

## Official: Police chief search will take about four months

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middletown

Middletown probably won't have a police chief in place for at least four months, according to the township supervisor leading the search.

At a recent meeting, the board of supervisors unanimously approved the wording on an advertisement for the position, and OK'd newspaper and national Web site ads for 30 days for a total cost of \$1,249.

Supervisor Patrick Mallon said the ad is subject to final editing by township Manager Ray Stepnoski and other officials before it runs. Once the ad runs, which is expected to happen before the end of the month, resumes submitted to township solicitor Joe Pizzo will be collected for at least 30 days.

The supervisors, or possibly a special subcommittee of the board, will then choose the candidates to be interviewed, said Mallon. Interviews probably will take about 30 days, and it will then take about another month to work out an employment agreement with whoever is hired, he said.

Mallon emphasized his timeline is a rough one and said if the initial 30-day advertisement period doesn't bring in enough resumes, the ad will be placed again at an additional cost.

He said anyone within the township police department or outside who meets the job requirements is welcome to apply.

According to the proposed advertisement, Middletown officials are looking for someone with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice, police science, public administration, business administration or a similar discipline - though a master's degree is preferred.

Candidates also must have "at least 10 years of progressively responsible experience in a municipal or military police force with a minimum of four years of supervisory responsibility."

The supervisors can waive the bachelor's degree requirement if the candidate has at least an associate's degree and the required experience, Mallon said.

The new chief will be required to live within 15 miles of the township borders, he added. If the new hire doesn't already meet that requirement, he or she will have six months to comply, Mallon said.

The new chief's salary would be negotiated, but Mallon predicted it would be at least \$100,000 a year.

Acting Public Safety Director Patrick McGinty, currently in charge of the police department, will make \$104,750 in base salary this year, plus a longevity payment of \$5,984. He joined the Middletown force in 1974 as a patrol officer and has said he will apply for the police chief position.

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.

Middletown is switching back to a police chief system after more than a year under the public safety director system. McGinty was promoted from lieutenant to acting public safety director in January 2009, after the supervisors couldn't nail down a permanent director.

Late last year, the board of supervisors moved to switch back to police chief and name McGinty the new chief. Supervisors-elect Mallon and Drew Kreiling, saying the new, post-election board should hire the chief, blocked both those moves in court.

An agreement then worked out among the parties stated that the township wouldn't switch back to a police chief system until a new chief was hired, and McGinty would remain acting public safety director until that time.

Middletown has about 70 people in its police department, including sworn officers and civilian employees, including clerks and secretaries.

Chris English can be reached at 215-949-4193 or [cenglish@phillyBurbs.com](mailto:cenglish@phillyBurbs.com).

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