asked if Mr. Gasior is satisfied with the process. Mr. Gasior answered that he is, he just wanted to be sure everyone understands we are certifying these candidates, there are two lists, we have four candidates budgeted, so that is a certain number of names they can look at. Chief explained that they get 10 names to hire one position, 15 names to hire two to four positions. Chief said they will be looking at the top 15 once the list is certified. Mr. Greaney asked if it was up to the Chief what list he wants to hire from. Chief answered yes, the rules don't specify what list to go off. The way we handled it in the past, we look at both lists. He always tries to find the best candidate if that candidate is on the Entrance, we take them from there, if they are on the Lateral, then we get them from that list. The Chief's goal is to hire the best possible candidate, no matter what list they might be on.

ACTION ITEMS:

Certify the Police Entrance Eligibility List

Mr. Wojciechowski made a motion to certify the Police Entrance Eligibility List. Mr. Greaney seconded and the motion passed 3-0.

Certify the Police Lateral Eligibility List

Mr. Greaney made a motion to certify the 2022 Police Officer Lateral list as presented today. Mr. Wojciechowski seconded and the motion passed 3-0.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS:

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Mr. Kratt asked Chief Fischbach to address the Commission regarding the current Police Eligibility Lists. Chief Fischbach explained that we still have the Eligibility Lists from October of 2020 and they are current. As he has explained before, they are having trouble getting any candidates from this list because it is so old. He does have one conditional offer to a candidate from that list and they have accepted and

they passed a psychological exam and they are scheduled for the physical exam that they must pass for the pension system this week. Once that happens, they will receive their final offer. His suggestion is that once that final offer happens, we can abolish the 2020 police lists. He anticipates at the next Civil Service Meeting that the old lists be abolished and then the lists that we just certified today would be valid. He asked Mr. Gasior for confirmation that the rules allow for two lists to be used concurrently. Chief said if he didn't have that conditional offer out there, he would have asked the Commission to abolish the old list today. But he feels it is better to leave it valid until the final offer is accepted. Mr. Kratt asked if there were any questions. There were no questions.

Chief Fischbach then indicated he would like to speak about the third item on our Agenda, which is a Sergeants Exam. He was given notice by one of his sergeants that he intends to retire this year. He was given a tentative date of October 20th by the pension system. He has medical issues that he is contending with and he hopes to be able to make it to that October 20th date. Our current Sergeants Eligibility List expires October 14th of this year. We will need another exam in anticipation of his retirement. Chief has talked with Rose about getting a test on the calendar, maybe in September. He's hoping we could have a list to certify at the November Civil Service Meeting. If the Commission is willing, we would like to request to have that test given in September, so that we will have a valid list by November's meeting. Chief shared that he has talked with his command staff and all of them agreed that the NTN process was probably the best process their department has ever used for a Sergeants Exam. It consists of a video-based test and then, in the past, the top 5 candidates moved on to Phase II, which is the Pradco. He would like the top 10 to move on to Phase II. He feels we will get a broader, better range of candidates to move on. Both phases are equally weighted at 50%, so he feels it would be more appropriate to move as many people on as we can. For a multitude of reasons, moving every candidate on to Phase II is not practical. Phase II, Pradco, is a lengthy process. Chief doesn't think we can get through all those candidates in a timely fashion. We will have about 23 or 24 candidates eligible to sit for the exam, although we don't know how many will want to. Mr. Kratt asked how many people do we have on the force and how many would there be if Chief got the agency to where he wanted it? Chief responded that we have 45 sworn police officers, that includes him, all the way down to patrol officers. We are authorized for 48, which is what he's trying to get to right now. He said he will be asking for more next year, but that is a discussion for another time. Right now, we are down three officers and have three retiring, so that's six he knows he will be needing to replace or add in the next six to nine months. Our force is about 50% veteran officers that could be looking at retiring in the next few years, so we are going to be hiring for the foreseeable future. It's just where we're at in this city, as it's still growing. Mr. Wojciechowski asked how long the Chief plans on being here. Chief answered he is eligible to retire in three years, but he doesn't plan on going anywhere anytime soon. He said, God willing, he sees another 10 to 12 years for himself. He was fortunate to get into it young, so he still thinks he has some years to positively contribute to the agency. Mr. Kratt said the Chief has a long history in Avon, so they might keep him around.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

Next meeting is Monday, August 8, 2022 at 10:00 A.M.

ADJOURN:

Following a unanimous vote, today's meeting was adjourned at 10:20 A.M.

PASSED: _____ **SIGNED BY:** _____

Peter Kratt, Chairman

ATTEST: _____

Rose Seighman, Recording Secretary

C: John Gasior
Safety Director Duane Streator
Chief Fischbach
Chief Swope
Rose Seighman