The Meeting of the Board of Selectmen held on Tuesday, January 11, 2022, called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Members present: Derek DeBarge, James Gennette, Antonio Goncalves, Williams Rosenblum and Manuel Silva.

First Order of Business: The Pledge of Allegiance

Visitations

Police Officer interviews open at 5:30 p.m.:

It is anticipated that the Board may convene in executive session during the interviews pursuant to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)7, to comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special saw or Federal grant-in-aid requirements, specifically the requirements of the Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) Law.

Interviews were opening at 5:30 p.m. – Christian Sykes – Selectman DeBarge voted to enter into Executive Session at 5:30 p.m.; second by Antonio Goncalves; roll call vote unanimous

Exit Executive Session at 5:37 p.m. and reenter in regular session at 5:58 p.m.

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5:58 p.m.-6:25 p.m. - Christian Sykes interview

Opening statement from Mr. Sykes

Selectman DeBarge:

Why change to full time – candidate responded well suited for the change

Stressful situations example – candidate responded, don't take personally, stay calm

Question re: application – candidate responded re discipline re "double dipping" in Chicopee;

supervisor – relationship with Ms. Hastings, bad morale; based on forced overtime and conflict

Selectman Genette

Question on responsibilities of police officer – safety of himself and fellow officers, maintain professional image, integrity within community

Mandatory overtime question – answer "it is what it is".

Selectman Goncalves

Partner or not? What would motivate? People who have a positive outlook, no one wants to work with someone who will bring you down; try to be laid back

Supervisor gives direct order that is against policy or against law – reminder to supervisor what is legal vs illegal

Selectman Silva

2 things you did in last year to improve yourself - focusing on fitness, trying to learn home improvement skills, coparenting/calmness,

Selectman Rosenblum

If you were interviewing someone, what traits would you be looking for? – personable, honest, being easy to talk to

Personal or work related, what is your biggest weakness – struggles with balance between work and personal.

Chief Valadas

Informed candidate of additional testing required of police officer candidates, specifically physical and post certification standards. Additional information and requirements.

Chairman explains process to candidate including pre and post interview comments by candidate.

6:26 p.m.- 6:45 p.m. – Darian Saraiva interview

Opening statement from Mr. Saraiva

Selectman Genette

Prioritize the top 5 responsibilities of a police officer – respectful to general public and community; hold to higher standard; good communication; honesty; attention to detail

What do you think of mandatory overtime including weekends, holidays, etc – I already do that at work now, not considered mandatory;

Selectman Silva

Two things that you did in last year to improve yourself – going to gym a lot, going to school doing the best I can

How would you deal with someone perceived as being unreasonable, irate or hostile – remain as calm as possible; currently deal with that at work

Selectman Goncalves

Supervisor gives you order to do something that is against policy or against the law, how would you deal with it? – depends on situation, initial is not to want to do it; get another supervisors opinion; if not going to hurt anyone proceed and follow up with another supervisor

What type of people do you like to work with or like to work by yourself? – prefer working with others,

Selectman DeBarge

Noted that he and Mr. Saraiva know each other; grew up with Mr. DeBarge's older son and was his athletic coach.

Policing changed a lot in past 2 years, why do you want to do this? Always appealed to me, always wanted to be. Expecting changes going into the position.

Can you give us a situation that was stressful for you and how you dealt with it? At work, security at Apple Store, customer yelling at store associate, swearing, took mask off. Calmly removed him from store. Did the best I could to get him out of store

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Selectman Rosenblum

If handling the interviews, what traits would you be looking for? - how prepared for interview, how passionate for position

If you looked at yourself in the mirror, what would you perceive as greatest weakness? Overthinking things and situations

Chief Valadas

Reiterates list of requirements as given to other candidates.

6:30 p.m. -6:45 p.m. – Benjamin Taylor interview

Opening statement from Mr. Taylor

Selectman Goncalves

Supervisor gives you order to do something that is against policy or against the law, how would you deal with it? Would go to higher supervisor; don't believe anyone is above the law; no one can give orders to break law; higher supervisor is best plan

Prefer to work by yourself or with another and what type of person would you want to work with? Learning in working in dispatch, type of person? Can probably work with anyone. Very laid-back person

Selectman DeBarge

Noted that he and Mr. DeBarge know each other; grew up with Mr. DeBarge's older son and was his athletic coach.

Selectman DeBarge

Last 2 years in policing has changed; mass exodus re covid; etc. why do you want to do this? Dream of mine especially when I got in college. Always been a dream of mine to be a difference maker. Make a better police department.

Stressful situation – example and how did you deal with it? As a full time, dispatcher, had quite a few stressful calls. One was a death at Ludlow Reservoir before anyone got there. ((Continued with story)).

Selectman Silva

What are 2 things you did in the last year to improve yourself? Exercising to improve my mental as well as physical health; difficulty with Covid and job as dispatcher gives me enjoyment as well.

How would you deal with someone who would be considered unreasonable, irate or hostile towards you? Calm them down using words; if they continue on with the issue, you need to restrain them and always call for backup.

Selectman Genette

Can you prioritize the top 5 responsibilities of a police officer? Be sociable, be reasonable and be lenient, be stern, protect and serve, and be yourself.

What do you think about having to work mandatory overtime? No problem working whenever I'm needed. Mandatory overtime is part of the job.

Selectman Rosenblum

If you were interviewing someone for this position, what would you be looking for? Someone who is level headed. Overly aggressive persons can make a lot of problems. Can't be too lenient.

What do you perceive as your biggest weakness? I don't talk too much, tend to listen more, not too assertive with my approach to things.

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Chief Valadas

Disclosure – Ben is his sister's son. Reiterates list of requirements as given to other candidates.

7:05 p.m. – 7:21 p.m. – Geovanny Tirado interview

Opening statement from Mr. Tirado

Selectman Silva

What are 2 things you have done this year to improve yourself? Currently in Medic class (an EMT), maintaining balance with work, family and school

How would you deal with someone who would be considered unreasonable, irate or hostile towards you? Do my best to talk with them and level with them as best I can. Deescalate the situation.

Selectman Genette

Can you prioritize the top 5 responsibilities of a police officer? Integrity, professionalism, doing best to protect and serve, following correct protocols, and do best to keep it going through the years. Maintain physical health.

What do you think about having to work mandatory overtime? Job needs to be done; the job gets done. Currently work a lot of weekends and overtime daily.

Selectman DeBarge

EMT and FTO? Currently going for Paramedic status? (All Yes)

Last 2 years in policing has changed; mass exodus re covid; etc. dangerous - why do you want to do this? Likes being a first responder, always been interested in police work. Like being out in community even though not everyone is happy to see you.

Stressful situation – example and how did you deal with it? Psych patients, never know what is going to happen and what issues they may have.

Question about application – how long doing Brazilian jujitsu? Since 13 at Team Link.

Selectman Goncalves

Supervisor gives you order to do something that is against policy or against the law, how would you deal with it? Not do it. Problem with person asking it but go to someone higher up and right away.

Prefer to work by yourself or with another and what type of person would you want to work with? I like working in both situations. Currently working with a partner – same partner 40 plus hours per week.

Selectman Rosenblum

If you were interviewing someone for this position, what would you be looking for? Ability to work around people in stressful situations. Ability to maintain work/life/personal time. Enjoy being out in the community.

What do you perceive as your biggest weakness? Not really a weakness but my family and wanting to be home as a priority

Chief Valadas

Reiterates list of requirements as given to other candidates. Noted that Mr. Tirado is bilingual in Spanish.

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P O Candidates Review

Valadas – Chief asked Board to consider appointing 2 alternates – highest placement Paul Carvalho bilingual, David Krok, not a traditional candidate (higher in age), Taylor, Intern and dispatcher – Tirado bilingual and an EMT – Warner, currently a police officer (alt), all have 4-year degrees.

10-minute break to tally scores by selectman

Selectman DeBarge – 2 days of interviews, 9 candidates; totality of circumstances when interviewing for new candidates, pursuit of education. What are some things I see through their eyes in application packet and see in interview? How do I feel that is relatable to law enforcement job? My scores are close with a few exceptions. In looking at evaluation report from police department, things that we see differently. Start with the ones that in my opinion would not agree in advancing.

Sykes : too many red flags. Concerned from comments from employers; general demeanor; very concerned with dictation on application (aloof and arrogant); don't see that type of personality conducive to this department Education was a factor.

Ms. Klekota education issues/concerns; work experience; totality of what I observed as well as department's observations as well;

Mr. Carvalho – scored high; impressed with his demeanor; impressed with his answers; his education and training in public service will transfer well into police work.

Mr. Taylor and Mr. Tirado scored high – interviews excellent; very articulate; moving toward law enforcement from onset; Mr. Tirado an asset with medical experience. Physical fitness is on point.

Mr. Warner and Mr. Egan – are two veterans; higher on list; interviewed well. Liked their background for this type of job but have some reservations with both; physical fitness issues coupled with job experience.

Mr. Krok – life experience in these circumstances is important. Not rated high in my interview (issue with supervisor where he was toe to toe with him); gave me pause. Education (engineering degree) is there. My choices in this order:

1. Mr. Carvalho
2. Mr. Taylor
3. Mr. Tirado
4. Mr. Krok

Alt

1. Mr. Warner
2. Mr. Egan

Selectman Goncalves

Agree most of the way with Mr. DeBarge. My idea of what I think being the oldest member of board, communication skills are first and foremost; has to be de-escalation, circumstance individually, know which way to tackle each situation and bring them back somewhere else.

Looking back, Mr. Kroc, in that particular instance has the best grip in life and answer a call in the best manner.

Ms. Taylor, with dispatch – you've seen it, you know what goes on with a situation on other side of line; half the battle is walking into. Mr. Tirado, being in an ambulance and wanting to be a first responder, great answer, got the passion for that; Mr. Carvalho might be the total package with the stressful environment of being in an emergency room, dedication on the school part, appears to be physically fit, doesn't seen to have a problem going forward with the academy, overall handled himself as good as Mr. Krok, in general. Those four are what you had Mr. DeBarge. Mr. Warner as an alternate; not sure on 2nd alternate, I'd like to come back to it in a minute. We are very lucky, some people right from the go were going to be an issue. One candidate when asked about going against policy, said they would do it and deal with circumstances after. That was scary to me.

Very close scoring-wise, good group to draw from

Selectman DeBarge

Did forget to mention Mr. Saraiva's interview was great. This candidate has a lot of intangibles with his education, brimming work experience, think he'll be a great candidate for near future, just needs more experience.

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Selectman Silva

No secret that I take great stock in what Police Chief and other officers take on the interviews. They know what they are doing, quite honestly, I don't. I just listen and use the rating sheet. Some didn't pertain so I gave everyone the average. All came in pretty close. Going back to want the Police Chief said, I absolutely no problem, my ratings came just that with top 3 candidates. The others were very close but Mr. Tirado, I'm fine with. What I would do with the alternates. Because of their service, I would give the vote to the 2 vets.

Selectman Gennette

When I do this rating, my first go-to was education. Up until the interviews today, I would say Mr. Carvalho was our ace. Complete package until Mr. Taylor stepped in. He had criminal justice and he blew me out of the water with what he had so those are my first 2 candidates. On top of that, they brought some relative experience level between dispatch and other things related to police. Third candidate was Mr. Saraiva. His bachelors in criminal justice were incredible, I enjoyed that. He also had mall security which I know wasn't really big but matched him up with Tirado who has the medical background. Brought so much to table, how do you avoid that? Phenomenal candidate. For my 5th, I put down Kroc. 6th, I put Egan. So, my recommendations I put down Taylor (1), Carvalho (2), Saraiva (3), Tirado (4) and Krok and Egan as alternates

Selectman Rosenblum

Following up with what Mr. Silva said, I've always said is that the experts who brought these candidates to us, be it police, bet it fire. As I've said to Mr. Pease, you know your business better than I do and I agree with that 100%. So, I take a lot of stock in recommendations from your department and staff that did interviews prior. I think that we have a lot of similar agreements here; Saraiva, glad you brought that up. I see him as just needing a little more experience. I think he's close. If he keeps on the path he's going on, he'll make an excellent policeman down the road. I eliminated a couple right off the bat, just some things with me with interview process in general being that I've interviewed and been interviewed a number of times, I look for eye contact and person's demeanor. I found a couple of people who didn't fit that bill for me; it's telling to me about their personality; that eliminated Mr. Sykes beside some other things that didn't agree with me with that but Mr. Carvalho, he scored highest for me. Do like the fact that he has the ER and the stressful situation. Also worked at they Sheriff's Dept where he's overseen 75 people in one block. He's in where he needs to be so he would be one of my choices.

Mr. Taylor, being that he's interned himself into the police department which is, to someone in college, what your chosen path in college is that you try to find your way into your chosen path. Being an intern, volunteer, one of my choices as well

Mr. Krok, reminds me of someone who is in the room right now – he reminds me of Officer Irwin. Educated, kind of a "book worm". A little straight forward, yes, but not in a cocky manner. Think it was more as assertive but knows his place. In the same sense, he would do the job very well.

Up in air between Mr. Warner and Mr. Tirado and did like the fact that Mr. Tirado has the life/work balance that you bring and the fact that your family like and what you are pursuing, I admired that a lot. I would go with Carvalho, Krok, Taylor and Tirado and for alternates I would go with Warner and Egan.

Any discussion....

Selectman DeBarge

I'll say this, I think we are all in general agreement. I would recommend to go with the Chief's recommendation as well. I will say this for the alternates: alternates were tough for me. I did give a veteran everything involved. I would not be opposed to adding Mr. Saraiva to the alternate list, as opposed to Mr. Egan.

Selectman Goncalves

Do you want me to make a motion?

Selectman Rosenberg

Do you want to make a motion on the floor?

Selectman Goncalves

Mr. Chairman, I move we appoint the following officers in the order as:

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Selectmen Gennette:

Mr. Chairman, can we do them one by one because we do have differences?

Selectman Goncalves

I move we appoint Paulo Carvalho as #1;

Second by Selectman Silva

Selectman Rosenblum

Roll call vote: Mr. DeBarge yes; Mr. Gennette yes; Mr. Silva yes; Mr. Goncalves yes; Mr. Rosenblum yes

Motion carries 5-0

Mr. Carvalho has been appointed

Selectman Goncalves

Move to appoint Mr. Krok as choice #2

Selectman Silva

Chief is there a difference between the order we are appointing?

Selectman Goncalves/Chief Valadas

Yes, there would be a difference for seniority. Appointment carries their badge number so there would be differences there.

Selectman Goncalves

Mr. Chairman, I withdraw my motion

Selectman Goncalves

Mr. Chairmen, I move we appoint Mr. Taylor as #2

Selectman Silva

Second

Roll call vote: Mr. DeBarge yes; Mr. Silva yes; Mr. Genette yes; Mr. Goncalves yes; Mr. Rosenblum yes

Motion carries 5-0

Mr. Taylor has been appointed as 2nd police officer

Selectman Goncalves

I move we appoint Mr. Krok as #3

Selectman Silva

Second

Selectman Rosenblum

Motion has been made and seconded. Mr. DeBarge – yes; Mr. Genette – no; Mr. Goncalves – yes; Mr. Silva – yes; Mr. Rosenblum – yes. Motion carries 4-1. Mr. Krok would be 3rd

Mr. Goncalves

I move we appoint Mr. Tirado as #4

Mr. DeBarge

Second

Mr. Rosenblum

Motion was made and seconded. Mr. Genette – yes; Mr. Silva – yes; Mr. DeBarge – yes; Mr. Goncalves – yes; Mr. Rosenblum – yes. Motion carries 5 to 0. Mr. Tirado would be the 4th appointed officer.

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Mr. Rosenblum

Now we move into alternates

Mr. Goncalves

Move we approve Mr. Warner as an alternate. Mr. Silva second

Mr. Rosenblum

Motion has been made and seconded, Mr. Genette – no; Mr. DeBarge – yes; Mr. Goncalves – yes; Mr. Silva – yes; Mr. Rosenblum – yes; motion carries 4-1.

Mr. Goncalves

I move we appoint Mr. Saraiva as alternate #2; Mr. DeBarge – second

Mr. Rosenblum

Motion has been made and seconded; Mr. Genette – yes; Mr. Silva – Yes; Mr. DeBarge – yes; Mr. Goncalves – yes; Mr. Rosenblum – no; Motion carries Mr. Saraiva will be 2nd alternate 4-1.

Chief and Board – thank you gentlemen and congratulations,

Mr. Rosenblum

Look forward to seeing you for your promotions in the next few years.

Mr. Rosenblum

Now that we are done with interviews, we can move into correspondence.

Correspondence #8

David J. Fernandes – informing the Ludlow Police Department of his resignation effective immediately

Mr. Silva – no, he never told me

Mr. Goncalves – motion that we accept Mr. Fernandes with regrets and thank him for his 11 years with the Ludlow Police Department. Second – Mr. Silva

Motion made and seconded – vote 4 aye and one nay by Mr. Silva

Correspondence #9

Ryan Pease, Fire Chief – board to approve a request to carry over six (6) additional vacation hours from calendar year 2021 to calendar year 2022, in addition to the four (4) carry over tours a firefighter/paramedic is already allowed since he was unable to use all of his vacation time due to returning from a six (6) month tour of duty with the Army National Guard.

Mr. DeBarge – I make a motion to approve a request to carryover six (6) additional vacation tours from calendar year 2021 to calendar year 2022, in addition to the four (4) carryover tours a firefighter/paramedic is already allowed since he was unable to use all of his vacation time due to returning from a six (6) month tour of duty with the Army National Guard.

Second – Mr. Goncalves.

Mr. Rosenblum

Motion has been made and seconded – Mr. Genette – yes; Mr. Silva – yes (doesn't need a roll call).

Mr. Rosenblum

All in favor – ayes; motion carries 5-0.

Correspondence #10.

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Danial Valadas, Chief of Police and David Irwin, Lieutenant – notifying the Board of the names of individuals being submitted for annual appointment as Special Police Officers with the Ludlow Police Department, effective January 1, 2022.

Mr. DeBarge

I make a motion to accept and appoint the named submitted for annual appointment as Special Police Officers with the Ludlow Police Department, effective January 1, 2022.

The following personnel

Mr. Seth Beale; Joe Branco; Justin Cruz, Joseph Fontaine; James Harrington; Alan Kept; Joe Metcalf; Nelson Ramos; Steve Ramos; Avram Resnick; Fernando Ribeiro; Juan Rivera; Corey Rodrigues; Nelson Rodrigues; Troy Rubner; Armando Saraiva; Mike Omer.

Mr. Goncalves

Second

Mr. Rosenblum

Motion has been made and seconded; All in favor, motion carries 5-0

Correspondence #11

Springfield Water and Sewer Commission – HAA5 Water Quality Violation and Public Notification of Drinking Water Haloacetic Acid 5 MCL Violation.

Mr. Goncalves

Move to file

Mr. Silva

For fiscal reference before we vote on that, Ellie will post on website

Second

Mr. Rosenblum

Motion has been made and seconded; All in favor, motion carries 5-0

Mr. Rosenblum

That ends correspondence, closing comments

Mr. Gennette

Thanked candidates for pursuing Ludlow. Don't give up

Mr. Silva

Covid remarks; please stay safe and get vaccinated; upcoming clinics; congratulations for all candidates.

Mr. Goncalves

Great: 9 candidates for 4 positions excellent turnout; COVID – numbers and info; be safe

Mr. DeBarge

Fitting for PD interviews to be done during 1st responder week; dinner Thursday night; COVID – thank you for patience and respect your decisions.

Mr. Rosenblum

Be respectful of each other's decisions and thought processed during this time. Everyone has a different comfort level.

Mr. Goncalves

Motion we adjourn at 8:11 p.m.

Mr. Silva

Second

Mr. Rosenblum

Motion has been made and seconded. Roll call vote – all in favor 5-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

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Chairman

Ludlow Board of Selectmen

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