

# POLICE COMMISSION MINUTES MEETING #8

APRIL 17<sup>TH</sup>, 2024 @ 6:00 PM

PONDEROSA ROOM – CITY HALL

## **CALL TO ORDER:**

Seven Boyer, Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Members performed the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present were:

- Steven Boyer-Chair (term ends 04/30/2025)
- Brad Nelson-Vice Chair (term ends 04/30/2024)
- Karen Dinkins-Secretary (term ends 04/30/2026)
- Chief Cody Ercanbrack

The minutes from the March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, meeting was read. Steven Boyer requested a correction to the minutes as follows. Steven made a motion to accept the forms provided by Chief Ercanbrack. The actual correction was: *Steven Boyer made a motion that the commission accept the documents presented by Chief Cody Ercanbrack. There was no second, so the motion died.*

Steven Boyer made a motion to accept the minutes of the Regular meeting dated March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, with the amendment. Second by Brad Nelson. **Motion passed.**

## **Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items:**

Kathleen Sheffield, 512 California Ave, came to invite all to the candlelight vigil, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 7:00 pm in front of the courthouse. Kathleen stated there are approximately 6.6 million crimes and less than two million are reported. She stated it is called a criminal justice system not a victim's system. This year will be the second year for the vigil. She secured a grant for this. She did not have any stats for us as she has been busy with the State vs. Miller (State Trooper that was run over last year in Eureka) trial.

Chief Ercanbrack provided a blank personal statement that is completed by each applicant for the police force.

## **Standing Business:**

1. Police Commission emails received – no emails received during the last month. Karen Dinkins mentioned that at the time the agenda was distributed there was no emails. Steven Boyer stated one email was received yesterday from Lacey Thompson. He asked if the commission and Chief Ercanbrack had read this email. Everyone confirmed they had read it including Chief Ercanbrack. Steven stated he was going to discuss the email with the mayor and/or city attorney before releasing it.

### **Public comment:**

No public comment

2. Police Officer Candidate review – no new candidates to review at the present time. Chief Ercanbrack state he has two candidates that are in the process of applying for the one open position. They are Vincent Smart and Tim Steffenson.

### **Public comment:**

No public comment

### **Unfinished Business:**

1. Qualifications Checklist for:

- a. Caleb Thomas – Sworn in July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023
- b. Don Luthey – Sworn in September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023
- c. Seth Power – Sworn in December 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2023 in private – December 18<sup>th</sup>

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- Chief Ercanbrack stated he had the signed mental health evaluations on the new form. After he received them, he received a call from Sweet Grass Community Health with concerns that they had done something wrong the first time. Chief Ercanbrack explained this was just a form change.
- Chief Ercanbrack noted that he had received a call from the Community Health Center regarding the new medical evaluation forms in which they said they were uncomfortable signing the new form.
- Karen Dinkins asked if it was because they are the primary care providers (PCP) for the candidates?
- Chief Ercanbrack said the candidates were new to town and did not have a PCP. He is collaborating with them to sign these forms. Brad Nelson asked if a letter from the commission explaining the purpose of the new form would help to get them signed. Chief Ercanbrack said it probably would. It was agreed that Brad Nelson would write a letter and circulate it to the commission before sending it to Chief Ercanbrack.
- This issue will be held until the next meeting in hopes the forms will be signed. Chief Ercanbrack stated if the candidates are motivated, they will schedule a physical quickly.
- Karen Dinkins asked why the City of Libby does not use a standard provider/practice to perform all physicals? Karen Dinkins also commented that she made contact with Lt Rich LaBard from the Great Falls Police Department. Lt LaBard works with the Great Falls Police Commission. Lt LaBard emailed a summary document that is the cover sheet to the packet he provides to their police commission. This packet also includes a copy of the applicant's birth certificate, driver's license and any certifications they may have. This is provided to the commission 30-60 minutes before the meeting. There is also an interview where the police commissioners tend to ask Integrity type questions.
- Karen Dinkins also spoke with Chief Jordan Venezio of the Kalispell Police Department. He also puts together a packet and interview for the commission with the applicant. His packet includes references he talked with, a summary employment history and MPAT scores. Chief Venezio said the commission is only to confirm the applicant meets the qualifications.

#### **Public comment:**

Caroline Buckner, 103 E Poplar, is concerned why the process of the commission receiving the minimum qualifications is taking months. She commented that the law was broken when the MCA was not followed, and the commission should have gone above the mayor. The public should know about the and it should have been sent to the state that the commission had not signed off.

### **New Business:**

1. DC Orr request for the grievance filed by Sgt. Buckner – Steven Boyer discussed this with the mayor and she said the request has to go through LeAnn and she will get it to the appropriate individuals. Steven Boyer said the grievance being provided to the commission was “illegal” and that Sam told Sgt. Buckner to give it directly to the mayor. Steven stated the commission is now tainted because they have read the grievance and complaint.

#### **Public Comment:**

Kathleen Sheffield, 512 California Ave, asked the question if there was an employee handbook and what is the process.

Caroline Buckner, 103 E Poplar, asked if the commission cannot accept a grievance than what can be done. The mayor will not discipline her handpicked chief. Ron Buckner, 103 E Poplar, per the Police Department policy manual there are time limits that need to be met. He also added that the commission does not supervise the chief.

1. POST Certification per MCA 7-32-303
  - a. Cody Ercanbrack – Sworn in May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023
  - b. Caleb Thomas – Sworn in July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023
  - c. Don Luthey – Sworn in September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023
  - d. Seth Power – Sworn in December 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2023 in private – December 18<sup>th</sup>  
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Chief Ercanbrack stated all that have been to POST are certified now. Seth Power is currently at POST Training.

**Public Comment:**

No Public Comment

**General Comments by the Commission:**

Brad Nelson thanked everyone for coming.

Steven Boyer will check with the mayor to see if it is okay to release the email.

Karen Dinkins – no comment.

**Public Comment:**

No public comment.

The next Police Commission meeting is scheduled for May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 7:00 pm.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn by Karen Dinkins. Second by Brad Nelson. **Motion passed.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm.

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Steve Boyer, Police Commission Chair

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Brad Nelson, Police Commission Vice Chair

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Karen Dinkins, Police Commission Secretary