

JANUARY 6, 2025

5:00 P.M.

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Mayor Evans called the Special Meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Present were Mayor Shane Evans, Recorder Phyllis Smith, Council Members Carl Harshbarger, Scott Foster, Scott Bias, and Chase Bryant. Council Member Troy Nicely attended via telephone.

The purpose of this Special Meeting was to appoint or hire a Chief of Police.

Mayor Evans gave Lt. Kyle O'Dell the opportunity to address Council regarding the pay rate for the position of Police Chief. Lt. O'Dell stated that he understood there had been questions about whether the Police Chief was required to be paid salary or hourly. He went on to say that he had looked through the entirety of the code and ordinances and did not find that it was required to be one way or the other. O'Dell stated that when he was hired in 2009, Chief Mullins was an hourly employee, as was Chief Lilly some time after that. He said when Chief Zerkle was hired, there was an agreement between Zerkle, the former Mayor and Council that the position of Chief would be a salaried position at that time. After Chief Zerkle left, the position remained salary because that is what Chief Parsons agreed on.

Lt. O'Dell stated the reason he wants to continue to be paid hourly as Chief of Police is because he is going on 17 years with the Milton Police Department. He is concerned the possibility of future Administrations "kicking him out" and if there is not a position below Chief available then he could be let go. He stated that would be a lot time invested in his career to just let go. O'Dell said not only does he live here, but his family lives here and he has built his entire career here. He said that Milton is his home and he wants to keep Milton safe and that is why he wants to stay here and hopefully have the opportunity to run the department to keep it that way.

Lt. O'Dell stated that if appointed Police Chief, his request was a \$2.00 per hour raise and to remain an hourly employee.

Council Member Bryant asked Lt. O'Dell to speak to his training. O'Dell said he went through 16 weeks at the State Police Academy, graduating in April of 2010. He stated he's been trained in SWAT tactics and hazmat, as well as being on the Fire Department and is cross trained in that area as well. He stated that he's worked on ambulances, so he is cross trained in the medical field. He said he's worked on various investigations, from petty crimes to malicious crimes. He has trained with FEMA in Alabama and trained in Clarksburg with the FBI in defensive tactics.

Council Member Foster asked Lt. Odell if he would continue to run shifts. O'Dell said he would still do shift work and be a full-service Chief.

Council Member Bias asked Lt. O'Dell if his previously worked overtime was to cover absences or because the department is short-handed. O'Dell stated he has been doing shift coverage because they are short two or three officers. He said that some of it is also situational. For example, when his shift is about to end and a call comes in that requires him to be out for another six or seven hours until the case is done. Lt. O'Dell said he records his time worked just as the previous Chief did. He stated that the other Officers turn their timecards into him and he reviews them for accuracy.

Recorder Smith added that she has known Lt. O'Dell for many years and she knows he cares about Milton.

Council Member Bryant asked Lt. O'Dell what the biggest change is that he would make as Chief. O'Dell replied that he likes to streamline things and use technology. He said he feels that they need to be out in the public a little bit more and he would like to have open lines of communication. He also mentioned more cost-effective uniform options.

Council Member Bias moved to go into Executive Session at 5:30 pm. Second by Council Member Harshbarger. Motion carried.

Mayor Evans called the meeting back into session at 6:06 pm. Mayor Evans stated that no business was conducted. Council Member Harshbarger moved to return to the Special Meeting. Second by Council Member Foster. Motion carried.

Council Member Bias moved to offer Lt. O'Dell a \$2.00 per hour raise to be locked in for two years and that the Mayor will oversee and approve O'Dell's overtime. Second by Council Member Harshbarger. A roll-call vote was taken with all present voting in favor of offering Lt. O'Dell his requested raise. Motion carried.

Mayor Evans Offered Lt. O'Dell the position of Chief of Police with a \$2.00 per hour raise to be locked in for two years. Mayor Evans will oversee and approve O'Dell's overtime. Lt. O'Dell stated he would give Mayor Evans his decision the next morning.

Council Member Harshbarger moved to adjourn at 6:12 pm. Second by Council Member Bias. Motion carried.

Shane Evans, Mayor

Phyllis Smith, Recorder