



# CITY OF HIGHLAND PARK

## BOARD OF POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSIONERS

---

Return to Excellence

Hubbert Yopp  
Mayor

### BOARD OF POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSIONERS

#### Minutes of July 20, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 6:08 pm by Chairman Johnson.

#### Roll Call:

**Present:** Commissioner Michael Curis, Commissioner Brenda Hicks, Commissioner RJ Watkins, Commissioner/Secretary Erica George, Chief Thomas, Internal Affairs Investigator Monroe

#### Approval of Minutes

The minutes of May 18, 2022 were approved.

#### Police Department

Chief Thomas: We are pushing to hire additional officers. The crime is down overall for the year. I can email you an update. Overall, things are going well.

Chairman: How are we coming with staff?

Chief Thomas: We have hired five new officers and increased pay.

Chairman: What is the starting pay?

Chief Thomas: The top pay is now \$23.00 an hour.

Commissioner Watkins: What are the age ranges?

Chief Thomas: The age range is 22-47 years old.

Chairman: We had an issue with a citizen last week. Commissioner Curis was at his business and an officer was called. The officer stated there was nothing they could do. The commissioner stated he was a commissioner and the veteran police officer stated we do not have commissioners. I find this disturbing.

Chief Thomas: I was told the Commissioner was on the phone and not in the building. The officer has been reprimanded and told there is a commission body.

Commissioner Curis: I do not want to point fingers but the bigger problem for me is making the commission relevant. We are here for the citizens and the officers.

Commissioner Watkins: I made a statement about taking our pictures to hang in city hall. I am not sure if I want to do the pictures but that may help. I am open to do a radio show introducing the commission.

Chairman: We did vote on this and the Mayor has approved our pictures.

Commissioner George: I think we need to be more intentional and be apart of the officers agenda.

Chairman Johnson: Chief, do you have roll call?

Chief Johnson: Yes, we have roll call everyday from 7am – 7pm.

Chairman: Commissioners please give the chief a call and be apart of the roll call.

Commissioner Watkins: Does the officer have a chance to talk to Commissioner Curis?

Chairman: It has been resolved.

### **Internal Affairs**

Monroe: We received an arbitration ruling and it went in our favor. We have had only five additional matters since our last meeting which we call route slips. The first one was a citizen complaint of an officer handling a citizen inappropriately. This matter was handled by the Chief and coaching was done.

Chairman: Please be sure we are getting all citizen complaints and remind Director Lackey.

Monroe: The paper copies are sent to various people. The electronic copies I thought were being routed directly to the commission.

Chairman: No, we have not received any complaints.

Monroe: I will have Lackey send them to you. The next item is a citizen complaint regarding a supervisor conducting an investigation. The citizen believes the supervisor handled him in retaliatory actions. This matter went to court and ruled in our favor. The next complaint deals with an off-duty officer. A night club had an issue with the officer's conduct. We conducted the investigation. The issue was not substantiated. The officer is new but the Chief did do verbal counseling addressing entitlement being an officer. The issue was the officer wanted to bring his firearm in the club. At that point, the officer allegedly became combative.

Chairman: What has the policy been on this matter? Our officers are not required to carry 24 hours a day like DPD, correct?

Monroe: Correct. Officers can not carry during consuming alcohol.

Chairman: Are the officers required to get CPL license?

Chief: As a certified officer, you are allowed to carry a gun 24 hours a day. IF something happens it would fall back on the department so the officers do not have to have a CPL. It is not a requirement to carry 24 hours a day. I do not believe Detroit requires their officers to carry 24 hours a day.

Monroe: Now, officers have department issued weapons. This officer in the complaint was carrying a personal weapon.

Commissioner Watkins: What is the difference between carrying an issued fire arm versus their own fire arm.

Chief: The officers may have a personal firearm they are more comfortable with to handle or conceal. The issue of the firearms helps with not paying out the stipends for officers using their own weapon. The stipends were paid every year to the officers for using their own weapons.

Monroe: The next complaint was a failure to supervise. This is an ongoing issue where the supervisor is leaving the officer by themselves. This supervisor has sometimes not left the station to handle his duties as a supervisor. This is still an ongoing matter.

Commissioner Watkins: Is it mandatory for the supervisor to come provide support to an officer? What happens if a supervisor does not come?

Monroe: Yes and it could be several reasons why a supervisor is requested.

Chief: If it is determined that a supervisor is not doing their job then they probably will not be a supervisor any longer. IF I move to quickly then I can violate this supervisor's rights.

Commissioner Hicks: This has been ongoing issue for police officers?

Monroe: We are interviewing activity logs, officers, etc.

Commissioner Hicks: When do you expect this to be wrapped up?

Monroe: We should be able to provide a report by next meeting.

Chief: The alleged violator is currently fulfilling their duties but the matter has been addressed however I still must wait for the complete investigation.

Monroe: The last complaint is regarding an officer turning off his dash cam while on patrol.

Commissioner Watkins: Was he on a run when he turned it off?

Monroe: This complaint was given to us today so we do not have any further information. The camera must be in standby mode at all times.

Commissioner Watkins: Do you know if the lady who had the complaint about speeding or racing down her neighborhood street was resolved?

Monroe: For the last couple of weeks there have been a traffic enforcement in that area.

Chief: The concerns for some of the complaints I just want to let you know many of these matters are initiated by my department. We do audits daily and find out some of these things happen.

### **Public Comments:**

Ms. Thomas: The speeding on our street and wanted to find out if the statistics are shared with the community? It seems like there is always an accident near my home. Do we have any updates about the speed humps?

Chairman: They just gave an update and I can let Chief give more information.

Chief: We have made a few arrest and issued tickets. The speed bumps would have to be done from the office of Director Faizon.

Ms. Thomas: The speeders coming through our neighborhood are coming from Oakland Plaza. It seems to be employees. Have we talked to the business?

Chief: I know there has been six accidents reported. But, we are going to talk to appropriate people.

Commissioner Watkins: IS there anything else we can do as a Commission to move this along?

Chief: I will put a call into the Mayor. Speedbumps are a process. The city has to do surveys. I think the police are putting more officers and writing more tickets.

Ms. Thomas: I hope through the tickets it will change the speeding. I know they started the process of speed bumps but it has not gone anywhere at this time

### **Closing Remarks:**

Commissioner Curis: I would like to be present at those community meetings.

Chief: When I go to the community meetings, I can talk to the person who is running the meeting and give them your information.

Chairman: Can you or Lackey email us when you all are going to a meeting?

Chief: Yes. The meeting tomorrow is at the firehouse at 5:30pm.

Commissioner Hicks: What block club is this?

Chief: This is for McClean.

Commissioner Watkins: Chief, if you ever need to come on the radio show you are welcome.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 6:48 pm

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, July 19, 2022, 6:00 pm, Zoom  
cc: City Clerk