

Personnel Committee Minutes

Honorable Council
City of Newark, Ohio
May 10, 2016

There was a meeting of the Personnel Committee in Council Chambers on Monday May 9, 2016 following the Capital Improvement Committee with these members in attendance:

Ryan Bubb, Chair
Alex Rolletta
Doug Marmie
Dee Hall
Curtis Johnson

We wish to Report:

1. **Ordinance No. 16-13** amending the position classification, pay range and department authorization tables of the Department of Safety, Division of Police, by creating the classification of Information Technology Specialist, and setting the compensation therefore, and abolishing one Police Officer position was considered.

Director Spurgeon- the Division of Police has had a historical mismatch of how the function of IT is done and who does it. It has worked well but we have had a Police Officer performing our IT needs. I said something to Chief Connell's predecessor when I came on board that if there was ever an opportunity to address it I would like to. That is what we would like to do tonight. We would like to have a job description that matches what they are doing which is IT. The details of which I have asked Chief Connell to stick around and walk you through it.

Chief Connell- let me give you a little bit of a historical perspective. Bob Carson started on the department a year after me in 1991. I think in 1992 we got one computer in the department that was donated by Bob and his family's company. As time progressed we have gone from very few computers in the IT department to extensive. Bob retired recently and about a year ago we started studying all of the things that he did because we knew he would be leaving within the next year or so. I feel bad as a Command Officer in that department because what we found was that Bob was giving us about 60 hours a week for 40 hours pay. He was doing a lot of things off duty so we knew that what we would have to do was get somebody who specialized in this and wasn't actually a sworn Police Officer and I realize that it looks like we are taking away safety forces but we're really not because for the last two decades Bob has done this job and hasn't actually worked the street as a Police Officer. We are trying to line the duties better with what we actually need.

Mr. Marmie- is it going to be the same pay structure?

Chief Connell- Director Buskirk could answer that, I think it is less but I don't know to what degree less.

Mr. Johnson- so we are truly not getting rid of the police officer that would be working in the safety area

Chief Connell- on paper we are but in reality we're not because this position hasn't been used in 20 years.

Mr. Johnson- yes because it doesn't look good that we are getting rid of an officer.

Chief Connell- We have also discussed this with the FOP and let them know in advance what we plan to do.

Ms. Hall- would this be a possibility of an outside contract person or is this someone you absolutely need every day?

Chief Connell- we need absolutely every day. As I said Bob Carson 60 hours' worth of work for 40 hours of pay so we need somebody in house and we also need somebody in house because they could be dealing with things that could potential be evidence. It is a very involved job that we want to include directly in the Police Department. We don't think that we could be served as well with outside contracting.

Mr. Rolletta- can you explain why it is necessary to abolish that one position on paper? You may have alluded to that earlier.

Chief Connell- because we are truly taking one position and moving it to the other. We still have several positions they are available just not funded.

Motion by Mr. Johnson to send to full Council, second by Mr. Marmie

Mr. Rath- the 60 hours a week that he was working what percentage of that would you say was spent doing police work versus IT work.

Chief Connell- I would say virtually none of it would have been police officer, law enforcement type of work. There would have been times when he would have helped with extracting evidence so I would say a very small portion.

Mr. Fraizer- where will this person be working, in the building?

Chief Connell- yes the same location. We have actually pulled a Police Officer off of the street to cover the duties after Bob retired. We would like to do this as quickly as we can because we are actually impacting the number of Officers on the street.

Mr. Rath- you said that person would be helping with police work, can they do that without being an officer?

Chief Connell- absolutely. We currently have an AFSCME employee that does property room work. There is no requirement to be a member of the FOP or a sworn Police Officer to do this work. In fact many departments farm this out to private companies.

Mr. Rath- have you look into to the possibility or what is the possibility of finding a certified Police Officer who has a specialty in law enforcement and IT and still have the capabilities of putting them on the street.

Chief Connell- that would be problematic. First all we would limit our pool to current Police Officers where this would allow us to reach out to everybody who would have the ability and skills. I have 60 hours' a week worth of work so there wouldn't be a slow day where I could say go hit the streets.

Mr. Rath- I didn't necessarily mean a slow day I meant an emergency situation. If you add the IT person is it absolutely necessary to eliminate the Police Officer position or could we just leave it unfilled until we have funds to fill it?

Chief Connell- as I've said we already have positions that are still there vacant currently so comfortable with the margin, they aren't funded now so if funding would come available I have several positions I could fill. It would serve no purpose to maintain that position.

Mr. Rolletta- do you know how many we have vacant? You said that you are comfortable with the margin.

Chief Connell- I think that we were at 81 sworn in 2007-2008 I would have to think that most of those were still available; we are at 68 right now. I don't know that for sure.

Mr. Rolletta- Chief let me make sure I heard this correctly, and officer was taken off of the street to do this job currently and you could get someone back on the street if you fill it with someone else.

Chief Connell- we took Bob Carson off of the street many years ago then when Bob retired recently that took us down to 68 sworn Officers. We also pulled Dickman off the road to cover things because we are still going through the transition with the county so we have a very high IT need especially right now so he was pulled off which impacted one of our daylight teams, we are down 5 Officers on that team. The sooner we can do this the better.

Mr. Rolletta- I definitely understand the need for this, I do have some concern about eliminating one of those Police Officers positions but I am going to vote to pass this out of Committee.

Mr. Cost- when that transition is over with that you just spoke of will your IT needs be relieved a little bit or would you say it would still be the same?

Chief Connell- as of right now probably not we are not seeing anything that is going to change the work load because it is so intensive on the IT needs. We are going from 60 hours a week to 40; it will be a very full job.

Ms. Hall- no disrespect, if you didn't hire this person would you hire an Officer with those funds then outsource? You said some people go private, outsourcing.

Chief Connell- I have zero budget to outsource anything on top of my current budget.

Ms. Hall- there is x amount of money for one or the other?

Chief Connell- that was the look to the Officers salary which truly wasn't a Police Officer, it is on paper but it's not in reality it is an IT person who is well qualified for the position.

Motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

Ryan Bubb, Chair