

D.R. NO. 94-16

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS COMMISSION
BEFORE THE DIRECTOR OF REPRESENTATION

In the Matter of

BOROUGH OF PITMAN,

Public Employer,

-and-

Docket No. RO-94-69

PITMAN POLICE DISPATCHERS ASSOCIATION,

Petitioner.

SYNOPSIS

The Director of Representation dismisses a representation petition filed by the Pitman Police Dispatchers Association. The Director determined that the dispatchers shared a strong community of interest with other unrepresented non-supervisory white collar employees who were not included in the petition. The petitioned-for unit is not appropriate.

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Appearances:

For the Public Employer
Montgomery, McCracken, Walker & Rhoads, attorneys
(Ralph H. Colflesh, Jr., of counsel)

For the Petitioner
Denise A. Ladd, pro se

DECISION

On November 16, 1993, the Pitman Police Dispatchers Association filed a Petition for Certification of Public Employee Representative seeking to represent a negotiations unit of four civilian police dispatchers employed by the Borough of Pitman. The petition was accompanied by an adequate showing of interest. The dispatchers are not included in any negotiations unit.

The Borough objects to the petition, contending that the petitioned-for unit is inappropriate. It employs about 14 other "non-supervisory, non-managerial white collar employees" and asserts that Commission approval of the petitioned-for unit would result in a proliferation of negotiations units.

The Association asserts that dispatchers have significantly different job duties than other white collar employees, giving them a discrete community of interest. These duties include radio communications, maintenance of police complaint log book, awareness of alarm, fire and ambulance procedures, typing arrest, investigation and stolen property reports, etc. Dispatchers work around-the-clock in three shifts and are separated by security doors from other white collar employees. The petitioner asserts that a week may pass before the dispatchers would "see" or "have contact" with Borough clerical employees. The Association maintains that only one other clerical employee uses the radio and does so in limited circumstances. It disputes any comparison of dispatcher and clerical employee salaries.

The Borough negotiates collectively with a unit of 12 police officers and a unit of about 9 blue collar employees. Unrepresented blue collar employees include the public works superintendent and assistant superintendent. Blue collar employees earn generally \$10 - \$14 per hour and have 35-hour work weeks.

Unrepresented white collar employees include tax collectors, a police secretary, a court administrator and about 5 secretarial/clerical employees. Salaries range between \$19,000 and \$29,000 per year. All employees work in the same building and receive identical health benefits and vacation time.


On January 10, 1994, we issued a letter tentatively dismissing the petition. No responses were filed.

The petitioned-for unit is inappropriate. Commission policy favors broad-based units. State of New Jersey and Prof. Assn. of New Jersey, 64 N.J. 231 (1974). Although dispatchers have different job duties than other non-supervisory white collar employees, we believe they share a strong community of interest with them. All work in the same building, receive comparable wages and benefits, and perform administrative functions. Differences in hours and schedules are insufficient to overcome the Commission's policy favoring broad-based units.

Under facts very similar to those asserted in this matter, the Director determined that a petitioned-for unit of dispatchers was inappropriate because other white collar and blue collar employees, sharing a community of interest with the dispatchers, were not included in the petition. Winslow Tp., D.R. No. 87-24, 13 NJPER 208 (¶18087 1987).

This case does not require a different result. I dismiss the petition. See also, Borough of Pt. Pleasant, D.R. No. 91-27, 17 NJPER 208 (¶22087 1991).

BY ORDER OF THE DIRECTOR
OF REPRESENTATION



Edmund G. Gerber, Director

DATED: February 2, 1994
Trenton, New Jersey