**CIVIIL SERVICE MEETING MINUTES**

**DATE:** April 12, 2023

**PRESENT:** Bill Cavinder, Kevin Ryan, Candi Faupell, Robert Snaza, Wes Rethwill, Dusty Breen, Kevin Engelbertson, Rick Van Wyck, Alan Stull, Jeff Godbey, Gabriel Frase, Kevin Dickey, Sam Schouten, Skylar Eastman, Doug Lowrey, Andrew Scrivner, Isaac Ingle, Jared Kasinger, Sherri Guenther (Notetaker in Secretary Linda Bailey’s absence)

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 11:30 a.m. by Commissioner Bill Cavinder. Minutes of the March 8, 2023, meeting were approved as written.

**Secretarial Report:**

Personal Service Agreement Extension **–** It was requested by Undersheriff Rethwill to table the Personal Service Agreement Extension between Zoe Vandegrift and the Lewis County Civil Service Commission until after further discussions on the suggested changes to the Support Technician testing process. Granted by Commission.

**Administrative Report:** Undersheriff Wes Rethwill

***Special Services Bureau*** – The Services Bureau has one vacancy. Of the six who recently applied for the Support Technician 1 position, three made it through the testing process, and only one applicant was interviewed. Working on ideas to better the process and create a larger eligible candidate pool.

Chief Engelbertson continues to work on implementing the new Permitium System that will allow citizens to be able to apply and make appointments for fingerprinting online to obtain their concealed pistol license; along with implementing a Point-N-Pay System for online payment of services.

Plans for the east end substation are still being worked on. The Sheriff’s Office hopes to staff the substation two to three days a week once opened late summer/early fall.

***Corrections Bureau*** – Currently six vacancies in Corrections. Two employees are in the academy right now and will graduate in late May. One Corrections Deputy was injured during DT training and will be on temporary modified duty until cleared by a doctor. Couple Corrections Deputy applicants are in the background process. Anticipate two upcoming retirements this summer.

The kiosk project in the jail was completed early and they were able to lift booking restrictions. Next project will be the HVAC system and it will be an all summer long job. At the BOCC meeting yesterday, they created a new funding source to fund the jail roof repair, which is also in critical need.

There was a “fire” at the jail in one of the big commercial dryers. Employees were fully prepared for this type scenario, it is a normal practiced drill. All went through without any issues.

***Field Operations Bureau*** – There are three deputy vacancies right now. An applicant was given a conditional offer and will start on June 1st, with an academy start date of June 13th. A deputy will graduate the academy April 24th and start his 12-week FTO upon his return.

One Sergeant continues to be out on FMLA. Another Sergeant who was out on temporary modified duty is back to full-duty. One deputy will possibly be leaving for employment with the Chehalis Police Department.

***Legislative Update*** – The Sheriff’s Office remains engaged in WASPC for the legislative session, receiving weekly briefs on bills that have impact to our profession and are winding their way through the legislative process. The session only has a few weeks to go before they are done. Don’t anticipate major changes, good or bad, for our profession.

**Old Business:**

***Operations Sergeants’ Assessment Center*** – The eligibility list for Operations Sergeant was reviewed by the Commission and signed by Commissioner Cavinder in Linda Bailey’s absence. Chief Breen talked about the recent assessment center and thanked the Commissioners for stopping by and sitting through the exercises and providing their feedback. Overall, there were four scenarios, each weighted 25% for the overall score. Raters and actors from various agencies came to assist.

Commissioner Cavinder believes the exercises did what we suggested it to do and it was a good testing process. Weaknesses will surface and he thinks they did a great job on this. Congratulations to the employees who went through the assessment.

Commissioner Faupell said it was a great assessment. Being an outsider, she thought personally that the assessment was tough. Well setup, flowed smooth, and it made sense to her. Liked having four scenarios instead of three.

Sheriff Snaza thanked the commissioners for their participation and his staff for putting the assessment center together. Advised it is challenging to be a supervisor at the LCSO and this gave the candidates an eye-opening experience at what they will get exposed to as a sergeant, along with what they are expected to do. He hopes the candidates who didn’t make the list will be challenged to grow, thrive, and prepare for the next testing opportunity.

Undersheriff Rethwill advised the assessors were all impressed with our folks who put themselves out there through the testing process. The partnerships with our regional partners are very important and their feedback is meaningful for us moving forward.

Chief Breen said the raters did a good job of providing feedback on their ratings. During the debrief, the raters went through each candidate and gave details. Chief Breen is available to go over these details with each candidate, if they would like.

***Changing from National Testing Network (NTN) to Public Safety Testing (PST) –*** Request to contract with Public Safety Testing for entry-level deputy and corrections deputy applicants. Since the last meeting, LCSO command staff had the opportunity to meet with PST representatives. They answered questions and solidified our request to contract for their services. Undersheriff Rethwill advised he truly believes making the switch to PST is the right move to acquire a greater applicant pool, and would like to enter into that contractual agreement with them. The current NTN contract is up for renewal on April 14th. A majority of Washington state law enforcement agencies already use PST. The contract would be year to year with a 3% increase every year built into the contract, which is not out of the ordinary.

Commissioner Ryan advised he feels comfortable with the information provided about PST, is not worried about the cost increase, and is confident we will get the best candidates possible by contracting with PST. Commissioner Ryan made a motion to contract with Public Safety Testing, seconded by Commissioner Faupell, and motion carried.

Background Investigator Kevin Dickey pulled the last lists from NTN and will weed through the remaining eligible applicants. It was noted that several on the NTN list have already tested with PST.

***Change in Lateral Deputy & Corrections Deputy Application Process –*** LCSO would like to move away from having lateral deputy/corrections deputy applicants having to test through the contracting company as we feel this is discouraging lateral applicants from applying. Would like to create a process the Commission is comfortable with. LCSO proposes lateral applicants complete and submit an application directly to our background investigator. The applicant would then be scheduled for a panel interview as openings exist, which the Civil Service Commission may elect to have one Commissioner participate in the interview process. Applicants who successfully pass the panel interview with a score of 70% or greater would be ranked and placed onto a lateral eligibility list. The drawback of having a Commissioner on the panel is the person would have to recuse himself/herself from an appeal process if one were received. Commission Cavinder concurred and noted that laterals have already gone through a testing process and are working in their profession, they shouldn’t have to retest at square one. Undersheriff Rethwill advised we would open that up to the Commissioners, wants them to feel comfortable we are holding to their standards.

Commissioner Ryan made a motion to approve the suggested changes to the Civil Service Rules for the lateral deputy/corrections deputy application process, with the option open for a Commissioner to participate at the interview table, seconded by Commissioner Faupell, and motion carried.

***Change in Testing Process for Support Technician 1 –*** Zoe Vandegrift has done an excellent job putting together the clerical testing for our support technician applicants for many years. At this time, we feel the process is antiquated and, as such, we are losing applicants qualified in the clerical field. We are suggesting the Civil Service Rules be modified to have Support Technician applicants submit a complete application, participate in a panel interview, again with the Commission having the option to participate, and then the applicants who receiving a passing score of 70% or better be ranked and placed on an eligibility list. The Undersheriff advised most new Support Technician 1 employees start at a front counter position and are the “face” of the LCSO. New support technicians participate in a robust 12 week FTO Program, along with having a one-year probation, in which they can be trained in the various clerical/support duties for their position.

Commissioner Faupell made a motion to approve the suggested Civil Service Rule changes to the Support Technician application process, again with the option open for a Commissioner to participate at the interview table, seconded by Commissioner Ryan, motion carried.

A letter from LCSO will be sent to Mrs. Vandegrift thanking her for her service.

Meeting adjourned at 12:12 p.m.

**Future Meeting Date:** The next meeting will be held on May 10, 2023, at 11:30 a.m., in the Sheriff’s Office Conference Room.

Minutes Prepared By:

Sherri Guenther, Administrative Assistant

Lewis County Sheriff’s Office

(Notetaker for Linda Bailey’s absence)