

July 13, 2006 Police Commission Minutes
Draft Copy

Motion was made by Commissioner Blass to approve the May Minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Ritchie. Minutes were unanimously approved.

Commissioner Blass presented a letter from the Town of Taghkanic thanking us for the use of our speed sign from the Park Superintendent.

Commissioner Gabaccia presented a letter from VFW Commander Arnie Anderson regarding the Memorial Day Parade, referring to the fact that no one ever called him back regarding coverage and indicating a comment from Sheriff David Harrison that his office had never been contacted regarding providing deputies for detail. Commander Anderson also suggested that the Commission provide citizens wishing to stage a special event with a "To-Do Checklist" and deadlines so that there would be no confusion in the future as to procedure. Commissioner Gabaccia said she thought such a "To-Do Checklist" would be an excellent idea. Commissioner Blass said that such a list should come from the Town Board.

Commissioner Blass made reference to the fact that "no organizations were going to participate in the Memorial Day parade." Commissioner Ritchie said he did not care if only one person wanted to march we need to accommodate the Veterans. Commissioner Gabaccia indicated that she hoped the conflicts would be resolved in time for next year's Memorial Day Parade. Commissioner Blass said, "The people didn't want it on Saturday." Commissioner Ritchie said, "It's up to the veterans."

Commissioner Blass inquired how the other Commissioners felt about the hiring policy he drafted. Commissioner Ritchie asked about the lie detector test and whether or not it is a science that is 100 percent. Commissioner Blass said we could leave the lie detector test optional. Commissioner Ritchie inquired as to its expense. Commissioner Ritchie said he didn't want it as part of the hiring policy, because it states "We don't trust you."

Commissioner Blass said there would be psychological testing and a written test which is sent

out to be evaluated. Commissioner Gabaccia asked if this was an MMPI? Commissioner Ritchie asked what that was and Commissioner Gabaccia said, "Minnesota Multi-Phase Personality Inventory." Commissioner Blass said he thought that's what it was. It was decided to leave the lie detecting out of the hiring process. Commissioner Ritchie asked about drug testing and was told by Commissioner Blass that it would not be mandatory. Commissioner Ritchie said, "But they even drug test for Walmart."

Commissioner Ritchie moved to approve the new hiring policy which did not include the lie detector test, but which did include the psychological evaluation. This motion was seconded by

Commissioner Gabaccia and unanimously approved by the Commission.

Commissioner Blass raised the issue of the drafting of the new Policy and Procedures manual

to be written by the Police Commission. The resolution he presented made reference to such

a manual existing since 1987. Commissioner Gabaccia questioned whether or not such a manual had actually existed since 1987. Commissioner Blass said there had been General Orders in existence since then and that Supervisor Near had a manual for the department.

Commissioner Blass moved the following:

Whereas; the Copake Police Department has operated under a set of policy and procedures since January 1, 1987, and

Whereas; those rules and regulations have been implemented and supplemented from time to time by the Chief of Police and Police Commissioner; And

Whereas; it is the recommendation of this Commission that the policy and procedures should be updated to reflect current operating procedures and protocols that the department has implemented over the years; now therefore be it

Resolved; that the Copake Police Commission shall retain the right by town law to establish

policy and procedures. The Chief of Police is hereby authorized to from time to time establish general orders and memos in regard to specific operations of the department such as training, special details, service of vehicles, monthly working schedules, work assignments, et.c, which comply with the policy and procedures established by the police commission.

Commissioner Blass' motion was seconded by Commissioner Ritchie and unanimously approved by the Commission.

Commissioner Blass suggested that we need to establish the requirements for the Chief of Police position. He indicated that Civil Service Law required seven years as a sworn police officer

with two years in a first line or supervisory capacity and that Civil Service would not bend on this rule. Commissioner Gabaccia asked if that meant we would have to go off the Civil Service

list to appoint a chief. Commissioner Blass said that that only applied if the position was full-time.

Commissioner Blass said he felt that given the current salary for the job that the Chief should only be required to be present five hours a week at the department, but that other than that the

Chief would only need to be "available". Commissioner Ritchie asked what he meant by available and was told "to be able to be reached by phone." Commissioner Gabaccia said she felt we should wait to study the job requirements further before deciding.

Supervisor Valentino stopped into the Commission meeting and indicated that he would read Chief Kane's letter of resignation at the Town Board meeting before moving to appoint George

Hoffman to replace him. Commissioner Blass said he felt the position should be a Commission-appointment. Commissioner Gabaccia said that under General Municipal Law the position of Chief was a yearly appointment made by the Town Board.

Commissioner Gabaccia moved that the Commission recommend to the Town Board the appointment of Court Officer George Hoffman as Chief Thomas Kane's replacement.

Commissioner Ritchie seconded the motion and

requested that Commissioner Blass please make the vote unanimous. After further discussion, a vote was taken and the Commission unanimously voted to recommend to the Town Board that they appoint George Hoffman. Commissioner Gabaccia said she would speak to Town Attorney Carl Whitbeck to further clarify appointment responsibilities.

Commissioner Gabaccia indicated that she would like to investigate the disability insurance

issues for the officers of Copake who if they are injured on the job go out on a rate of pay which reflects their parttime status in Copake but which does not take into account the subsequent loss of income from being able to work at their full time jobs. She indicated that this idea came from Officer Lopez and that it merited consideration.

Commissioners Ritchie and Blass agreed that this fact should be investigated.

Commissioner Ritchie moved that the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Commissioner Gabaccia and unanimously approved by vote.