

## AGENDA – Police Commission

*The City of Hardin  
Police Commission  
406 N. Cheyenne Avenue  
Hardin, MT 59034*

**September 10, 2025**

**AUDIO RECORDING BEGINS**

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 5:15 P.M.**

**ROLL CALL:**

Commissioners: Harry Kautzman\_\_\_\_\_, Kevin Cannon\_\_\_\_\_, Rachel Ybarra\_\_\_\_\_

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:**

Commission Meeting 05/27/2025

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- Review of two candidates on agenda
- Checklist to review Police Officer Applicants to City of Hardin Police Department
  - Raymond Longstreth
  - Jake Kinder

***Meeting adjourned at \_\_\_\_\_ P.M.***

*Additions to the Agenda can be voted on by Commission to add to the Agenda for the next Commission meeting.*

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**The Police Commission Meeting of September 10, 2025 will be held by virtual meeting and the Public is invited to attend in person.**

**Topic: City of Hardin 09/10/2025 Police Commission Meeting Time: 5:15 p.m. Mountain Time**

The meeting will open at 5:15 p.m.

If you will be logging into the Commission meeting by:

**Computer:** Please identify yourself by submitting your first and last name by using the “Chat” function.

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Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9897104479>

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**May 27,2025**

**POLICE COMMISSION**

**CITY OF HARDIN, MONTANA**

**POLICE COMMISSION MEETING: The Police Commission Meeting was called to order @ 5:19pm by Harry Kautzman, Commission Chair.**

The following were in attendance: Harry Kautzman, Chair, Kevin Cannon, Commissioner, Rachel Ybarra, Secretary.

Also in attendance: Chief George, Police Chief and Drew Lehr, City Finance Officer.

**0:00**

**Kautzman** - Commissioner's meeting to order, please. We will have roll call. Harry Kautzman's here. Kevin?

**Cannon** - Here.

**Kautzman** - Rachel?

**Ybarra** - Here.

**Kautzman** - Ok, can we, do we read the minutes of the previous meeting or, just pass it?

**Cannon** - I will make a motion to approve the meetings as, or the minutes as written.

**Ybarra** - I second it, okay.

**Kautzman** - I second it, okay. All in favor?

**Cannon** - Aye.

**Ybarra** - Aye.

**0:33**

**Kautzman** - Aye. I guess we're, there was no old business so we'll continue to do business. Review of two candidates on the agenda, and we have a checklist for to review the police officer's application to the City of Hardin Police Department. The first one is Jashua Garcia.

**Lehr** - I don't know if you guys have any questions or anything about the candidate before we go through the checklist.

**Kautzman** - Okay, anything you want to supply us with, Mister George?

**Chief George** - Just that reiterating that Edward Stafford's already certified coming from Motor Carrier Services. Been there about five years. Um, Joshua Garcia is not certified, so he will have to go through the academy. But his physical fitness test scores should be in there and that both both applicants have already gone through their criminal background checks. They're good. But you'll see on their list that they have to do their fingerprints. But we wait until we hire them to do the prints. But we don't expect anything to come back because we already did the name and date of birth search on it. So, other than that, both are, I think, really good. Ed's really excited to get here.

**1:45**

**Chief George** - If you guys aren't aware, he is in a relationship with Officer Welch, Lori Welch who's the SRO. They've been together for some years now. So, all of his references spoke highly of him as well as mister Garcia. Mister Garcia works obviously at the female department of correction of Billings. When I did a neighborhood check on him being that he is uncertified. I just do that extra step for the uncertified folks. But, other than the one neighbor saying that he wishes he would quiet his dog down, there is no issue there. So I think both both are really good candidates that will last a while here. Mister Garcia, once he passes this step, we officially tell him yeah, you're clear for hire, I plan to have him sign the contract. So that way we recoup our money if he decides to leave.

**2:37**

**Kautzman** - Okay, any other questions? Have any questions Kevin?

**Cannon** - I guess, are they gonna live in town or are they, the one with Officer Welch, obviously he's gonna live up in Billings. What about Garcia? Is he planning on moving down here or staying up in Billings?

**Chief George** - They all say their plan is to move, but once they actually get offered the job, I think that changes.

**Cannon** - Yeah.

**Chief George** - But Stafford is gonna live with Welch in Lockwood. They live in Lockwood. Garcia lives kind of mid, mid Billings I guess you could say. So he says he's gonna move here, but I don't really hold him to it because he'll be, one if he can't really find housing here. So that's the other hard part, especially when they have dogs and he has a dog. So, it's gonna be hard for him to find a place to rent where someone will allow the dog.

**Cannon** - Okay.

**3:22**

**Ybarra** - Chief, are you at all concerned about him not being accepted at any of these other law enforcement places like Laural and.

**Chief George** - I was at first. He applied to Billings, he wasn't selected. It wasn't that he failed anything, he just wasn't selected. The applicant pool there is obviously greater, so they have a lot of more qualified applicants. So they selected a more qualified applicant with him. He's in the process now with MCS, but being that we offered him the conditional offer, he pretty much told them sorry. I'm gonna go to Hardin. So, I don't think there's any anything disqualifying him for any anywhere else. They just all have better applicants, either with a degree or older because he is, he's a little bit younger.

**Ybarra** - or certified.

**Chief George** - Or certified. So they they pass him up for that. And, unfortunately, we can't, we can't match that right now with the money, so I'm trying to get our our pay raise up by possibly getting rid of a position to give all the officers a pay raise to kind of match rural and the Sheriff's office here so that way we maintain good officers.

**Ybarra** - Alright. Thank you.

**4:23**

**Kautzman** - The only question I had about was Mister Garcia was that, that one of the statements in text was wrote out. It said he wasn't a self starter, is he a self starter?

**Chief George** - Yes.

**Kautzman** - It sounded like he kinda likes to stand around the desk and do nothing but.

**Chief George** - Yeah. Now he is. I don't think he was then, but he is now, especially at the women's prison. His supervisor there, I think officer Welch spoke to one of his Lieutenants who's currently there, and she spoke very highly of him. It says that he's, he's he gets involved. He takes charge. He's doing good as far as training. He's not a field training officer, but he has trained some of some of the newer officers that have come behind him. She says he he does a good job at that. And she also said that there was some fights that had broken out, and she hasn't had to push him into it, that he jumps into it to to to break them up. So I think he's a self starter. I think he's gonna be really good. This is what he wants.

**5:19**

**Kautzman** - Any other questions?

**Ybarra** - Nope, it's go time!

**Kautzman** - So I guess we'll start with Mister Garcia. Question one. **General Prerequisite.** Is the applicant a US citizen? Yes. Has the applicant graduated high school or possess the equivalent of a diploma? Yes. Does the applicant possess a valid driver license or eligible to receive one? Yes. Has the person resided in Montana for one year, or has the residency requirement been waived by the Mayor of the City of Hardin? He resides here, correct?

**Cannon** - Yep.

**Kautzman** - Must all be yes to pass. Number two **Age**. Is the applicant 18 years of age or older? Yes. Number three **Legal**. Has the applicant graduated from the Montana Law Enforcement Academy, or has the applicant graduated from any other law, any other law enforcement academy? No.

**6:39**

**Kautzman** - If not, is it intended to send the applicant to the Montana Law Enforcement Academy within a year of hire?

**Cannon** - Yes

**Kautzman** - Yes?

**Chief George** - Yes.

**Cannon** - Does he have a spot?

**Kautzman** - Does he have a spot?

**Chief George** - I don't know for sure yet, I have to get him hired here before I can.

**Cannon** - Okay.

**Chief George** - The academy is now doing something different, which I agree with. They used to let agencies reserve spots before they even had bodies, and that kinda would screw us. But now the attorney general put a stop to that, and you can't reserve a seat until you have the employee here. So, I think we won't have a problem getting a seat.

**Kautzman** - Is the applicant POST certified in Montana? No?

**Cannon** - No.

**Kautzman** - If no Montana POST, does the applicant have POST certification in another state that will be accepted by Montana POST? No. Oh, I missed I missed that question. A. Is Montana POST certification in good standing?

**Ybarra** - I'd say that'd be N/A.

**7:53**

**Kautzman** - Okay. And number three, If no Montana POST, if no Montana POST, does the applicant have POST cert certification in another state that will be acceptable by the Montana POST? That's no. Is the other POST certification in good standing? No, because he doesn't have one. None applicable. Number, question number four. Has the applicant been decertified by any POST council in any state? No. Question number 4. **Mental**. Has the applicant been evaluated by a licensed physician or a mental health professional who is licensed by the State of Montana under title 37 under Montana code who is

acting within the scope or a person's licensure when performing mental health evaluation, who is not the applicant's personal physician or licensed medical health professional, who is selected by the employee authority or has the applicant satisfactorily completed a standardized mental health evaluation instrument determined by the City of Hardin to be sufficient to examine for any mental conditions and instrument was scored by a licensed physician or mental health professional acting within the scope of the person's licensure by the state?

**9:29**

**Kautzman** - Yes. Question two. Is the evaluation free from any mental conditions that might adversely affect performance of the duties of a peace officer according to the professional opinion of the mental health evaluator?

**Lehr** - Yep.

**Kautzman** - Yes. Did the examiner submit a declaration of mental condition?

**Cannon** - Yep.

**Kautzman** - Yes. Did the licensed evaluator recommend the city hire this applicant based upon the results of the mental evaluation? Yes.

**10:11**

**Kautzman** - Question number five. **Moral**. Has the applicant been fingerprinted and has a criminal history been reviewed? Yes.

**Cannon** - Yes and No.

**Chief George** - Yeah, yes and no. Criminal issue has been run but we have no fingerprints yet.

**Kautzman** - Right.

**Chief George** - The criminal issue has been reviewed.

**Kautzman** - Does the applicant have any convictions for which they could have been imprisoned? No. Has there been a thorough background investigation conducted? Yes.

**10:51**

**Kautzman** - Has the applicant reference been contacted? Yes. Has the police commission interviewed the applicant? No. Did the police commission find any information that questions the applicant's moral character? No. If yes please explain. Question six. **Physical**. Has the applicant recently graduated from the law enforcement academy where the applicant's physical fitness was tested? No. Or did he?

**Cannon** - Yeah.

**Kautzman** - At the, at the.

**Lehr** - Well, he has the

**Kautzman** - The detention facility.

**Chief George** - He has done the test. Is that part? Yeah, I don't know if that's part of that question or if it's another one.

**Ybarra** - It's another one.

**11:44**

**Kautzman** - Oh, it's another one? Okay.

**Lehr** - Oh yeah, you're right it's another one.

**Kautzman** - Has the applicant provided a satisfactory declaration of medical conditions signed by a licensed physician or provider? Yes. Has the applicant passed the MPAT or similar test?

**Chief George** - Yes.

**Kautzman** - Are there any physical findings that would disqualify the applicant? No. Question seven.

**Ability**. Has the applicant satisfactory passed all the commissioner's exams? I haven't given any. Do you recommend the commission issue a certificate for appointment of the applicant to the Hardin Police Department?

**Cannon** - Yes. Do you make a motion or just.

**Kautzman** - Yes. Call for a motion.

**Cannon** - And I'll make a motion to approve Joshua Garcia for hire.

**Kautzman** - I second. All in favor?

**Cannon** - Aye.

**Ybarra** - Aye.

**Kautzman** - Opposed? Okay, motion carried. That's one. Candidate number two. Edward Stafford.

**13:26**

**Kautzman** - Is the applicant a US citizen, Yes. Has the applicant graduated from high school or possess the equivalent diploma? Yes. Does the applicant possess a valid driver's license or eligible to receive one? He has one. Has the person resided in Montana for one year, or has the residency requirement been waived by the Mayor of the City of Hardin? Resided here correct?

**Lehr** - Yeah.

**Chief George** - Yes.

**Kautzman** - Is the applicant 18 years old or older? Yes. Has the applicant graduated from Montana Law Enforcement Academy, or has the applicant graduated from any other law enforcement academy?

**Chief George** - Yes.

**Kautzman** - Yes. Skip A. right? Is the applicant POST certified in Montana?

**Chief George** - Yes.

**Kautzman** - Yes?

**Cannon** - Yes.

**Kautzman** - Is the Montana POST certification in good standing? Yes.

**Chief George** - Yes.

**Kautzman** - If no Montana POST, does the applicant have POST certification in another state?

**14:56**

**Kautzman** - Okay. Is the other POST certification in good standing?

**Cannon** - Non applicable.

**Kautzman** - Has the applicant been decertified by any POST councils in any state?

**Chief George** - No.

**Kautzman** - No. Four, **Mental**. Has the applicant been evaluated by a licensed physician or mental health professional who is licensed in the state of Montana under title 37 of the Montana code, who is acting within their scope of the person's Licensure on performing mental health evaluation, who is not the applicant's personal physician or licensed mental health professional, and who is selected by the employee author authority or has the applicant satisfactorily completed a standardized mental health evaluation instrument determined by the City of Hardin to sufficient to be sufficient to examine for any mental conditions. An instrument was scored by a licensed physician or a mental health professional acting within the scope of the person's licensure by the state? Yes.

**Cannon** - Yeah.

**16:13**

**Kautzman** - Is the evaluation free from any mental conditions that might adversely affect performance of the duty of a peace officer according to the professional opinion of the mental health evaluator? Yes?

**Cannon** - Yes.

**Kautzman** - Did the examiner submit a declaration of mental condition? Yes. Did the licensed



evaluator recommend the city hire the applicant based upon the results of the mental evaluation? Yes. Number five, **Moral**. Has the applicant been fingerprinted and has the criminal history been reviewed? He hasn't been fingerprinted. History's been reviewed. Correct?

**Chief George** - Correct.

**Kautzman** - Does the applicant have any convictions for which they could have been imprisoned? No.

**17:16**

**Kautzman** - Has there been a thorough background investigation conducted? Yes, Has the applicant reference been contacted? Yes. Has the police commission interviewed the applicant? No. Did the police commission find any information that questions the applicant's moral character? No. Number six, **Physical**. Has the applicant recently graduated from the law enforcement's academy, academy where the applicant's physical fitness was tested? So, that'd be yes, correct?

**18:03**

**Chief George** - I don't know. Recent would be I'm not sure.

**Ybarra** - But he's employed with the Motor Carrier, so.

**Lehr** - Yeah he had to pass it to get the job with the Motor Carrier.

**Ybarra** - Yeah, so I would say yes.

**Chief George** - Okay.

**Kautzman** - Has the applicant provided a satisfactory declaration of mental condition, medical conditions signed by a licensed physician or provider? Yes. Has the applicant passed the MPAT or similar test? Yes. Assuming he has. Are there any physical findings that would disqualify the applicant? No. Okay. Seven, **Ability**. Has the applicant satisfactorily passed all the commissioner's exams? We didn't give them any exams. So. Do you recommend the commission to issue a certificate for appointment of the applicant to the Hardin Police Department?

**Cannon** - Yes.

**19:05**

**Kautzman** - I guess all in, everybody say yes? All in favor?

**Cannon** - Aye. Yes.

**Ybarra** - Yes.

**Kautzman** - Yes. Okay So that'd be number two. So we recommend both candidates. And there are we supposed to schedule a time to go through the bylaws with Natasha?

19:39

Lehr - Yeah, I just put this on the schedule more so, so you and I Harry could talk to Natasha or one of us could and see when we wanna schedule that. I know the mayor and Jordan have been wanting us to do that for a while, and we just haven't gotten together for me to ask that question. So I figured, well, all three, four of us, five of us are here, we can go through that. So to set up that appeal process, we do need Natasha to probably be at one of these meetings, so I'm just gonna get, like a day and a time during the week that would be best for everybody. I know, Harry, you're probably open pretty much all the time, and Kevin in the summertime but Rachel, I wasn't sure about your schedule.

Ybarra - I can make arrangements if it needs to be during the day. I can take time off.

Lehr - Is there a day that works better than any of the rest of them, though? Not necessarily?

Ybarra - No. Any day is good.

Kautzman - I did did talk to Natasha Natasha on saturday, and she said that she she of course, she was reluctant at first to be our judge, but then she consented. And she said she's read through it, so she's got a pretty good understanding at this point. So.

Lehr - Yeah, yeah. And that would basically just be to set up that appeal process. So when it and if it ever happens, we have it already established,so.

Ybarra - Kinda find out, for us it's new. So I guess for everybody it's new.

Lehr - Yeah.

Ybarra - On the process of how this all goes.

Lehr - Right.

Ybarra - So discussing that would be good.

Lehr - And I think she would probably standardize it in some kind of form, kinda like this, you know? So I guess. Unless she's just gonna be the judge of, is that kinda what what was discussed, she would be the judge of it and you guys would like be the jury, essentially?

Kautzman - Yeah, basically

Ybarra - That's kinda what it sounds like, yeah.

Chief George - Pretty much. Yeah. She just make sure you guys are no violating the employee's rights and their due process and that you guys are the jury to the citizens.

Ybarra - So it would be kind of like a court scene?

Lehr - Yeah

Ybarra - So we'd hear.

Lehr - It'd be in here, but yeah, it'd be the same.

Ybarra - Right. but we'd hear you know?

Lehr - Both sides

Ybarra - Both sides of the story and then.

Chief George - Witnesses, I think, get called in here. So, I think both parties can bring witnesses to to testify and.

Lehr - Yeah. Okay. I'll talk to Natasha. It probably won't be next week because we have a council meeting. I'll get it scheduled for the following week, Tuesday or Wednesday is what I'll shoot for. And if we can do it during the day, I will. But if not, I'll try to do it as close to 5:00 as we can. Or a little before. Does that work for you Kevin?

Cannon - Tuesdays are usually golf days.

Lehr - So Wednesday?

Cannon - Wednesday, perfect.

Ybarra - Any any day is good for me. And like I said, if i need to take the time off, I will. I'm willing to do that.

Lehr - Okay, sounds good. Do you guys wanna leave your sheets that you signed for the candidates, I'll get them from you when you're done.

Kautzman - Okay, so call for a vote to adjourn.

Cannon - I'll make a motion to adjourn.

Ybarra - I second.

Kautzman - All in favor?

Cannon - Aye.

Kautzman - Aye.

Ybarra - Aye.

Kautzman - Meeting adjourned.

