

REGULAR MEETING OF WESTFIELD POLICE COMMISSION

WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

March 14, 2022

The Westfield Police Commission meeting was called to order at 59 Court Street, Westfield, MA, at 5:30 pm.

Roll Call: Richard Sypek – Present
Felix Otero – Present
James Irwin – Present

Commissioner Sypek notified everyone present that tonight's meeting is being recorded by the Chief's Secretary and Peter Currier.

Commissioner Sypek introduced and welcomed James Irwin as the newest commissioner to the Westfield Police Commission.

Approval and Release of Minutes: Commissioner Otero made a motion to approve and release the minutes dated January 10, 2022 and January 19, 2022. Commissioner Irwin seconded that motion.

- Richard Sypek – Yes
- Felix Otero – Yes
- James Irwin - Yes

Open Participation: None

Old Business: None

New Business:

A.) Commission to Elect: New Police Commission Chairman Due to the Retirement of Commission Chairman Leonard Osowski: Commissioner Otero made a motion to appoint Commissioner Sypek as the Chairman for the Westfield Police Commission. Commissioner Irwin seconded that motion.

- Richard Sypek – Abstain
- Felix Otero – Yes
- James Irwin – Yes

B.) Commissioners to Elect: A Second Commissioner to Become and Authorized Signatory. Commissioner Otero is Currently 1 of 2: Commissioner Sypek made a motion to appoint himself as a second signatory for the Westfield Police Department. Commissioner Otero seconded that motion.

- Richard Sypek – Yes
- Felix Otero – Yes
- James Irwin – Yes

C.) Interview and Appoint: Two Full-Time Patrolmen:

Joseph Gandolfi: Commissioner Sypek said that since the commission has not interviewed Mr. Gandolfi in the past, they will be interviewing him this evening. Commissioner Otero asked Mr. Gandolfi to tell the commission about his background after high school graduation, including any hobbies or interests he may have. Mr. Gandolfi

said he graduated from Milford High School. From there, he attended and received a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from Westfield State University. He enjoys playing rugby, rock climbing and riding dirt bikes. He said after he graduated college, he began working at Baystate Health. He worked for private security companies until Baystate took over their own security at which time he then began working directly for Baystate. He did this for approximately 5 years. From there he moved on to work as a campus police officer for Springfield College. He worked there for about 3 years. About a year ago, he began working for the Chicopee Police Department. Commissioner Irwin asked Mr. Gandolfi where he sees himself within the department in the next 5 years. Mr. Gandolfi said he tries to keep his nose clean and just do his job. He said if Westfield had a motorcycle unit, he would like to do that. He is also certified in bicycles. He said he would like to become an SRT at some point as well. Commissioner Sypek said that the Westfield Police Department prides itself on the reputation it has earned. He asked Mr. Gandolfi what it is about himself personally that would help maintain this reputation. Mr. Gandolfi said that there is always case laws changing and he tries to stay up to date on it to try to do the most effective job he can. Commissioner Sypek noted that Mr. Gandolfi previously had worked with the Westfield Police Department as an Auxiliary Officer. Mr. Gandolfi said he was unable to hold 2 badges when he joined the Chicopee Police Department as a full time officer, which is why he resigned as Auxiliary Officer in Westfield.

Scott Gregory: Commissioner Sypek said that the commission interviewed Mr. Gregory at the last meeting. He said that rather than re-interviewing Mr. Gregory he would like to, with Mr. Gregory's permission, read that interview out loud from the minutes of the last meeting. Mr. Gregory agreed. The previous interview was read as follows: "Commissioner Otero asked Scott to tell the commission about his background, starting after his high school graduation. Scott said he graduated in 2006. He grew up in Blandford, but went to school in Lee, MA. He dad was a state trooper stationed in Lee. He went to the University of Dartmouth for engineering. After his second semester, he decided he didn't want to sit behind a desk for the rest of his life and he switched his major and his school and graduated with an Associate's Degree in Criminal Justice. He was given the opportunity to attend the full time police academy before he received his Bachelor's Degree. He was self-sponsored. He graduated 4th in his class of 50. In February of 2011, he started working for the Northampton Police Department. He has learned a lot as a patrolman. He is a field training officer. He holds several instructor certifications. He is a lead instructor for defensive tactics. He is a course away from being a firearms instructor. He is also the department's liaison for the river task force for the marine unit. He is also in charge of the department's armory including the administrative and maintenance of all firearms. In the past 3 or 4 years, he decided he wanted to pursue his education so he went back to school part time to WSU. He just graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice and a Minor in Policy and Ethics. Commissioner Otero asked Scott why he wants to leave the Northampton Police Department. Scott said he had to really think about what he wanted to do. He said he plans on starting a family soon as he is recently married. He moved to Westfield specifically because he wanted to be on the Westfield Police Department and because this is where he wanted to start his family. Northampton was the first department to pick him up. He wants to have a stable career where he can be valued as a patrolman and a team member. He wants to build his life here, plant roots here and eventually retire from this department." Commissioner Otero asked Mr. Gregory if there was anything he wanted to add to his original interview. Mr. Gregory said he just wanted to thank the commission again for having him here tonight. Commissioner Irwin asked Mr. Gregory where he sees himself within the department in the next 5 years. Mr. Gregory said possibly in a leadership role, possibly training and as a valuable member. Commissioner Sypek asked Mr. Gregory if anything has changed since his last interview that the commission would need to know about. Mr. Gregory said that there is nothing else to add.

Ryan Keating: Commissioner Sypek said that the commission interviewed Mr. Keating at the last meeting. He said that rather than re-interviewing Mr. Keating he would like to, with Mr. Keating's permission, read that interview out loud from the minutes of the last meeting. Mr. Keating agreed. The previous interview was read as follows: "Commissioner Otero asked Ryan to tell the commissioner about his background, starting after his high school graduation. Ryan said he graduated in 2013. He then went to UConn. He started studying political

science. He enjoyed it. He then began working in security at 6 flags. He has worked there for approximately 6 years. He started at the ground level and is now a senior supervisor. He is responsible for overseeing the shifts of 50-70 officers. He works hand in hand with the Agawam Police Department. He is heavily involved with the recruiting and training process. Commissioner Sypek said that the police department prides itself on having a good reputation within the community. He asked Ryan what it is about himself that would help to maintain that reputation. Ryan said he is very interested in community policing. He thinks community policing is a good way to build the trust within the community. He said he also has experience through his current employer of recruiting younger individuals. He is interested in working with youths and would love to work with the cadet program.” Commissioner Otero asked Mr. Keating if there was anything he wanted to add to his original interview. Mr. Keating said there is not. Commissioner Irwin asked Mr. Keating where he sees himself within the department in the next 5 years. Mr. Keating said he hopes to still be in the department, to become a better police officer and hopefully heavily involved in the community police division. Commission Sypek asked Mr. Keating if anything has changed since his last interview that the commission would need to know about. Mr. Keating said there is nothing else to add.

Chief Valliere said that all 3 candidates are amazing. He said the department is at a crossroad with the police reform act that is going into effect. He said all of the candidates interviewed very good. He said the department currently needs to get officers on the streets right away. His recommendation is to hire Mr. Gandolfi and Mr. Gregory this evening. However, he is also very impressed with Mr. Keating.

Captain Dickinson said that he agrees with what the Chief said. There are no academies currently available so hiring Mr. Gandolfi and Mr. Gregory this evening would be the best fit for the department.

Captain Pitoniak said he agrees. Both Mr. Gandolfi and Mr. Gregory would be ready to work right away without needing to attend an academy since they are both already full-time officers.

Commissioner Sypek said that he agrees. He said the commission had to bypass both Mr. Gandolfi and Mr. Gregory during the January meeting because they had to get candidates into the academy. He said if it wasn't for that, the commission would have hired them at that time. He said based off of that he would like to make a motion to hire both Mr. Gandolfi and Mr. Gregory.

Commissioner Sypek made a motion to appoint Joseph Gandolfi as a full time police officer for the Westfield Police Department effective May 9, 2022. Commissioner Otero seconded that motion.

- Richard Sypek – Yes
- Felix Otero – Yes
- James Irwin – Yes

Commissioner Sypek made a motion to appoint Scott Gregory as a full time police officer for the Westfield Police Department effective April 4, 2022. Commissioner Otero seconded that motion.

- Richard Sypek – Yes
- Felix Otero – Yes
- James Irwin – Yes

D.) Enter into Executive Session: At 5:51 p.m. Commissioner Sypek made a motion to enter into Executive Session. Commissioner Otero seconded that motion.

- Richard Sypek – Yes
- Felix Otero – Yes
- James Irwin – Yes

At 6:10 p.m. Commissioner Sypek made a motion to enter back into regular session. Commissioner Irwin seconded that motion.

- Richard Sypek – Yes
- Felix Otero – Yes
- James Irwin – Yes

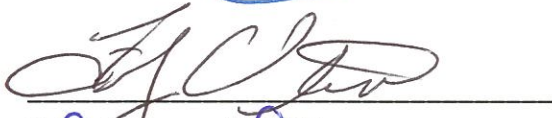
E.) Announcement of Next Meeting: Monday April 11, 2022 - Commissioner Otero said that he may not be available on that date. He said he is available the week before or after. Commissioner Sypek said that April 18, 2022, which is the week after is a holiday. He said the Commission can plan on a meeting for April 19, 2022 if there are enough items that need to be discussed.

F.) Motion to Adjourn: At 6:14 p.m. Commissioner Sypek made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Otero seconded that motion.

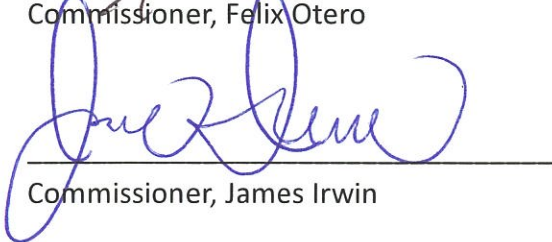
- Richard Sypek – Yes
- Felix Otero – Yes
- James Irwin – Yes



Chairman, Richard Sypek



Commissioner, Felix Otero



Commissioner, James Irwin

APPROVED FOR RELEASE ON

7/11/22