

Police chief announcement coming soon

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middletown

The Middletown supervisors could announce the name of the township's new police chief as soon as the next meeting on June 21, and will definitely make the announcement by July 19, board member Patrick Mallon said.

Mallon, the supervisor who has taken the lead on the police chief search, said a June 21 announcement is his most optimistic guess. More likely, the announcement will be made at the only meeting in July, he said.

Mallon said the announcement will come once a majority of supervisors agree on a candidate, which could happen before a contract is worked out with that person.

Acting Public Safety Director Patrick McGinty, who has applied for the chief's job, is in charge of the police department now. The township will switch from a public safety director back to a police chief system once a chief is named and a contract worked out, Mallon said.

A special police chief search committee made up of people who live or work in Middletown reviewed 37 applications for the chief's job, interviewed 14 candidates and has recommended seven finalists for further consideration by the supervisors, Mallon said.

The supervisors will meet in a special executive session at 6:30 p.m. Monday to review and rank the seven resumes and decide which of the seven candidates to interview, he said. While the supervisors are not bound by the search committee's recommendations, Mallon said he'd be surprised if one of the seven finalists isn't chosen.

"I'd like to see us interview all seven," he said. "The search committee spent a tremendous amount of volunteer time on this the last 30 days and I think they've come up with a great list of finalists. They did their jobs very well."

The search committee, whose members were picked by Mallon and approved by the majority of supervisors, consisted of: Bucks County Deputy District Attorney Dave Zellis; Michael Lentine Sr., a former owner and now a consultant with the Lentine Mower Center; Sherry Hessenthaler, director of Mid-Atlantic operations for Verizon; Michael Jones, vice president and chief financial officer for ISS Solutions; Dave Kemmerer, a Bucks County detective and former Middletown cop; Martin Duffy, former Newtown Township police chief; and Todd Buch, president of the McCafferty Auto Group.

Committee members and others involved with the search have signed confidentiality agreements to not disclose candidates' names or other information about the search. Mallon pushed that measure because he claimed the 2008 search for a permanent public safety director was poisoned by leaks.

Mallon wouldn't disclose the names of the seven finalists or which were outside candidates or Middletown officers.

McGinty, a 36-year veteran of the township police force, was promoted from lieutenant to acting public safety director in early 2009. He said he was interviewed by the search committee for the chief's job but doesn't know if he's one of the seven finalists.

Supervisor Robert McMonagle claimed the police chief search has been a charade and that the majority of supervisors want Middletown Lt. James Kane to be the new police chief.

"It's unfortunate he (McMonagle) feels that way," Mallon responded. "I can assure you the people involved in the search committee didn't feel this was a charade. They've taken the whole process very seriously and I've taken it very seriously.

"I don't have a favorite. I think we have seven good candidates to choose from and I'm going to be objective and do what is best for the taxpayers and the police force," Mallon added.

He said the chief's salary will be negotiated with the person chosen for the job. McGinty will make \$104,750 in base salary this year, plus a longevity payment of \$5,984.

Township administrators said any outside candidate who might be hired for the chief's job wouldn't be eligible for longevity pay. They weren't sure whether McGinty or any other internal candidate would retain longevity pay if hired as the new chief.

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