

Summary of Township Manager Recommendation Letter dated 7-6-21

The Commission was preparing to update their Chief candidate recommendation information since it was originally submitted back in February, when we received this Recommendation memo from the Township Manager dated 7/6/21. The first page was what we would have expected, but the 2nd page was definitely a surprise, as it contained a number of statements that were accusations against the Commission, and made many inappropriate and unsubstantiated claims. It is hard to see how this could be allowed to be entered into the public record without the opportunity for proper discussion and rebuttal, and many of the claims regard material that really would require discussions in closed session due to its sensitivity. And it is also frustrating as the Commission has, on more than one occasion since February, offered and requested to sit down with the Board to review our recommendation in detail.

Specifically:

- “However, since that time, the Lieutenant has accused the Dep Chief of harassment...”
 - Although there has been much verbal “scuttlebutt”, the Commission has not been made aware of any official complaints by the Lieutenant of harassment by the Dep Chief. Nor has the Dep Chief made the Commission aware of any such claims made against him by the Lieutenant.
- “...the union has filed a grievance and threatened to file additional grievances against the Dep. Chief.”
 - The union has filed grievance 21-139, as is their contractual right, which is being handled per the 3-step process outlined in the GIPOA contract, and is still being negotiated in the 3rd step. Any further discussion would have to take place in closed session.
- “...demanded the Dep Chief’s dismissal”
 - This statement is frequently standard language in many grievances, similar to demands that a grievant “be made whole”.
 - At the start of the hearing on 21-139, the Commission made the following statement, which was acknowledged by Management, and the grievant, his local Union rep, and his state POAM rep. This position was also communicated to the Twp Supervisor soon after the grievance was filed to let him know that no discipline would be part of this grievance hearing, and was reiterated in a review with him on 6/24/21.
 - *This grievance is not regarding discipline, as disciplinary actions are not based upon demands of a grievance, or as a contingent action to remediate or settle a grievance. Management, as a normal matter of administration reviews the facts surrounding departmental activities, including grievances. Any action would follow the guidelines set forth in Chapter 67 of the Township procedure/ordinances.*

- “...the Police Commission has criticized the Dep Chief because he called an outside agency under the direction of the Twp Mgr...”
 - As indicated above, this grievance is still being negotiated in the 3rd step, and nothing has been published at this time. Further, the Twp Mgr was not present at the hearing to be able to make this claim. Any further discussion would have to take place in closed session.

- “The Commission reviewed the grievance as if it were a discipline hearing against the Dep Chief...not a review of the merits of the grievance...”
 - Again, the Twp Mgr was not present to be able to make that statement. And as noted above, at the onset of the hearing it was specifically made clear to all participants that this was NOT a disciplinary hearing.

- “It is my strong opinion that the Commission, union, and Lieutenant are trying to manipulate the Twp Board’s decision on the promotion of Chief.”
 - The Twp Mgr is basically making the accusation that there is a conspiracy between the parties noted based upon nothing other than his opinion. This is concerning on so many levels, and deserves to be heard in closed session before moving forward. These are serious allegations, and call into question the integrity of each of the parties, and should not be allowed to be presented and entered into the public record without discussion and rebuttal in a forum that allows the Twp Mgr to present whatever evidence he has to support his claims, and the parties to respond.

- “This is very reminiscent of filling the Chief vacancy in 2018 when the Commission was only interested in their political agenda.”
 - This is another veiled accusation of conspiracy made against the members of the Commission, which is a serious allegation that must be allowed to be rebutted in closed session before the Board moves forward on this issue, and before this statement is allowed to be entered in the public record. Especially since (3) of the current commissioners were not even serving on the Commission in 2018. They have no political agenda.
 - Further, the statement is not accurate and a distortion of the facts. In 2018, the Commission was not even provided the opportunity to perform its duty to follow the process and make a recommendation to the Twp Board as required in Chapter 67 of the Twp Ordinances. The Board (seated at that time) went around the Commission and Twp Ordinance to make that appointment without input from the Commission.

- “I know the Twp Board has been aware of the manipulative attempts and negative efforts to control the Twp Board regarding the promotion of Chief, but I believe that it is important to put this information in writing.”

- Another accusation and allegation of some kind of conspiracy on the part of the Commission members - through “manipulative attempts and negative efforts” to control the Board. Again, these are serious allegations, and call into question the integrity of each of the parties, and should not be allowed to be presented and entered into the public record without rebuttal in closed session.
- Also, the “I know that the Twp Board has been aware...” statement is concerning, as the Commission chairman and vice-chairman have met as recently as 6/24 and 6/28 with the Twp Supervisor in his office to review many aspects of the Commission Recommendation and other GIPD issues, and it is curious that he did not communicate any of these claims to them so that they could have been discussed at that time. Among other issues discussed were the desire to protect the Twp from any civil liability.