

Minutes of Special Meeting on May 20, 2010

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Commissioner Mike Nott. In attendance:

Commissioner Greg Chapman  
Commissioner Ray Brixey  
Chief William Doster  
Commander Kevin Greco  
Commander Ken Ruggles  
Officer Jason Kopek

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss whether the existing rule barring officers lacking the college education requirement from taking the sergeant promotional exam should be changed.

Chief Doster stated that since the rule was put in place after some officers were hired, those hired prior to the rule change should be exempt from the requirement and be allowed to take the promotional exam.

Commander Greco agreed with Chief Doster stating that a college education does not necessarily make officers better candidates for promotion. He further stated that there are numerous other training opportunities available to officers that are more beneficial than the knowledge gained through a college education.

Commander Ruggles agreed with Chief Doster. He stated that other life experiences are more valuable and compensate for the lack of a college degree. He mentioned previous years experience as a police officer and a military background as examples. In his opinion, good candidates such as Jason Kopek will be overlooked if prohibited from taking the promotional exam.

Officer Kopek agreed with Chief Doster. He summarized his background including military service and the skills he gained over the years as an officer. He stated the door is being shut for people in his situation.

Commissioner Chapman stated that the rule should be changed to allow officers who were hired before the rule change but lack the required education to take the exam. He stated that he believes on the job experience is far more valuable than a college degree.

Commissioner Brixey stated the rule should not be changed because college experience is one component of learning that enhances professional conduct, further raises the standard of the position, and prepares the candidates for future command-level positions beyond that of sergeant. He further stated that many other departments have added this requirement. He concluded by stating that relaxing this rule would be a step backward.

Commissioner Nott supported the position of Commissioner Brixey adding that this rule has been in effect for several years which gave officers adequate time to obtain the required college credentials.

After discussion ended a vote was taken. Commissioner Chapman voted in favor of changing the rule. Commissioners Brixey and Nott voted in favor leaving the rule as is. The motion carried 2-1 in favor of leaving the rule in place.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg Chapman  
Secretary  
Plainfield Police Commission