

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

POLICE COMMITTEE

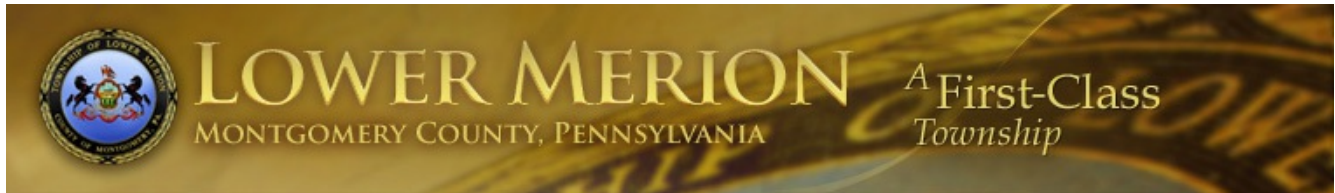
**Wednesday, May 1, 2024
6:00 PM (Approximately)**

Chairperson: Shawn Kraemer

Vice Chairperson: Joshua L. Grimes, Anthony C. Stevenson, V. Scott Zelov

FINAL AGENDA

- 1. AUTHORIZATION TO ISSUE CONDITIONAL OFFERS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR OPEN POLICE POSITIONS**
- 2. APPOINTMENT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE**
- 3. AUTHORIZATION TO ADVERTISE ORDINANCE - CHAPTER 145, VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC - HAGYS FORD ROAD AND RIGHTERS MILL ROAD STOP SIGN AND ONE WAY REGULATIONS**



AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

ITEM: AUTHORIZATION TO ISSUE CONDITIONAL OFFERS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR OPEN POLICE POSITIONS

Consider for recommendation to the Board of Commissioners authorizing the Township Manager to make conditional offers of employment to up to three police applicants who have fulfilled the Civil Service requirements for eligibility.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue Briefing - Conditional Offers of Employment	Backup Material

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION
Police Committee

Issue Briefing

Topic: Offers of Employment – Open Police Positions

Prepared By: Eugene J. Pasternak, Acting Superintendent of Police

Date: April 26, 2024

- I. Action to Be Considered by the Board:** Authorize the Township Manager to make offers of employment to up to three probationary police candidates who have fulfilled the Civil Service requirements for eligibility to begin to fill vacant budgeted sworn police officer positions.
- II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:** Filling vacant positions in the Police Department requires approval of the Board of Commissioners.
- III. Current Policy or Practice (If Applicable):** This request is consistent with past practice and Civil Service Regulations.
- IV. Other Relevant Background Information:** The 2024 budgeted authorized complement for the Police Department is 136 sworn officers. This action will fill up to three of the 14 current vacancies in the ranks of the Police Department from the existing certified list of police candidates, which was approved by the Civil Service Commission on January 10, 2024. These three potential hires will be the extent of candidates yielded from the Civil Service test given in the fall of 2023.

Thorough background investigations have been conducted on two of the potential candidates. There remains one additional candidate on the certified list who still must undergo a background check. If successful, this candidate will be considered to fill a vacancy after completion.

If approved, one candidate will be hired later in May 2024 to begin police academy training. The second candidate will be hired in June 2024 after completing psychological testing, a medical physical examination, and other related tasks. This candidate will already have police certification and will begin in-house training.

There is an ongoing recruitment campaign to establish a new Civil Service List to fill additional positions later in the year. The first phase of the process will begin with a written test on May 4, 2024.

In addition to the current vacancies, the Police Department has 14 officers currently eligible for retirement. Maintaining an adequate complement of officers is essential for mitigating the effects of future retirements.

- V. Impact on Township Finances:** These requested positions are included in the 2024 adopted budget.
- VI. Staff Recommendation:** The recommendation is to authorize the Township Manager to make offers of employment to up to three probationary police candidates.



AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

ITEM: APPOINTMENT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE

Consider for recommendation to the Board of Commissioners confirming the nomination by the Township Manager of a new Superintendent of Police effective June 3, 2024.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type
 Updated Issue Briefing - Superintendent of Police	Issue Briefing

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION
Administrative and Human Resources Committee

Issue Briefing

Topic: Appointment of the Police Superintendent

Prepared By: Ernie B. McNeely, Township Manager

Date: May 1, 2024

I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:

Confirmation of the nomination by the Township Manager of Andrew J. Block to fill the position of Superintendent of Police effective June 3, 2024.

II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:

Confirmation of the Township Manager's appointment of department head positions is required by Code.

III. Current Policy Or Practice (If Applicable): N/A

IV. Other Relevant Background Information:

A nationally recognized public sector executive search firm Baker Tilly was retained to assist with the Police Superintendent search process. They conducted a survey of stakeholders including the Board of Commissioners, police officers, residents, and related organizations to develop a profile of desired candidate qualities and abilities. The position was advertised in late 2023 in multiple national publications plus Baker Tilly made 4,599 direct contacts with possible applicants across the nation.

The only possible internal candidates who would meet the qualifications did not apply as one was in the Deferred Retirement Option program which includes a mandatory retirement date in about three years and the other chose not to apply for personal reasons.

The nationwide search produced 59 candidates who met all or almost all the qualifications. After a follow-up in-depth questionnaire offered to 25 candidates the field was narrowed to 17 initial candidates. Ultimately 18 candidates were invited to submit video responses to four questions. Analysis of those videos resulted in 8 candidates being invited to participate in live video interviews. The 8 candidates included 6 local police executives and two from out of state, a testament to the quality of police professionals in the Philadelphia metropolitan region.

The video interviews produced a narrowed field of 5 candidates invited for in-person interviews. Four were local and one was from out of state. A panel of 2 Commissioners, 2 Fraternal Order of Police representatives, the Assistant Township Manager, the Human Resources Director, the Chief Financial Officer and I conducted the in-person interviews. These interviews along with discussions with other officials who know the candidates, reference checks, social media search, criminal history, motor vehicle, credit, civil search, judgements/liens allowed the identification of 3 finalists. Further due diligence narrowed the field to 2 finalists.

The two finalists were sent to a professional testing firm to identify police management traits, and both were found to be qualified/recommended for the position, likely to exhibit a participative style of leadership, encourage trust, respect, collaboration, and communication. Additional background discussions were conducted with professionals who know the two finalists and a successful candidate was chosen for nomination to the Board of Commissioners.

After this long, extensive and comprehensive process, the nominee is the current Police Chief for Upper Moreland Township in Montgomery County. Upper Moreland is a community with a population of over 26,000 residents. Chief Block has 38 years of law enforcement experience including 28 years at Radnor Township, a community of over 33,000 residents where he rose through the ranks and retired as Deputy Police Superintendent in 2018. Additionally Chief Block has performed executive law enforcement consulting for several area communities and served as an instructor at Neumann University teaching public safety management, communication, and leadership courses. Finally Chief Block is a lifelong resident of Lower Merion Township and has been consistently involved for many years as a volunteer with the Lower Merion fire service.

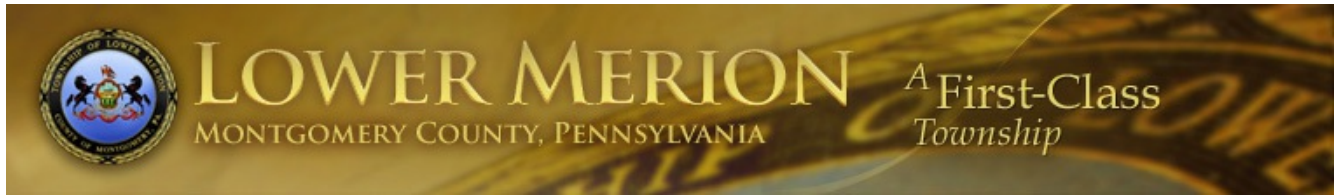
I am nominating Andrew J. Block to serve as Lower Merion Township Superintendent of Police effective June 3, 2024.

V. Impact On Township Finances:

With differences in salary and other benefits compared to the previous Superintendent of Police there will be modest net savings to the Township from the transition to the new Superintendent of Police.

VI. Staff Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Board of Commissioners confirm the nomination of Andrew J. Block to serve as Superintendent of Police effective June 3, 2024.



AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

ITEM: AUTHORIZATION TO ADVERTISE ORDINANCE - CHAPTER 145, VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC - HAGYS FORD ROAD AND RIGHTERS MILL ROAD STOP SIGN AND ONE WAY REGULATIONS

Consider for recommendation to the Board of Commissioners authorizing the Township Secretary to advertise notice of intent to adopt an Ordinance to amend the Code of the Township of Lower Merion, Chapter 145 thereof, entitled Vehicles And Traffic, Article XV, Schedules, §145-106, Schedule VI: Intersections Restricted As To Turns And Through Traffic, by prohibiting entry on the left side of the channelized island at Hagys Ford Road; and amending Schedules, §145-108, Schedule VIII: Stop Intersections by rescinding the two-way stop intersection at Hagys Ford Road and Righters Mill Road and establishing a four way stop intersection.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue Briefing - Hagys Ford & Righters Mill	Issue Briefing
<input type="checkbox"/> Draft Ordinance - Hagys Ford & Righters Mill	Ordinance

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Police Committee

Issue Briefing

Topic: Hagys Ford Road and Righters Mill Road - Four-way “Stop” and Traffic Pattern Change Request

Prepared By: Eugene J Pasternak, Acting Superintendent of Police

Date: May 1, 2024

I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:

Authorize the Township Secretary to advertise notice of intent to adopt an Ordinance to amend the Code of the Township of Lower Merion, Chapter 145 thereof, entitled Vehicles And Traffic, Article XV, Schedules, §145-106, Schedule VI: Intersections Restricted As To Turns And Through Traffic, by prohibiting entry on the left side of the channelized island at Hagys Ford Road; and amending Schedules, §145-108, Schedule VIII: Stop Intersections by rescinding the two-way stop intersection at Hagys Ford Road and Righters Mill Road and establishing a four way stop intersection.

II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:

The Traffic Safety Unit is conducting a traffic study at this location for consideration of a four way stop regulation and a change to the traffic pattern of the left side of the channelized island making it “Do Not Enter.” The Ward Commissioner has requested a four way stop regulation at the intersection of Hagys Ford Road and Righters Mill Road and to make the left westbound side of the channelized island “Do Not Enter.” If approved, this will require adoption of an ordinance to amend the Township Code.

III. Current Policy Or Practice (If Applicable):

The Township requires a traffic study be conducted prior to installation of traffic control devices following the standards established by PennDOT and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The request is consistent with past practice.

IV. Other Relevant Background Information:

The residents of Hagys Ford Road and surrounding side streets expressed safety concerns at the intersection of Hagys Ford Road and Righters Mill Road. The concerns mentioned were crashes and pedestrian crossing at this location, due to its proximity to Penn Valley Elementary School.

A traffic study is being conducted for this location. A sight inspection revealed that there are currently stop signs on both minor street approaches of Righters Mill Road. In addition, there are “Cross Traffic Does Not Stop” plaques posted below the stop signs. Hagys Ford Road is the through street with no controls at this intersection. Hagys Ford Road has a paved width of approximately 28 feet and maintains a single lane of travel for each direction. The channelized island at the intersection currently has two-way traffic on the left (southeast).

A three-year crash history revealed nine crashes at the intersection of Hagys Ford Road and Righters Mill Road.

The criteria below is required for the installations of all way stop signs. The traffic and engineering study that is currently underway will provide data as it relates to the criteria. That information will be provided with the agenda for the May 15, 2024 Board of Commissioners meeting.

- Crashes (Five or more reported crashes in a 12-month period that are susceptible to correction by an all-way stop installation. Such crashes include right-turn and left-turn collisions as well as right-angle collisions.)
- Minimum Volumes (The vehicular volume entering the intersection from the major street approaches (total of both approaches) must average at least 300 vehicles per hour for any 8 hours of an average day; and the combined vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle volume entering the intersection from the minor street approaches (total of both approaches) averages at least 200 units per hour for the same 8 hours, with an average delay to minor-street vehicular traffic of at least 30 seconds per vehicle during the highest hour.)
- Corner Sight Distance

V. Impact On Township Finances:

The cost for installation and purchase of the signs is minimal.

VI. Staff Recommendation:

The traffic and engineering study is currently underway. The Staff recommendation and other data will be provided with the agenda for the May 15, 2024 Board of Commissioners meeting.

AN ORDINANCE

NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE To Amend The Code Of The Township Of Lower Merion, Chapter 145 Thereof, Entitled Vehicles And Traffic, Article XV, Schedules, §145-106, Schedule VI: Intersections Restricted As To Turns And Through Traffic, By Prohibiting Entry On The Left Side Of The Channelized Island At Hagys Ford Road; And Amending Schedules, §145-108, Schedule VIII: Stop Intersections By Rescinding The Two-Way Stop Intersection At Hagys Ford Road And Righters Mill Road And Establishing A Four Way Stop Intersection.

The Board of Commissioners of the Township of Lower Merion hereby ordains:

Section 1. The Code of the Township of Lower Merion, Chapter 145, entitled Vehicles and Traffic, Section 145-106, Schedule VI: Intersections Restricted as to Turns and Through Traffic, is hereby amended by the addition of the following regulation:

§ 145-106. Schedule VI: Intersections Restricted as to Turns and Through Traffic.

<u>Name of Highway</u>	<u>Direction of Travel</u>	<u>Restriction</u>	<u>Location</u>
Righters Mill Road	West	Do Not Enter.	Left side of channelized Island at Hagys Ford Road

Section 2. The Code of the Township of Lower Merion, Chapter 145, entitled Vehicles and Traffic, Article XV, Schedules, Section 145-108, Schedule VIII: Stop Intersections, is hereby amended by rescinding the following regulation:

§145-108. Schedule VIII: Stop Intersections.

<u>Intersection</u>	<u>Stop Sign on</u>
Hagys Ford Road and Righters Mill Road	Righters Mill Road

Section 3. The Code of the Township of Lower Merion, Chapter 145, entitled Vehicles and Traffic, Article XV, Schedules, Section 145-108, Schedule VIII: Stop Intersections, is hereby amended by establishing the following regulation:

§145-108. Schedule VIII: Stop Intersections.

Intersection

Stop Sign on

* Hagys Ford Road and Righters Mill Road

Hagys Ford Road and Righters Mill Road

Section 4 Nothing in this Ordinance or in Chapter 145 of the Code of the Township of Lower Merion, as hereby amended, shall be construed to affect any suit or proceeding in any Court, any rights acquired or liability incurred, any permit issued, or any cause or causes of action existing under the said Chapter 145 prior to the adoption of this amendment.

Section 5. The provisions of this Ordinance are severable, and if any section, sentence, clause, part, or provision thereof shall be held illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional by any Court of competent jurisdiction, such decision of the court shall not affect or impair the remaining sections, sentences, clauses, parts, or provisions of this Ordinance. It is hereby declared to be the intent of the Board that this Ordinance would have been adopted as if such illegal, invalid, or unconstitutional section, sentence, clause, part, or provision had not been included herein.

Section 6 This Ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after its approval as required by law.

Approved by the Board this day of , 2024.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Todd M. Sinai, President

ATTEST:

Jody L. Kelley, Secretary