

**CITY OF LAWRENCE**  
**Police Merit Commission**  
**February 5, 2024**  
**Public Assembly Room**  
**Special Meeting**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Charles Wheeler, Gail Gartin, and Ronald Christensen

MEMBERS BY MICROSOFT TEAMS: Bob Hendrickson

MEMBERS ABSENT: Karen Horth Powers

ALSO PRESENT: retired clerk Kathleen Walton and Executive Assistant Amber Baldwin

STAFF PRESENT: Police Chief Bigsbee, Lieutenant Scott Evans, and Mayor Whitfield

STAFF BY MICROSOFT TEAMS: None

Commission President Wheeler called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and announced a quorum was present.

COMMENTS OF COMMISSION MEMBERS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mr. Wheeler moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on January 8, 2024. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Gartin. By a roll call vote, the motion carried 3-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: Lt Evans requested to establish eligibility list for 18 out of 31 candidates passing background, deemed acceptable continue to the next phase of the hiring process (DVSA, Medical & Psychological Exams). Mr. Christensen moved to deem the 18 candidates acceptable to continue to the next phase of the hiring process. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Gartin. By a roll call vote, the motion carried 3-0.

Lt Evans requested that 13 candidates deemed unacceptable be removed from the process. Mrs. Gartin moved to remove the 13 candidates deemed unacceptable. Mr. Christensen seconded the motion. By a roll call vote, the motion carried 3-0.

Lt Evans requested to provide Conditional Offers of employment to 10 applicants having the highest score (in order) and is still of "good character". Mr. Christensen moved to approve the request. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Gartin. By a roll call vote, the motion carried 3-0.

Lt Evans requested those applicants passing an updated background investigation and passing all requirements of the INPRS 1977 Fund, become Probationary Officers to fill 10 of the 10 vacancies within the department. Mrs. Gartin moved to the request. The motion was seconded by Mr. Christensen. By a roll call vote, the motion carried 3-0.

Lt Evans requested that 8 candidates remain on the hiring list for 2 years starting February 8<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Gartin moved to accept the request for 8 candidates to remain on the hiring list for 2 years. The motion was seconded by Mr. Christensen. By a roll call vote, the motion carried 3-0.

COMMENTS OF THE POLICE CHIEF: Police Chief Bigsbee thanked the Commission for approving the list and made mention of expecting a possible retiree late March/early April and may be asking for one additional hire to keep the staff at 65. The police department is working on a 5-year Strategic Plan and updating the internal policies regarding the disciplinary matrix in the next 1-2 months. Police Chief Bigsbee ended by introducing Mayor Whitfield and welcoming her to her first Police Merit Commission meeting.

MAYOR OF LAWRENCE: Thanked the Commission for their service and their assistance with getting the police department to a full staff of 65. Mayor Whitfield reinforced the importance of recruitment and retention of public safety officers.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: Council members Liz Masur, Kristie Krone, Sherron Freeman, and Carlos Jennings introduced themselves and thanked the Commission for their service.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m., by unanimous vote of the Commission.

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Charles Wheeler, President

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Amber Baldwin, Executive Assistant

These minutes are not intended to be verbatim. They are a summary of discussions held, except for the motions. An audiotape is made which provides a detailed record.