

**VILLAGE OF COMMERCIAL POINT
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
February 23, 2013**

Mayor Hammond called the meeting to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Hammond then asked for a Moment of Silence to honor our Men and Women; Past and Present; for their Military Service to our Country. Fiscal Officer Hastings took roll call with the following members present: Mr. Shelton, Ms. Evans, Mr. Wissinger, Mr. Thompson and Ms. Gooden-Kinney. Mayor Hammond and Chief Jordan were also in attendance. Mr. Cruz, Solicitor Hess and Engineer Grosse were absent.

Mr. Shelton made a motion, seconded by Ms. Gooden-Kinney to suspend the procedural rules. All members were in favor. The motion passed.

Mayor Hammond reviewed the budget process. He informed Council this was a budget meeting and only the budget would be discussed. Mr. Shelton asked Mr. Thompson to recap on his proposal he made to the Police Department budget. Mr. Thompson said he was asking for full time, 40 hours a week, Police Chief and Police Sergeant positions. He would also like to see a part time police officer at 24 hours a week. He said the Village is getting 60 hours of coverage right now. With his proposal, 104 hours a week would be covered. He said safety for our children in the schools is one of the main reasons he is asking for this additional coverage. Mr. Thompson presented Council with a packet of information he had gathered for the meeting. In this packet, a letter from Jeff Sheets, Superintendent of Teays Valley Local School District, a letter from Robin Halley, Principal of Scioto Elementary, and a letter from Jim and Heidi Peters, owners of Commercial Point Market, all supporting additional police coverage. A petition signed by several residents, tax payers and business owners saying they would like to see more coverage from our Police Department was also included.

Mr. Shelton asked Mr. Thompson what the qualifications were, to be an officer. Mr. Thompson asked Chief Jordan to answer the question. Chief Jordan said the officers have to complete the Ohio Peace Officer Academy training as well as have completed 600+ hours of service. The Attorney General's office then has to sign off on the time served. Chief Jordan informed Council of a few of his certifications: OPATA Certification, Peace Officer Academy, some college classwork, certified in fire service, certified instructor. Sergeant Murphy's certifications include: Peace Officer Academy, instructor for laser use, OPATA Certification, 25 years of experience as a Police Officer as well as other certifications. Other qualities Chief Jordan feels play an important part in being officers for Commercial Point are: able to work with the public and other officers, merit and years of experience in the field. Mr. Shelton asked if continued education is a requirement. Chief Jordan said yes. Twelve to fifteen hours a year are spent on recertification. Mr. Shelton asked how a Police Officer moves up to Sergeant. Chief Jordan said it is done by Village or State Code and off of the recommendation of the Chief. Mr. Shelton said the City of Columbus has a 10 step process they have to go through to be considered for the Chief's position. Education and physical standards are just a few of the steps. He asked if Commercial Point has these requirements. Chief Jordan said no, Commercial Point does not have these standards and neither does the City of Columbus. Chief Jordan said once you pass your initial testing, that is all you have to complete.

Mr. Wissinger's said his main focus is being able to reduce the income tax. He is not unopposed to the increase in police protection.

Mr. Thompson feels the Chief's position is grossly underpaid. He said that the safety of the Village was one of the platforms that Mr. Shelton, Mr. Wissinger and Mayor Hammond ran on during the campaign.

Ms. Gooden-Kinney feels more police coverage is necessary. She just recently found out about the incident on Grove Run Road and was very upset that no one from the Police Department, Council or the Mayor informed her. Mr. Shelton said he had just found out at the last meeting.

Mr. Shelton reviewed the wage increases for the Police Department, by percent from 2011 – 2013. He feels in today's economy, a 3-5% increase is "normal" for an above average employee. Ms. Gooden-Kinney said when the Police Committee was established a few years back, they felt they needed to start somewhere with the anticipation of increasing the department wages as necessary. Ms. Gooden-Kinney asked the rest of Council if they had an issue with the Police Staff we have now. Mr. Wissinger said he had no problem with the officers we have now. The problem is the cost. Looking at the economy, the proposed amounts are too expensive. Mr. Wissinger said if our present officers were not happy working here, they would leave. Mr. Wissinger asked Council what they thought about reducing the Chief's wages to \$ 33,000, Sergeant's wages to \$ 30,000 and the part time officer at \$ 13,000. Chief

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Jordan said in either 2000 or 2001, the Village had a full time Police Chief making \$ 37,000 per year. Mr. Thompson compared other village employee's salary and feels the Police Department is much underpaid.

Mayor Hammond said the resident's safety is needed and the increased hours are agreed upon. The wages are what need to be discussed. Mr. Shelton asked Mr. Thompson why he didn't propose full coverage of 168 hours a week. Mr. Thompson said that is his ultimate goal for the Police Department. Mr. Thompson had requested the run logs from the Sheriff's office to have before today's meeting, however he didn't have them. He said the response time from a Sheriff Deputy is way too long. Mr. Wissinger asked Chief Jordan how the auxiliary officers' time is rendered. Chief Jordan said they are to work 16 hours a month to be able to keep their commission.

Ms. Gooden-Kinney said if Council chooses to go with Mr. Wissinger's proposal of \$ 33, 000 for Chief and \$ 30,000 for Sergeant, she would like to see a health benefit package for them. Mayor Hammond said the Village does not offer health insurance.

Mayor Hammond said he had concerns with hiring a part-time police officer at \$ 10.00 per hour. He said this person would be armed with a taser and a gun and he wants to make sure this person is qualified. Chief Jordan explained that he would like to see the possibility of using 3 officers at 8 hours a week to cover the 24 hours. He said the officers are very qualified. Mr. Shelton asked what the coverage hours would be. Chief Jordan said he would like to see Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. as one shift, 7:00 p.m. – 3:00 a.m. as another shift and then 12 hours each on Saturday and Sunday. Mr. Shelton agrees with the amount of coverage that is being proposed. He doesn't agree with a 21% increase for the Chief position and a 14% increase for the Sergeant position.

Mr. Wissinger proposed the following for Council's review. 40 hours a week for Chief at a salary of \$ 37,000 and 40 hours a week for Sergeant at a salary of \$ 30,000. Mr. Thompson would like to propose 40 hours a week for Chief at a salary of \$ 36,000 and 40 hours a week for Sergeant at a salary of \$ 31,000. A majority of Council agreed with moving the Chief and Sergeant positions to full time with a salaried wage.

Mayor Hammond asked for a 5 minute recess. Council agreed and a 5 minute recesses was taken.

Council rejoined the Council table and finished working on the budget. Mayor Hammond reviewed the rest of the budget as presented. Mr. Wissinger suggested reducing the money put aside for sidewalks to \$ 50,000. Ms. Gooden-Kinney suggested reducing it to \$ 80,000. The consensus of Council was to reduce it to \$ 75,000 and move forward with the budget. Mayor Hammond suggested increasing the amount in the water fund to cover the drilling of a new well. This is still in the works and has not been finalized; however Mayor Hammond feels Council needs to increase this amount to \$ 225,000. No other changes were made to the budget. This budget will be voted on at the Regular Council Meeting on March 4, 2013.

One suggestion Ms. Gooden-Kinney would like to see is money set aside for customers with medical issues who are not able to pay their monthly water/sewer bill. This is something that can be discussed at a later date.

Mr. Thompson made a motion, seconded by Ms. Gooden-Kinney to adjourn the meeting. All members were in favor. The meeting adjourned.

Joe Hammond, Mayor

Wendy L. Hastings, Fiscal Officer