

Cottage Grove Police amend personnel spouse, relative policy

Amended policy addresses situations in which officers directly supervise a relative or spouse

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Personnel policy for the Cottage Grove Police Department has been amended to allow an officer to directly supervise a relative or member of their household.

The policy is specific to the police department and does not pertain to any other department within the city.

Under Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS), public officials, with the exception of legislators, are prohibited from directly supervising a person who is a relative or household member

However, an exception

“There are times when [spouses or relatives] work together. And the way our policy and procedure manual stands, the one with the most seniority in our department is the one that would be the lead in that circumstance...”

—CGPD Chief Scott Shepherd

can be made if a public body adopts policies specifying when a public official acting in an official capacity may directly supervise a person who is a relative or member of the household.

The Cottage Grove Police Department has developed such a policy specifying when a sergeant may do so.

The policy describes the role of sergeants and limits their role and functions as a supervisor by prohibiting them from participating “in any interview, discussion, or debate regarding the appointment, employment or promotion of a relative or member of their household; or regarding the discipline, discharge,

firing or demotion of a relative or member of their household.”

Chief of Police Scott Shepherd presented the resolution to the Cottage Grove City Council for approval on Monday.

There are two brothers who currently work in the department, Shepherd told the council.

“And there are times

when they work together. And the way our policy and procedure manual stands, the one with the most seniority in our department is the one that would be the lead in that circumstance,” he explained. “And so they’re responsible for leading the shift, making decisions based on policy and procedure and offering support.”

The role, however, does not involve hiring, firing or promoting other employees, he added.

“And we don’t believe this is a conflict as far as if one of those brothers, both being eligible, under our current criteria to be promoted, were to be

promoted and supervise the other,” he said.

The police department rank and command structure provides that the Chief of Police is the only supervisor having the responsibility to appoint, remove, discipline, promote or transfer police department employees.

“I will be honest. It does make me a little concerned,” said Councilor Mike Fleck. “I do support this, but I hope that if there are any issues that, it is something that we could review in the future.”

The council voted unanimously to pass the resolution.

Code from A1

and record an annexation agreement specific to the property, must pay system development charges for the utility being connected, and the owner must annex when annexation requirements are met or when the city requests annexation.

This ordinance would only allow for extraterritorial connections outside city limits and within the urban growth boundary.

A second ordinance also addresses potential connections beyond the city’s UGB, which would be treated as a land use decision and be subject to appeals through higher agencies.

Staff reported, however, that it has received only one request to connect to the city water system outside the UGB in the past four years and the city council ultimately voted to pass only the first ordinance.

Several locations within the city’s urban growth boundary contain clusters where property owners have asked to connect to the city utilities which run by the incorporated properties.

While most requests have been handled by annexing properties into the city, some requests have been denied.

City staff brought to the council’s attention on Feb. 8 a case in which a property owner is outside city limits, inside the urban growth boundary

and has a city waterline adjacent to the property which serves homes on each side of the property.

However, the property could not be annexed as it is not contiguous to the city limits and no provisions in the city’s code allowed for new extraterritorial connections.

City staff reported that the requests to connect

to city utilities are frequently due to on-site well or septic failures. Such failures can seriously endanger the life safety and health of the property owner and could become a nuisance to the neighborhood and city if not dealt with.

Allowing for a utility connection, staff reasoned, could maintain the viability of the prop-

erty and prevent such cases.

The State of Oregon requires all cities to establish urban growth boundaries. The bound-

aries are meant to prevent urban sprawl by preserving land outside the boundary in its natural state or use it for agriculture.

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