

Port of Seattle

Police Civil Service Commission

Commissioner Oris Dunham
Commissioner Debrena Jackson Gandy

January 4, 2022
Police Civil Service Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
Approved April 5, 2022

Call to Order: Commissioner Debrena Jackson Gandy called the January 4, 2022, meeting of the Port of Seattle Police Civil Service Commission to order at 10:03 AM.

Roll call/In Attendance:

Commissioner Debrena Jackson Gandy – Chair
Commissioner Oris Dunham
Ericka Singh, PCSC Secretary, Human Resources
Anne Purcell, PCSC Legal Counsel, Port of Seattle Attorney Services
Brandy Brown, PCSC Administrative Support, Human Resources
Stephanie Brosio, PCSC Administrative Support, Human Resources
Kimberley Johnson, PCSC Administrative Support, Human Resources
Acting Chief Mike Villa, Port of Seattle Police Department
Derek Bender, Sr. Talent Acquisition Representative

1. **Approval of Minutes:** Commissioner Jackson Gandy moved to approve the minutes from the October 5, 2021, meeting. The motion was second by Commissioner Dunham and it was unanimously carried.
2. **Approval of Agenda:** Commissioner Jackson-Gandy moved to approve the agenda. The motion was second by Commissioner Dunham and it was unanimously carried.
3. **Public Comments:** No public comments were offered.
4. **Order of Business**
 - a. **Police Department Assessment Update**

Currently in the Implementation step of the Police Department Assessment:

 - Develop training & policies
 - Timeline and deadlines of implementation
 - Prioritization

The Police Assessment & Implementation Team (PAIT) first met on December 13 and is scheduled to meet every 3 weeks. They will systematically review each

recommendation, understand the impacts to the Police Department, and inform on how and when the Police recommendations move forward. PAIT is comprised of Representatives inside the Port of Seattle, many of those representatives are from the Police Department because they have expertise on the subject matter. The work of PAIT is expected to be turned over to Sr. Leadership in the second quarter of 2022.

At the first meeting of PAIT in December, the Police Department was able to provide written documentation of compliance in 10 of the 52 recommendations that the Police Department had already begun to implement. This will be the formal process the department will follow as the recommendations continue to be implemented.

Overall, the Police Department agrees with the recommendations put forth from the assessment.

b. Department Staffing & Service Levels

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic the Port of Seattle implemented a hiring freeze across the organization, including the Police Department. During that time the department was still experiencing attrition related to retirements and officers leaving for other departments. Those positions were not backfilled.

Due those circumstances, the department is currently 25% below the authorized staffing levels. Going into 2022, the department has 177 authorized positions total. 130 of those positions are commissioned staff. As of today, there are 100 officers within the department, 30 officers short of the 130 authorized commissioned positions. The department is also short 17 non-commissioned staff.

Derek Bender in Human Resources is partnering with the Police Department in the hiring process to fill the positions. Hiring has been difficult recently, which is the shared experience by other law enforcement departments across the United States. However, the department remains positive that they will be able to hire 20+ people within the next year.

To fill some of the patrol gaps, officers have been pulled from specialty assignments to assure the department can meet the needs of the communities that are served.

c. Hiring & Recruitment

With the assistance of Derek Bender in Human Resources the department has been very active with Oral Boards. There are monthly Oral Boards scheduled for lateral candidates.

The contract with Public Safety Testing has been reinstated and Oral Boards for Entry Level Officers began in November 2021 and another round currently being scheduled.

Traffic Support Oral Boards were held on December 3, 2021.

Police Specialists job listing is currently active and closes on January 6.

Internal Entry Hire starts their position on January 31.

There are 19 people that are currently in the backgrounds process.

The department is developing a recruiting/hiring event in the Duwamish Neighborhood in May 2022 and collaborating with Port departments to host a recruiting open house. There is no date set for the open house yet at this time. The recruiting brochure is also being translated into other languages.

The department is currently recruiting for 30 Commissioned Staff (1 Chief, 2 Sergeants, 28 Officers) and 17 non-commissioned staff (4 Police Specialists, 4 Dispatchers, 9 Traffic Support Specialists).

At this time, an external consultant firm that will be running the process to fill the Chief of Police position.

d. Promotions & Assessments

Dairus Aldridge was promoted to Commander. Dairus is someone who models the values of the departments and continues to do so as he moves up through the department.

e. Special Team: Bomb Disposal Unit

In 2021 there were 324 Activities and 52 incidents. An Incident is anytime the tools are used or the unit responds to a bomb threat. One of the primary activities is supporting the Valley SWAT with explosive breaching.

The Bomb Disposal unit is currently staffed with 4 officers and 1 Sergeant. An additional Officer is scheduled to attend the Hazardous Devices School in July 2022.

The department will be purchasing a new Bomb Disposal Robot in 2022.

f. Vacant Commission Seat

Commissioner Merrill resigned in October 2021. The process to fill the vacant seat is currently being led by Ericka Singh, Police Civil Service Secretary/Human Resources Talent Acquisition Manager.

Qualifications of the Police Commissioner are:

- Appointment by Executive Director
- Serve up to 2 terms of 4 years each.
- Washington State Resident

- May not be current employees of the Port of Seattle.

Interested parties have until January 31st to submit their resume to the Police Civil Service Commission email. At this time, there are two individuals who are interested in the vacancy.

As the process moves forward, Ericka will keep the commission informed.

g. Chair & Vice Chair Elections

Commissioner Dunham nominated Commissioner Jackson Gandy to continue in her correct positions as Police Civil Service Commission Chair. The motion was second by Commissioner Jackson Gandy and it was unanimously carried.

Commissioner Jackson Gandy nominated Commissioner Dunham as the Police Civil Service Vice Chair. The motion was second by Commissioner Dunham and it was unanimously carried.

Other Business:

Commissioner Jackson Gandy asked a follow-up on the impacts to the department that some of the new Policing Bills that have been passed.

There were 5 bills that impacted the Port Police Department. Most were effective July 26, 2021; some were effective in January 2022. The biggest impact is how some of the rules around Use of Force took away the authority of officers to Involuntary Commit individuals who are in mental crisis as it relates to the Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA). They could use physical force to restrain and transport those individuals to a hospital. The restrictions from the Use of Force act have impacted officers' ability to determine if an individual has an intent to harm themselves or others. The change now makes it so that the person must make a statement that they intend to harm themselves or others. The officer is unable to act until it is confirmed. This is one of the bills that the legislature is currently having additional conversations about, as it was not intended to remove the ITA ability from officers.

They are continuing to train officers as the policies are adjusted and rolled out to the department.

No other business was presented.

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Jackson Gandy at 11:03 AM