

CITY OF GARDNER, MASSACHUSETTS
APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 6, 2022

The Appointment Committee meeting was called to order by Chair Council George C. Tyros at 4:00 p.m. Appointment Committee Members Councilor's James Walsh and Judy Mack were present. Also present was Mayor Nicholson, Police Chief Eric McAvene, former Police Chief Philip Kearns and City Clerk Titi Siriphan.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF OPEN MEETING RECORDINGS: Any person may make a video or audio recording of an open session of a meeting, or may transmit the meeting through any medium, subject to reasonable requirements of the chair as to the number, placement and operation of equipment used so as not to interfere with the conduct of the meeting. Any person intending to make such recording shall notify the Chair forthwith. All documents and exhibits used or referenced at the meeting must be submitted in duplicate to the City Clerk, as they become part of the Meeting Minutes. This information is also posted on the wall by the door for review.

I. **Appointments:**

#10769 – A Measure Confirming the Mayor's Appointment of Eric McAvene to the position of Police Chief, Gardner Police Department.

Mayor Nicholson informed the committee that he made the decision to appoint Detective Lieutenant Eric McAvene to the position of Police Chief for the Gardner Police Department.

On June 22, 2022 at 2:57pm, he notified the City Council of the retirement of Chief Richard Braks and that he had appointed a search committee to do an initial review of the applications the City received. The solicitation for applicants for the position of Chief of Police was posted on June 23, 2022. The application period closed on July 8th, 2022.

Following this, twelve (12) individuals from the following locations applied for the position:

- Two from the Gardner Police Department
- Hardin, Montana Police Department
- Worcester, Massachusetts Police Department
- Boston Housing Authority Police Department
- Boxborough Police Department
- Adam's County Sheriff Department, Colorado
- Westborough, Massachusetts Police Department
- New Canaan, Connecticut Police Department
- Middleton, Massachusetts Police Department

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- Framingham, Massachusetts Police Department
- Warwick, Rhode Island Police Department

Of those individuals, the Committee decided to select six (6) individuals to interview for the position. The search committee then conducted the first round of interviews.

The search committee then requested to conduct a second round of interviews of their top three (3) choices before notifying me of their selection of finalists. I agreed to this request and the second round of interviews was performed by the search committee, this time adding Gardner Fire Chief Greg Lagoy to the panel. Following the second round of interviews, the Committee voted to send all three candidates to my office for final consideration.

The finalists were then interviewed by me and the offer to Det. Lt. McAvene was made and accepted on Wednesday, August 17, 2022.

Chief McAvene enters the position with twenty-seven (27) years of experience in policing, twenty-two (22) of which as a Gardner Police Officer. He was hired as a patrol officer for the Gardner Police Department in April of 2000. He was promoted to the rank of sergeant in April of 2005. In February of 2012, he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant to oversee the City's Community Policing Division, before being assigned as a Detective Lieutenant in November of 2013 where he has overseen all detective operations in the city since.

During the period of time between Acting Chief Alfano's tenure and Acting Chief Kearns's tenure, Chief McAvene lead the department alongside Lt. Nicholas Maroni. (During which time neither individual received no additional compensation or benefits for the additional duties added to their regular lieutenant positions, but rather simply did what needed to be done and lead the department when called upon). As such, since we have seen him perform the duties in this role already, I have elected to forgo the usual sixty (60) day temporary probationary appointment and submit his full appointment to the City Council for consideration following a confirmation hearing by the City Council's Appointment Committee.

Chief McAvene will begin his duties on Monday, August 22, 2022 in anticipation of a confirmation vote by the City Council through a temporary appointment due to the Charter of the City of Gardner only calling for one (1) regular meeting of the City Council during the month of August. Chief McAvene's full appointment will appear before the City Council during the month of September.

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Thank you for your patience during this time. I, like I am sure most of you, did not expect this process to last as long as it has, but I am happy with the results and am looking forward to seeing the City move on from this process. I have full faith in Chief McAvene's abilities to lead the Gardner Police Department and am confident in seeing general morale and efficiencies improve at 200 Main Street.

Chief McAvene would like to extend his appreciation to the Mayor for the opportunity and the City Council to allow him to speak his "two cents." Gardner is his adoptive home. He does not live in the city but transferred to work here. It is a pleasure to work for the Gardner Police Department.

Former Acting Police Chief Philip Kearns also spoke in favor of this appointment. He enjoyed his time here and has his full support of Chief McAvene.

On a motion made by Councillor James Walsh and seconded by Councillor Judy Mack, it was voted to recommend to the City Council to confirm *A Measure Confirming the Mayor's Appointment of Eric McAvene to the position of Police Chief, Gardner Police Department.*

II. New Business

There was no new business.

On a motion made by Councilor Walsh and seconded by Councilor Mack, it was voted viva voce to adjourn at 4:16 p.m.