

Pennridge Regional Police Commission
Meeting Minutes
February 22, 2023

The regular business meeting of the Pennridge Regional Police Commission was held at 5:00pm on February 22, 2023 in the meeting room at the Pennridge Regional Police Headquarters, 200 Ridge Road, Sellersville, PA 18960.

Present:	Jay Keyser	Commissioner
	Hal Schirmer	Commissioner
	Gary Volovnik	Commissioner
	Paul T. Dickinson Jr.	Chief
	Matt Hoover, Esq.	Solicitor
	Marianne Morano	East Rockhill Township Manager
	Greg Lippincott	West Rockhill Township Manager
	Jim Nietupski	East Rockhill Supervisor
	David Nyman	East Rockhill Supervisor
	David Collingwood	West Rockhill Supervisor
	Pedro Ruiz	Pennridge Regional Police Sergeant

The meeting was called to order at 5:00pm by Mr. Keyser with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Citizen Comment #1

There were none

Announcements:

Recognize Ofc. Daniel Forbes on his retirement from the department after 15 years of service. Ofc. Forbes was presented with a plaque from the department and the police commission recognizing his service to the community. Rick Dean, President of the PBA, also presented Ofc. Forbes with a plaque thanking him for his service. Chairman Keyser thanked Dan for his service to the department and the community.

Consent Agenda

- A. January 25, 2023 Meeting Minutes
- B. February 22, 2023 Financial Report
- C. February 22, 2023 Payment of Bills totaling \$94,754.41
- D. January 2023 Chief's Report

On motion by Mr. Volovnik, seconded by Mr. Schirmer, to approve the February 22, 2023 Consent Agenda. With no additional discussion, all present voted in favor.

Solicitors Report: Matthew Hoover.

There was no report from Mr. Hoover.

Business

Consider signing memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Bucks County regarding the co-responder program.

Chief Dickinson presented an update on the Bucks County Upper Bucks Co-Responder program and MOU. The chief explained that the areas of concern that the solicitor had expressed at the previous meeting were addressed and changed to his standards.

Mr. Keyser stated concern language in the document requires the department supply a vehicle and he does not support funding the program after two years as required in the MOU.

Mr. Nietupski stated the record must reflect he was against the department participating in the program based on language in the MOU. That language specifically addresses the use of office space, and the exchange of information between the co-responder and the department. He further wanted to express that he did not believe that the sharing of information with the county was proper and that if social services are necessary then they should be requested.

Mr. Nyman stated the program was where policing was moving towards in the future and believed that the program should be tried during the two year period.

Mr. Volovnik stated the program should be entered into because the department has 90 days to exit the agreement.

Chief Dickinson in response to the concerns above relayed that he had no intention of letting a co-responder use a vehicle and that the use of office space was not an issue. In addition he stressed that all the other Upper Bucks Departments have signed onto the program and not allowing the residents access to the program could be detrimental to them and the department.

On motion by Mr. Volovnik, seconded by Mr. Schirmer, to approve the signing of the MOU with the removal of subsection 6 under Police Department Responsibilities that pertained to providing a vehicle to the co responder while in the field. With no additional discussion, all present voted in favor.

Consideration of revisions to the hiring processes.

Mr. Keyser expressed concern about the current hiring process and stated he met with Chief Dickinson regarding the same. He felt the need for the commission to know who they were hiring moving forward and stressed the need for the Public Safety Committee to be involved in the process. He continued that the involvement of the Public Safety Committee would add transparency to the process, to include checks and balances in the process.

Mr. Schirmer expressed similar concerns in regards to there being an additional layer to the hiring process and with current Human Resource concerns.

In response to Mr. Schirmer request, Chief Dickinson went into depth regarding the hiring process currently followed. The chief explained the stages from advertising, interviewing, background investigations, polygraph, and finally a psychological and physical examination. The Chief also inquired of Mr. Keyser what role the Public Safety Committee would have in the process.

Mr. Keyser replied that he wanted to know the candidates before they were hired.

Mr. Nyman asked what added benefit would there be to include the Public Safety Committee and believed that the process was complete and met standards of other departments.

Mr. Volovnik expressed that the chief is the expert in the field and his position and recommendation was enough for him. He added that he believed the hiring of friends and families should be made clear to the board before final decisions are made.

Mr. Collingwood expressed that the chief, sergeant and detective are the experts in the field and that their recommendation is adequate. In addition he expressed that the additional steps could delay the process and also possibly prevent the department from getting the best candidate.

Discussion was then had regarding an executive session being held 30 days before the request of hiring is presented to the board. In those discussions it was expressed that the chief will relay to the board why the candidates were ranked in the manner they were ranked and also why he believed one candidate was better than another. The Chief expressed he would be able to do this and do so in the future.

No motion was made, the chief indicated he would make changes in policy and bring them to the commission outlining the changes requested.

Notification of Memorandum Addressing Manpower

A memorandum was distributed to the Commission for discussion at the March 22, 2023 meeting.

Update on Heating system:

Chief Dickinson followed up on the heating system and expressed that he was still waiting on further information and would update the board once he received the information.

Update on hiring process:

Chief Dickinson relayed to the board that he presented Mark Rosenfeld with a conditional offer of employment. This decision was based on his performance during the interview process, qualifications and background investigation.

Citizen Comment #2:

None

Adjournment

On motion by Mr. Schirmer, seconded by Mr. Volovnik, to adjourn. With no additional discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 6:07pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul T. Dickinson Jr.', written in a cursive style.

Paul T. Dickinson Jr. Chief of Police