

**BOROUGH OF CARROLL VALLEY
REGULAR MEETING
OF BOROUGH COUNCIL
TUESDAY, JUNE 16, 2020 – 7:00 P.M.
RECONVENED Meeting of June 9, 2020
BOROUGH OFFICE
MINUTES**

Richard Mathews, President called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. He led the Pledge of Allegiance. The attendance was as follows:

BOROUGH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Present

Richard Mathews
L. Michael Wight
David Lillard via phone
Bruce Carr
Jessica Kraft
John Schubring via phone
Robert Verderaime

Absent

BOROUGH OFFICIALS, ETC

Ronald J. Harris, Mayor
David A. Hazlett, Borough Manager
Richard L. Hileman, II, Police Chief

Mr. Mathews re-convened the June 9, 2020 meeting followed by a statement that the sole issue left for discussion is that of the hiring of a police officer. In adherence to Robert's Rules of Order, Mr. Mathews stated that he would entertain a motion for the Chief's request, with a second and then discussion. Secretary Marthers was asked to call each Council Member in alphabetical order by last name for comment except for himself having asked to be called as the final contributor.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

No one addressed Council at this time.

Request to Hire Officer.

***D. Lillard moved; J. Kraft seconded that Council appoint Erik C. Peiffer as a full-time, probationary officer of the Borough of Carroll Valley at \$51,345 yearly conditioned on his successful completion of the Act 120 Academy and the required physical, psychological and eye exams and subject to the standard one (1) year probationary period.

As requested, each Council member was called upon for their comments and/or concerns, responses of Chief Hileman have been inserted below where applicable:

- Starting Salary higher than expected; several examples of starting salaries and benefit cost-sharing among other departments were shared
- Greater fiscal responsibility was called for
- Requested update on the process that led to choosing Mr. Peiffer. Was Mr. Peiffer the only one to make it through the testing phase?
 - Yes
- Academy completion date is anticipated for August
 - Yes
- Requested background on salary data
 - Explained the step program, reasons and incentives. Original study was prepared in 2017 for the 2018 Budget and then updated for 2020. At this time Carroll Valley is ranked #8; Chief explained that the scale was developed to put Carroll Valley Police Department (CVPD) on a median range among local departments.
- Asked if salary was advertised

- Yes, but not guaranteed
- Requested information on the On-Call Program; is it mandatory?
 - It's now a Voluntary Program no longer Mandatory
- Requested starting salary of the last officer hired
 - \$48,872
- Asked how the higher starting salary was calculated
 - Using the 2018 starting wage of \$48,872 and adding the 2019 COLA of 3% and the 2020 COLA of 2% that was budgeted for all Borough employees
- Asked how candidate learned of the starting salary
 - Advertised through alternate advertising sites that target officers
- Where is the applicant from?
 - Palmyra area; he would be required to relocate
- Questioned the vacant position or starting salary of a new-hire being given COLA; further discussion regarding COLA versus Merit increase ensued.
 - Chief Hileman explained that the Borough gave COLA and Merit increases in the past, but not for several years.
- The CVPD is a training ground; maybe the Borough needs to accept that and hire accordingly.
 - Chief Hileman stated he does not want that to be the case and a comparable salary will help the situation
- Police Budget concerns voiced, effect of COVID-19 Pandemic on the current Borough Budget is concerning
- Explore cost sharing of benefits
- Asked if it is industry standard to offer a position to a candidate prior to graduation
 - Yes, the offer is contingent to successful completion of the program, and the candidate will have committed to CVPD
- Asked if there was a need for a 3rd full time officer?
- Could the Borough hire a part time officer to fulfill the needs?
- Are the State Police a viable answer?
- Asked Members to consider the following:
 - Where are the calls for police services coming?
 - What are the type of calls?
 - What is the call load? How many calls are being handled by each officer? Each day? Each Shift?
 - Will there be any impact on the Residents of the Borough with the decision that is made?
- Chief Hileman responded with the following:
 - 2020 call volume is uniquely low due to the COVID-19 Pandemic; the norm is much higher
 - Traffic enforcement is important
 - CVPD has more residents per officer than industry standard recommends and more than other police departments in the county.

Mr. Mathews provided a summation of the discussion noting the Starting Salary and Salary Scale as having flaws. He concurred with Members that the Council needs to review all Borough employees and look for a fair method of compensation that addresses all departments. He raised concerns about the amount of leave time built by officers and asked if there was a more efficient way to schedule officers that allows the use of leave while maximizing the on-duty patrol time. Use of State Police was questioned to include the possibility of offering them use of the Borough Offices as a satellite office for patrolmen. Chief Hileman was given the floor to address concerns:

- Martinsburg was mentioned as having a starting salary of \$45,000; however, their officers can top-out on their pay scale at \$86,397. Considerably higher than our scale. They use a COLA plus Merit system and their median pay and housing expense was shared.
- The Borough scale was developed to help alleviate the problem of waiting until the pay was way below other departments and then give large adjustments. Budgetarily it is better to plan for the increases in smaller amounts.
- Traffic enforcement is very important as it is not all about the speeding driver. Secondary arrests have been made that involved stolen property, outstanding warrants and DUI.
- The salary requested is within the budget that was adopted in December of 2019.
- State Police is understaffed by 1000 officers, they are facing funding reductions as well and are considering charging municipalities for their patrol time.
- The CVB scale is based off neighboring departments' current information.

Additional Comments:

- Consideration of a lower starting salary of \$51,044
- Concern that the Borough will look bad if the salary is lower than advertised
- Acknowledged and thanked the Chief and Corporal Weikert for their covering of shifts
- Questioned the "Conditional Offer" process; whereby Chief Hileman explained

Mr. Carr then requested that President Mathews call the question to vote. Mr. Mathews restated the motion made by Mr. Lillard and seconded by Mrs. Kraft that Council appoint Erik C. Peiffer as a full-time, probationary officer of the Borough of Carroll Valley at \$51,345 yearly conditioned on his successful completion of the Act 120 Academy and the required physical, psychological and eye exams and subject to the standard one (1) year probationary period. Motion passed via a roll call vote of six (6) yes votes and one (1) no vote cast by Mr. Schubring.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

No one addressed Council at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 P.M. via a motion by B. Carr and seconded by M. Wight that passed unanimously via roll call vote.

ATTENDANCE REGISTER

The Attendance Register is attached, numbered Page 4 and made a part of the Official Minutes.

Gayle Marthers, Borough Secretary