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32 applicants seek deputy chief job

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Staff Writer

The search for a permanent deputy police chief in Inkster yielded 32 resumes by the pre-determined deadline to apply for the spot.

Of those applications, none were from current salaried employees, but one was from a long-time subcontractor to the city, Dr. Erick Barnes, who is currently serving on a contractual basis as an administrative aide to the chief.

Bill Lawrence, Inkster personnel director, said the pool of applicants is being narrowed to about 10.

“Our hope is to come up with a group of finalists, and interview the top five or six during the second week of January,” he said. “We hope to fill the position soon.”

Not much is known about those who applied for the position, with the exception of Barnes, who has worked with the department in several capacities for about five years.

Barnes – the youngest deputy chief in the history of the Detroit Police Department – has taken care of the administrative duties typically handled by a deputy police chief since former Deputy Police Chief Greg Hill retired in February of this year.

Barnes was first introduced to the 72-officer department in 2003, when he served as a computer consultant. In that capacity, he played a role in bridging the gap between procedures used in the past, and ones that resulted from technological advances the department had not previously been able to utilize.

Technology was a problem in 2003 because the police department network was incorrectly configured, and it was incompatible with computers used by other agencies, officials said. Barnes was able to rectify that when he was brought in to address the overall computer needs of the department, and to install a crime mapping system he created to help identify crime trends.

“The Doc,” as he is called, has also been able to introduce more effective communications into the department, which underwent several changes in leadership four years ago.

“He brought a lot of expertise here,” said Lt. Tom Diaz, the president of the Inkster Command Officers Association. “He’s been here for so long that he understands the nature of the department and how it works. He knows where we need to go in the future. Everyone here is

behind him 100 percent, and we're lucky to have him."

In addition to his experience in Detroit, Barnes has served as an assistant professor of criminal justice and sociology at the University of Detroit-Mercy. At the university, Barnes is the point-person for departmental counter-terrorism studies program, which is new at the school.

Barnes said he is interested in staying with the department.

"I've come to know the individuals in this department, and it is my belief that they work very hard," he said. "My heart is here at this point. I've come to know the administration of the city, its elected leadership, and most importantly, its citizens, and I respect all of them."

The deputy chief position is one of several high-level pots the city needs to fill. The community development director's spot is still open, and the role of tax assessor will be open soon.

The posted pay range for the deputy chief job is from \$61,739 to \$80,261 annually, Lawrence said.

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