

Date: 16 March 2021

To: Mark D. Israelson, City Manager

From: Ed Drain, Chief of Police 

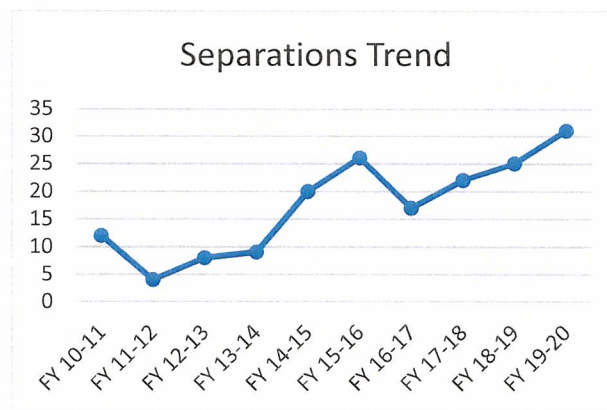
Subject: Police Over-Hiring

I am requesting permission to over-hire up to 10 police recruits above our three vacant positions. Over-hiring would allow us to have candidates already in the training pipeline when separations occur. A total of 59 applicants passed both the written exam and the physical agility test during our most recent applicant testing on March 6th. After reviewing the Personal History Statements, 41 applicants remain on the eligibility list. The remaining applicants on the eligibility list still need to undergo the background investigation process, so all may not be eligible for hire. If this request is approved, our goal would be to hire a total of 13 applicants from the eligibility list.

The Police Department has an authorized strength of 414 peace officers, divided amongst the Patrol Services Division and an array of specialized units. The background investigation and other pre-hire processes take about 12 weeks to complete. A hire date is then set to coincide with the start of the next Basic Peace Officer Academy class, starting their 51 week-long training process.

The lengthy hiring, orientation, and training process create a situation where the department may show to be close to fully staffed, but operationally its units are short. For instance, the Police Department currently has three vacant sworn positions but has 36 recruits in training, creating 39 (9.4%) operational vacancies department-wide.

An analysis of sworn service separations over the last ten fiscal years shows a mean of 17.4 and a median of 18.5 separations annually. Additionally, the attrition trend has been increasing over the previous ten years, as shown in the graph below.



This trend is likely to continue, as approximately 34% of PPD sworn personnel are currently eligible to retire. Thus far, in FY 20-21, the department has had seven sworn separations. While this is low given the trend mentioned above, the ongoing pandemic and economic uncertainty have most likely influenced retirement plans, artificially deflating separation numbers.