

**TUMWATER CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
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CONVENE: 12:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Eric Trimble and Commissioners Maggie Bean and Simon Tee.

Staff: Chief Examiner Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, Fire Chief Scott LaVielle, and Assistant Fire Chief Jim McGarva.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR APRIL 12, 2018: The following corrections to the minutes of April 12, 2018 included:

- On page 8, within the first paragraph, change “excises” to reflect “exercises.”
- On page 9, within the second sentence of the fifth paragraph, revise the sentence to reflect, “Currently, the department has six vacant officer positions.”

MOTION: **Commissioner Tee moved, seconded by Commissioner Bean, to approve the minutes of April 12, 2018 as amended. Motion carried.**

STATUS OF ELIGIBILITY LISTS: Examiner Behrends Cerniwey updated the Commission on the status of the eligibility lists.

APPROVAL OF MODIFIED ELIGIBILITY LIST: LATERAL POLICE OFFICER: Examiner Behrends Cerniwey reported two applications were received since the last update. Two names are also recommended for removal as the candidates were hired by the Police Department. One other name is recommended for removal from the list as the candidate was hired by another agency.

The Chief can hire from the top seven names.

MOTION: **Commissioner Bean moved, seconded by Commissioner Tee, to approve the Modified Eligibility List for Lateral Police Officer as presented. Motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF ELIGIBILITY LIST: ENTRY LEVEL POLICE OFFICER: Examiner Behrends Cerniwey reported oral boards were conducted on May 3. Nine of the 12 candidates interviewed passed with a 70% or higher score. Nine candidates are proposed for addition to the eligibility list. Seven applicants are proposed for removal because they failed the Chief’s interview or accepted another position. The Chief can hire from the top seven candidates.

MOTION: **Commissioner Bean moved, seconded by Commissioner Tee, to approve the Eligibility List: Entry Level Police Officer as proposed. Motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF Examiner Behrends Cerniwey reported the Commission previously

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**ELIGIBILITY
LIST: FIRE
CAPTAIN:**

approved the Fire Captain testing process. Public Safety Testing created a customized written test and hosted an assessment center. Six candidates applied for the position with all candidates passing the written test and moving on to the assessment center on May 8. External raters scored the candidates. The center included 21 role players and raters. Five of the six candidates passed with a 70% or higher score. Scores were combined at 60% for the assessment center and 40% for the written test. One of the candidates did not pass the assessment center. The exam plan required candidates to pass each element with a score of 70% or higher. The candidate that failed the assessment center had a score of 69.05%. No protests were filed. All raters provided written feedback to each of the candidates. The raters were from other fire districts/fire departments. Tumwater Police Commander Mason served as one of the raters.

Assistant Fire Chief McGarva addressed the score of the candidate who did not pass. During the initial computation of the mathematical scores, the scores revealed that all candidates had passed the assessment center. It was only later the next day during computation of the scores that one candidate failed to pass the assessment center. After a conversation with Fire Chief LaVielle, both he and the Chief acknowledged that the raters had not had an opportunity to learn about the failing score. As the raters were not afforded an opportunity to assess whether the candidate would be capable of performing the job, they believe that out of fairness, the combined score of over 70% should enable the candidate to be included on the list. The Commission is requested to consider inclusion of the candidate's name on the list.

Fire Chief LaVielle added that based on his experience with assessment centers, the process concludes typically concludes with a review by the raters of each candidate's performance on each dimension. Typically, that occurs before leaving the test site. However, because of the glitch in the formula for adding the combined scores, a review session with the raters did not occur.

Examiner Behrends Cerniwey said her role is to protect the integrity of the process. Public Safety Testing does not change scores even when combined. The intent is to have a blind rating system to avoid conflicts between the systems. However, since the rules would not allow changing the scores, the Chief is requesting consideration to use the combined score of 70% as the applicant missed the cutoff by a very small margin. Examiner Behrends Cerniwey said she believes the integrity of the scoring system remains intact.

Chair Trimble asked whether any of the other candidates received a final assessment by the raters. Fire Chief LaVielle affirmed that because the initial results indicated passage by all candidates, none of the candidates

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received a final assessment by the raters or were afforded an opportunity to provide feedback on whether the candidate should or should not be on the list.

Commissioner Tee said he believes affording the combined score to achieve a minimum score of 70% would change the testing methodology and might compromise the process. Commissioner Bean agreed as the other candidates took the same test and received scores under the same scoring process. Although, the circumstances were unfortunate, the Commission would be compromising the testing process by including the candidate's name on the list.

Examiner Behrends Cerniwey clarified that the *exam plan* did not require a minimum score of 70% for the assessment center portion. The test plan required 70% on the written score in order to move to the assessment center. All the candidates received at least 70% on the written test. However, the second part of the testing process required 70% on the assessment center. Fire Chief LaVielle is requesting the Commission's consideration to combine the scores and those with a score over 70% would be eligible for inclusion on the list. The proposal would change the exam plan but not the exam.

Commissioner Tee expressed discomfort with approving the proposal after the fact as it might be perceived as tampering with the process.

MOTION:

Commissioner Bean moved, seconded by Commissioner Tee, to accept the testing process as established and the testing results. Motion carried unanimously.

Examiner Behrends Cerniwey addressed questions about potential conflicts of interest by the raters. All the candidates were from the Tumwater Fire Department. The candidates attended a candidate orientation. On the day of testing, candidates received a briefing on each element. Candidates are afforded an opportunity to indicate whether a rater might not rate them fairly. Candidates are advised to complete the exercise and advise representatives from Public Safety Testing about their concerns. The rater and the role players attended a hour-long meeting the day prior to the assessment center.

UPDATES AND SCHEDULING:

Examiner Behrends Cerniwey reported the next meeting is scheduled on June 14 at 5:30 p.m.

Commissioner Bean advised that she may not be available to attend the July meeting.

Examiner Behrends Cerniwey said the Police Department has hired two

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lateral candidates.

Examiner Behrends Cerniwey reported that she and Fire Chief LaVielle and Assistant Fire Chief McGarva visited Eastside Fire Rescue during the last Civil Service Conference in Yakima. Eastside Fire Rescue is not under Civil Service Rules. Representatives from the organization shared information on its testing process to attract candidates with different life experiences. Eastside Fire Rescue employs 140 firefighters with only one female firefighter. To expand diversity within the agency, the agency created a three-step speed process whereby candidates scoring 80% or higher were invited to participate in a short interview. The agency has employed the process for the last three years. The discussion focused on ways to remove barriers to access.

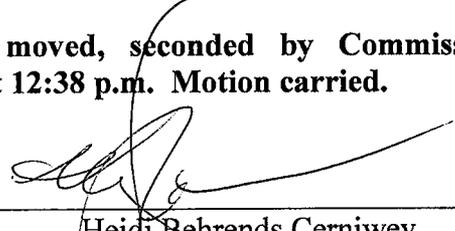
Assistant Fire Chief McGarva reported that the last candidate hired by the agency had tested for 16 years. The candidate had planned not to pursue further testing if unsuccessful. The agency interviewed the applicant and hired the individual. Representatives from the agency reported the individual is one of the best employees ever hired by the agency.

Chair Trimble supported efforts to expand the pool of applicants but cautioned that the process should not just include selection of only females as affirmative action in the state is against the law.

ADJOURNMENT: Commissioner Bean moved, seconded by Commissioner Tee, to adjourn the meeting at 12:38 p.m. Motion carried.



Eric Trimble, Chair



Heidi Behrends Cerniwey,
Secretary/Chief Examiner