

TOWN OF TAMWORTH  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
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Public Hearing - Police Advisory Committee Recommendations  
KA Brett School - Cafeteria

June 5, 2017 @ 6:00 pm

MINUTES

Present: Chairman Hidden, Selectman Gray and Poirier, PAC Chairman Canfield, PAC members Becky Mason, Mark Anthony, Lisa Remick, Melanie Streeter, Ginny Welch, Town Administrator McWhirter and 45 members of the public.

Chairman Hidden opened the public hearing at 6:00pm. He stated that this public hearing was to listen to the public's opinions and concerns regarding the Police Advisory Committees report.

The PAC made 3 recommendations to the board regarding how to proceed in rebuilding the Police Department. The biggest controversy in the recommendation was whether to hire Municipal Resources, Inc. or use resources from Carroll County Sheriff's Office to provide supervisory authority over the police department. The committee feels that an outside fresh set of eyes would offer a new perspective over the situation.

Sheriff Richardi offered to do similar work for no cost. Chairman Hidden is concerned how his department could do it at no cost after the County Commissioner's stated that Tamworth should be charged for the extra help the Sheriff's office has given Tamworth over the last 18 months. Residents are concerned Tamworth Police Department has a poor reputation and getting qualified applicants may be an issue. Other members of the public support using MRI to show the residents and the county that Tamworth is serious about improving the reputation of the Police Department. Selectman Poirier stated he would like to use the Sheriff's office and pointed out that MRI did not have a good track record where police departments are concerned. Other members of the public would like to have a discussion with both MRI and the Sheriff's office to see what is needed to move forward and compare apples to apples. The Selectmen acknowledged that they made mistakes regarding the handling of the Police Department and it is their job to make it right. Police Advisory Committee Chairman Canfield stated that the committee found that some of the policies and procedures were not being followed and that needs to be corrected. Most are in agreement that the review and process for a new chief should include members of the PAC, residents, other chiefs, a representative from the Sheriff's office and that the town should draw candidates from a wider area. No determination was made to hire a full time chief or part time chief. Most agreed that the hiring of other officers and reviewing the department's policies and procedures should be done by the new chief. Dom Bergen suggested that the town takes Selectman Poirier's offer to resign as Selectman and serve as Chief. Selectman Gray commended the committee's work. Melanie Streeter is concerned moving forward of a pending lawsuit from a former chief and that would be a good reason to bring in a fresh set of eyes. Peg Poirier did not feel the town should be held hostage by a pending lawsuit and Selectman Poirier stated that a potential lawsuit should not have any bearing on hiring a new chief. Selectman Gray stated that the Board of Selectmen have taken responsibility for their actions in public and that it is time to move on.

Chairman Hidden was ready to make a motion on how to proceed, but Susan Ticehurst reminded the board that this was a public hearing and not noticed as a Board of Selectmen's Meeting. Therefore no decisions could be made.

Respectfully submitted,

Darlene McWhirter  
Town Administrator

Approved by the Board of Selectmen

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James S. Hidden

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Steven G. Gray

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Daniel J. Poirier