



Township of Grosse Ile


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MEMORANDUM

Township of Grosse Ile
Office of the Township Manager

TO: Township Board

FROM: Dale L. Reaume, M.P.A. 
Township Manager

DATE: July 6, 2021

RE: Police Chief Recommendation for Promotion

Due to the retirement of Police Chief Mark Warnick, Deputy Chief Brent Hardin has been the Interim Police Chief since the beginning of the year. He has proven to be a sound Manager who is a very experienced employee and is highly respected by the overwhelming majority of the entire Township Staff, including the Police Department. His administrative skills and his ability to communicate has been showcased the past several years in his management position. His patience and tolerance of politics has been showcased the past several months. Brent has demonstrated and maintained strong and steady leadership in the position of Interim Police Chief.

Deputy Chief Hardin has over 30 years of service and experience in public safety including Paramedic, Fire Service, and Police Service. He has been with the Grosse Police Department for 25 years. He has served Grosse Ile as a Patrolman, Detective Sergeant, and Deputy Chief. Deputy Chief Hardin is a graduate of Police Staff and Command, Fire Staff and Command, and has earned licenses and certificates for 239 programs since 1998.

Deputy Chief Hardin is honest, hardworking, trustworthy and committed to the residents of the Township of Grosse Ile. I have received nothing but positive feedback from the Management Team and I cannot stress my solid support regarding Deputy Chief Hardin. Due to his strong performance, high level of integrity, organizational skills, attention to detail, strong communications skills, and interpersonal skills I highly recommend Brent Hardin be promoted to the position of Police Chief.



He has performed exceptionally well the past several years in his effort to serve the Community in spite of the recent attempted roadblocks to his success. The remaining portion of this memorandum addresses the latest negative history surrounding the appointment of Police Chief.

Shortly after Chief Warnick's retirement the Police Commission held interviews for the position of Police Chief. The Commission interviewed Deputy Chief Brent Hardin and Lieutenant Ken Pelland resulting in the recommendation that Lieutenant Pelland be promoted to Police Chief. The appointment or promotion of Officers above the rank of Sergeant shall be by the Township Board after recommendation from the Police Commission (Chapter 67-10, D).

Due to an investigation stemming from a resident complaint the Supervisor held off on taking action on the appointment of a permanent replacement for Police Chief not wanting to negatively impact any candidates. However, since that time the Lieutenant has accused the Deputy Chief of harassment, the union has filed a grievance and threatened to file additional grievances against the Deputy Chief, demanded the Deputy Chief's dismissal, and the Police Commission has criticized the Deputy because he called an outside agency under the direction of the Township Manager, the Michigan State Police, to investigate the resident complaint.

The Police Commission reviewed the grievance as if it were a discipline hearing against Deputy Chief Hardin, not a review of the merits of the grievance which I believe should be denied. It is my strong opinion that the Commission, union, and Lieutenant are trying to manipulate the Township Board's decision on the promotion of Police Chief. This is very reminiscent of filling the Police Chief vacancy in 2018 when the Commission was only interested in their political agenda. Administrative staff shared concerns with me that several people were trying to get them to retire because they support Deputy Chief Hardin and the Police Commission was only interested in their political agenda.

I know the Township Board has been aware of the above manipulative attempts and negative efforts to control the Township Board regarding the promotion of Police Chief, but I believe it is important to put this information in writing. As Interim Police Chief, Brent Hardin has navigated the challenging and inappropriate behavior of a Commission that is supposed to support the Administration, but instead does not support staff that they did not previously choose.