

**TUMWATER CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**

**MINUTES OF MEETING**

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**CONVENE:** 5:31 p.m.

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

Staff: Chief Examiner Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, Police Chief Jon Weiks, Fire Chief Scott LaVielle, Assistant Fire Chief Jim McGarva, Senior Human Resources Analyst Juliann McGarva, and Recording Secretary Valerie Gow.

**APPROVAL OF  
MINUTES – APRIL  
18, 2019:**

**MOTION:** **Commissioner Trimble moved, seconded by Commissioner Tee, to approve the minutes of April 18, 2019 as published. Motion carried unanimously.**

**STATUS OF  
ELIGIBILITY  
LISTS:** Examiner Behrends Cerniwey reviewed the status of the eligibility lists. A number of recruitments are in process.

**MODIFIED  
ELIGIBILITY FOR  
HIRE LIST:  
LATERAL POLICE  
OFFICER:** Examiner Behrends Cerniwey reported the City received two applications for Lateral Police Officer. Each applicant's score is based on the applicant's experience rating. The two applicants are proposed for addition to the list. One other applicant did not meet the minimum qualifications. The proposed list would contain 11 names. The Police Chief can hire from the top seven candidates on the list.

**MOTION:** **Commissioner Tee moved, seconded by Commissioner Trimble, to approve the Modified Eligibility for Hire List: Lateral Police Officer. Motion carried unanimously.**

**AUTHORIZATION  
FOR  
EXAMINATION:  
POLICE SERVICES  
SPECIALIST I:** Examiner Behrends Cerniwey reported the initial examination was approved by the Commission in January. The position is a new position for the Police Department. The first examination plan was a self-rating by the applicant. The Commission was asked to approve a validation process, as a number of the applicant's self-rating did not match the qualifications listed in their respective application, with many candidates scoring themselves higher or lower in terms of the examination definitions. The City requested further clarification from each applicant. After receiving the information, the City moved forward with the recruitment process and conducted an oral board. The top 15 candidates participated in the oral board with nine candidates passing the oral board. The list was approved by the Commission in March 2019. The Chief moved forward with interviews and conditionally offered the position to a candidate pending a successful background process. As reported at the previous meeting, the candidate failed the background process. No other candidate on the list was deemed

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suitable for hire. The request is to approve a new examination plan. Civil Service rules require notification to the Commission of the failed recruitment and the reason. The recommendation is to create a new examination, which would render the list as expired with each candidate notified that the list would be expired. The former candidates would be invited to participate in the new examination process.

The proposal is a customized written examination. After completing some additional research, a test was customized based on the job description. Chief Examiner Behrends Cerniwey presented a copy of the proposed written examination to the Commission for review. The proposal is a two-step process of a written examination representing 25% of the final score with eligible candidates advancing to an oral board. The proposal is an improved process to ascertain the skills required for the position, which was missing in the first examination process. The examination dates have been included to provide applicant's with some predictability for the testing schedule.

Commissioner Tee asked how the proposal differs from the first examination process. Chief Examiner Behrends Cerniwey said the first examination did not include a written examination. The first process consisted of the candidate's self-rating score on clerical and other related experience. Some candidates overrated their score and some candidates underrated their score. The written examination speaks better to the specific skill sets of the position, which includes clerical and administrative experience. Candidate skills did not match to the specific requirements of the position.

Commissioner Trimble asked whether the candidates on the existing list were afforded due process, such as an opportunity to appeal to the Commission. Chief Examiner Behrends Cerniwey said the list has not expired at this time. The new test, according to Civil Service rules would terminate the list.

Commissioner Tee asked why other candidates were not interviewed when the primary candidate failed the background process. Police Chief Weiks reported he interviewed the top seven candidates and conditionally offered the position to one of the seven candidates. The candidate was the only one with the necessary skill sets and the characteristics the department was seeking. The remaining candidates were not deemed to be a good fit for a variety of reasons. The first examination process was flawed as it enabled candidates to complete a self-assessment, which likely ruled out some qualified candidates.

Chief Examiner Behrends Cerniwey added that the written test is more specific to the job description.

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Chair Bean asked about measures that the City is pursuing to ensure applicants understand the duties and responsibilities of the position. Chief Examiner Behrends Cerniwey replied that the other elements of the revised testing process include the class specification of an administrative support specialty and creation of a job posting that includes information on the specific duties of the position. The class specification includes several different elements, which clarified the job posting. Part of the problem with the first examination process was some of the applicants focused on the evidence specialty as many of the applicants wanted to work in a police station and many wanted to become police officers. The position is not a job that has the same skill sets as a police officer.

Commissioner Trimble said his primary concern surrounds the procedure and the applicants on the existing list. It appears that it might be a violation of the purpose of Civil Service as it speaks to discarding the current list and creating a new list while existing candidates are invited to reapply. Police Chief Weiks advised that the top seven candidates were interviewed. Commissioner Trimble suggested that those applicants should be removed from the list before creating a new list.

Chair Bean asked whether the candidates have been notified of their impending removal and appeal rights. Chief Examiner Behrends Cerniwey advised that at this time, no applicant has been notified. Based on Civil Services rules, the Police Chief provided a memorandum stating the reason why the list was not viable for hiring a candidate.

Commissioners took a brief moment to review the memorandum from Police Chief Weiks. Because the department attempted to appoint one of the candidate's, the department is able to request a new list.

Discussion ensued on whether a request for a new list could include initiating a new examination process. Commissioner Trimble questioned whether it would be possible to complete another recruitment when a list exists. He suggested notifying the applicants of their removal from the list and providing information on appeal rights. If the Chief has interviewed the candidates and determined that none of them were qualified, the City should send a letter to the candidates informing them that they are not qualified and would be removed from the list.

Chief Examiner Behrends Cerniwey cited specific Civil Service rules for termination of a prior eligibility list and if the appointing authority finds good cause to reject each of the certified persons on the first list of seven, the appointing authority would justify in writing to the Commission the reasons why an appointment to the vacant position cannot be made. Chief Examiner Behrends Cerniwey advised that the candidates on the original list would be notified in writing after a new list is established. At that time, the candidates could appeal the action. The existing list cannot be expired

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until the new examination plan is approved.

**MOTION:**

**Commissioner Trimble moved, seconded by Chair Bean, to approve the Modified Recruitment Plan for Police Services Specialist I conditioned upon the understanding that the candidates on the existing list will be notified that the list will be extinguished and that they have a right to appeal the action to the Civil Service Commission. Motion carried unanimously.**

**AUTHORIZATION  
FOR  
EXAMINATION:  
LATERAL  
FIREFIGHTER:**

Chief Examiner Behrends Cerniwey reported the Fire Department is recruiting for Entry Level Firefighters. Additionally, the Fire Department would like to pursue a parallel recruitment for a Lateral Firefighter. The Fire Department has not pursued lateral recruitment for many years. In an effort to diversify the department's workforce, lateral recruitment provides another avenue to recruit other firefighters from other departments. The goal is to structure the lateral recruitment process in tandem with the entry level process for hiring by September 1, 2019. The recruitment process entails a two-step process without the speed interview. Civil Service rules defines a lateral candidate as; (a) an applicant who has been employed and successfully completed probation within the last 36 months prior to application as a full-time, paid employee of a firefighting agency; (b) fire service applicants must have obtained IFSAC Firefighter 1 certification and EMT certification; and (c) applicants must meet physical, medical, and background standards.

The two-step process includes a written examination (custom created with approximately 50 questions of recognized industry standards from IFSAC and the national standards for EMT) with a 70% minimum passing score. The oral board would be scheduled in the same week as the oral board for entry level applicants. The same dimensions would be applied, as well as fire service experience and education. The oral board requires a minimum 70% passing score. The final score would be the same mix as the entry level process (30% for written exam and 70% for the oral board).

Commissioner Trimble asked whether the Fire Department anticipates many applicants. Assistant Chief McGarva said he anticipates approximately up to 50 applicants as the Fire Department has received a number of inquiries.

Chair Bean inquired about the possibility of an adjustment for those applicants who have qualified and are paid at a higher level at their current agency. Assistant Chief McGarva said there are many variables and the Fire Department has some mechanisms in place if the applicant is from a JATC (Washington State Fire Fighters Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee) fire department. If the applicant is not from a JATC fire department, the department evaluates the applicant's credentials and experience to determine the level of pay.

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**MOTION:** Commissioner Trimble moved, seconded by Commissioner Tee, to approve the proposed Examination for Lateral Firefighter as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**UPDATES AND SCHEDULING:** The next meeting is scheduled on June 13, 2019. Examiner Behrends Cerniwey reported Analyst McGarva would serve in her absence, as she will be out of the area during most of June. The next meeting agenda includes Promotional Lieutenant Firefighter and Paramedic Lieutenant eligibility lists.

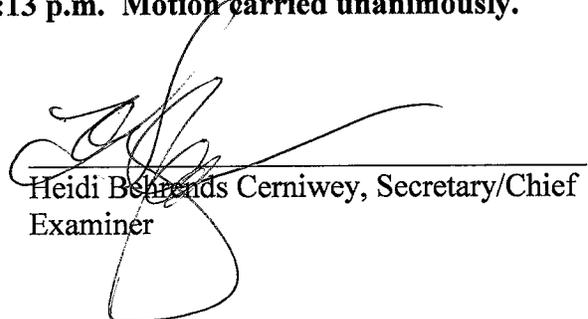
The City invited interested individuals to attend focus groups as well as completing some research on best practices for recruitment. The Fire Department hosted two career discovery events. The first session was geared for women interested in fire service. The event featured some guest speakers. Approximately 12 individuals attended the Saturday morning event. The second career discovery event was held on a Tuesday evening with a panel of speakers. Approximately 40 people attended the event.

Examiner Behrends Cerniwey reported on her recent attendance and completion of Fire Ops 101 in Richland, Washington.

Fire Chief LaVielle reported the City received 300 applications for entry level firefighter. The recruitment closes on June 7, 2019. The Fire Department recently completed the Regionalization Study between six local fire departments. The draft has been distributed to all the departments for review. The draft study includes no recommendations. The deadline for feedback and suggested changes is May 10, 2019. Within the next several weeks, information on any recommendations should be released.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Commissioner Tee moved, seconded by Commissioner Trimble, to adjourn the meeting at 6:13 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

  
Maggie Bean, Chair

  
Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, Secretary/Chief Examiner