

**TUMWATER CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 14, 2023 Page 1**

CONVENE: 5:31 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Simon Tee and Commissioner Blake Chard.

Staff: Secretary/Chief Examiner Juliann McGarva, Fire Chief Brian Hurley, and Police Chief Jon Weiks.

CHANGES TO AGENDA: There were no changes to the agenda.

**APPROVAL OF
AUGUST 10, 2023
MINUTES:**

MOTION: **Chair Tee moved, seconded by Commissioner Chard, to approve the minutes of August 10, 2023 as published. A voice vote approved the motion.**

STATUS OF ELIGIBILITY LISTS: Chief Examiner McGarva reported the list has not changed. The City completed some recruitment during the month resulting in some proposed changes for consideration by the Commission at its October meeting.

APPROVAL OF ENTRY LEVEL POLICE ELIGIBILITY LIST: Chief Examiner McGarva reported the proposed list includes four new names totaling 11 names on the list. One candidate failed a background investigation and one candidate failed the Chief's interview.

Chair Tee inquired as to whether there were any diverse candidates included on the list. Chief Examiner McGarva said the list contains one female candidate who was added in February 2023. As the list is continuous and changes from month to month, it is difficult to track the type of candidates.

MOTION: **Chair Tee moved, seconded by Commissioner Chard, to approve the Entry Level Police Eligibility List as presented. A voice vote approved the motion.**

APPROVAL OF ENTRY LEVEL FIREFIGHTER EXAM PLAN: Chief Examiner McGarva reported the proposal is for an exam plan for entry level Firefighter. The process has been in place since 2019. The Department's IDEA Team recommended the exam plan. The proposal is to open the application process in November for a three-month period. The first phase enables any applicant scoring 80% or higher on the Public Safety written test to participate in a speed interview in February 2024. Successful candidates receiving a score of 70% or higher will advance to the oral boards in March. Successful candidates receiving a score of 70% would be placed on the eligibility list for consideration by the Commission. Following approval of the list, the Fire Chief can hire from the top seven candidates beginning in April 2024 with conditional offers anticipated in May 2024.

The testing exam is weighted at 40% of the total score and the oral board is

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weighted at 60%.

The IDEA Team is comprised of Firefighters and the management team. The IDEA Team explored way to reduce barriers and increase the inclusivity of the hiring process for Firefighters by opening the hiring process to more individuals to increase diversity and provide equity. The process enables applicants scoring 80% or above on the Public Safety written test to participate in a speed interview with a three-member panel that includes a Firefighter and a community member. Dimensions rated include: (1) Motivation/Interest, (2) Compassion/Service Orientation, and (3) Working with the Public.

During the first speed interview process in 2019, the City invited 500 applicants to participate in the speed interview. Approximately 60 candidates were placed on the eligibility list. The process resulted in an increase in the number of female candidates, as well as an increase in diverse applicants. The process is conducted annually except during the pandemic. Additionally, the Fire Department hosted several open houses at the Fire Department to promote recruitment efforts.

Fire Chief Hurley added that the Fire Department is scheduling a minimum of two recruiting events. The department works with the City's communications team to advertise the events to a broad and diverse audience. Perspective applicants are invited to attend a presentation on testing and receive information about the job of a firefighter. The intent is removing barriers in the hiring process.

Chief Examiner McGarva reported the list from 2022 expires in November 2023. The first testing process was initiated in 2019. There are no proposed changes to the process. The process is starting prior to the expiration of the existing list to ensure a list is available in early 2024.

Commissioner Chard inquired as to the reason for approval of the exam plan that has been in existence since 2019. Chief McGarva advised that the list is not considered a continuous list. The new list will be effective from April 2024 to April 2025.

Fire Chief Hurley added that since the list is not continuous, the Commission is asked to reaffirm and reauthorize the process for recruitment and testing. Retirements are primarily occurring by Firefighter/Paramedics; however, the department requires an active eligibility list for Firefighters at all times as unexpected situations often occur.

MOTION:

Chair Tee moved, seconded by Commissioner Chard, to approve the Entry Level Firefighter Exam Plan with changes to reflect accurate dates. A voice vote approved the motion.

APPROVAL OF

Chief Examiner McGarva reported the position opening is for a lateral

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**PARAMEDIC
FIREFIGHTER
EXAM PLAN:**

Paramedic Firefighter. The exam plan has not been altered since the last recruitment in January 2023. The Fire Department has several vacancies. The City has a continuous process for entry level Paramedic Firefighter; however, the department has indicated interest in pursuing a lateral process to receive candidates from the lateral list as well.

Fire Chief Hurley said it is beneficial for the department to pursue a parallel process as entry-level recruitment has not attracted as many candidates. The department has experienced success in lateral recruitments. Generally, lateral candidates have considerable experience and do not need to attend the fire academy. Those candidates receive in-house training and can generally start working immediately to satisfy department minimum staffing standards.

Chair Tee questioned the definition of “subject matter experts.” Chief Examiner McGarva explained that subject matter experts are the Fire Chief and the Assistant Fire Chief. A lateral paramedic must have specific qualifications to be considered. The Chief and Assistant Fire Chief review the applications to ensure candidates meet the minimum requirements.

MOTION:

Chair Tee moved, seconded by Commissioner Chard, to approve the Paramedic-Firefighter Exam Plan as presented. A voice vote approved the motion.

UPDATES:

Police Chief Weiks updated the committee on activities occurring in the Police Department. Currently, two police officers are attending the Basic Law Enforcement Academy. Both officers are mid-way through the course. Another police officer is waiting for an academy slot. The goal is for the officer to attend the academy by late November or early December. The department currently has two police officer vacancies with a third opening anticipated in the next several weeks. The department continues to complete oral boards of candidates from the continuous list. The difficulty is identifying quality candidates. An oral board was recently completed and successful candidates will be placed on the list for the Commission’s consideration. Chief interviews are scheduled for subsequent approval by the Commission prior to any hiring decisions. The department was recently notified of the need to initiate a Code Enforcement Services Transport Officer testing process as the individual hired in January has been on medical leave and notified the department of her resignation, as she has not recovered from the medical condition. The Commission will consider the testing process for the position at its next meeting.

Fire Chief Hurley advised of the hiring a Firefighter Paramedic, and an entry level Firefighter. Both candidates have considerable experience and training and were able to participate in the department’s apprenticeship program at a higher step with both employees not required to attend the fire academy, which benefits the department. The department’s ongoing process for recruitment of a Department Assistant II position resulted in successful interviews earlier in the day. The list of candidates will be presented to the Commission at its next

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meeting.

Fire Chief Hurley said he anticipates hosting a series of events that will result in one hiring of a firefighter position next year.

Fire Chief Hurley thanked Chief Examiner McGarva for her service to the City and to the Civil Service Commission.

Chair Tee thanked Chief Examiner McGarva for her service and acknowledged both Chiefs for their updates. He wished her well on her pending retirement.

**NEXT MEETING
DATE:**

The next meeting is scheduled on Thursday, October 12, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

With there being no further business, Chair Tee adjourned the meeting at 5:47 p.m.

Simon Tee, Chair

Juliann McGarva, Secretary Chief Examiner

Prepared by Valerie L. Gow, Recording Secretary/President
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