

**TUMWATER CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING  
DECEMBER 12, 2024 Page 1**

**CONVENE:** 5:55 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Chair Simon Tee and Commissioners Blake Chard and Pat Schneider.

Staff: Secretary/Chief Examiner Michelle Sutherland, Fire Chief Brian Hurley, and Police Lieutenant Carlos Quiles Jr.

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

**APPROVAL OF CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES - NOVEMBER 14, 2024:**

**MOTION:** **Commissioner Schneider moved, seconded by Chair Tee, to approve the minutes of November 14, 2024 as published. A voice vote approved the motion.**

**STATUS OF DECEMBER ELIGIBILITY LISTS:** Chief Examiner Sutherland reviewed the status of the eligibility lists. Active and continuous lists for police and fire remain effective. There are no other changes proposed to the lists.

**CHANGES IN FIRE PROBATION LANGUAGE:** Chief Examiner Sutherland advised that during the negotiations of the fire union contract, both parties addressed the length of an employee probation period. Current Civil Service language specifies the length of the probationary period. The proposal is to change the probationary period specifying that employees may be required to serve a maximum of an 18-month probationary period unless extended by Civil Service rules.

Fire Chief Hurley reported that during the bargaining process, both labor and management expressed interest in changing the probationary period to reflect a minimum of 12 months up to a maximum of 18 months. The proposal is similar to the probationary period for police officers. Many newly hired fire department employees are required to attend the fire academy for emergency medical services training or fire training of 16 weeks. On January 1, 2025, the department is hiring a number of new employees. The new employees will complete all required training in June 2025, which should reflect the beginning of the probationary period. The proposal changes the probationary period from a minimum of 12 months to a period of 18 months to account for the six months of required training. Additionally, the probationary period could be extended if required. The proposal is specific only to the Tumwater Fire Department.

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*Commissioner Blake joined the meeting at 6:01 p.m.*

**MOTION:** **Commissioner Schneider moved, seconded by Commissioner Blake, to approve new language pertaining to a probationary period of 18 months for firefighters and paramedics. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF CERTIFIED POLICE OFFICER EXAM PLAN:** Chief Examiner Sutherland said the proposal is an open and continuous recruitment of police officer positions using the proposed Certified Police Officer Exam Plan as presented.

**MOTION:** **Commissioner Chard moved, seconded by Commissioner Schneider, to approve the proposed Certified Police Officer Exam Plan as presented. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

Chair Tee requested a revision to the published agenda reflecting that items 6 and 7 are items for approval.

**APPROVAL OF ENTRY LEVEL POLICE ELIGIBILITY LIST:** Chief Examiner Sutherland advised that the new proposed eligibility list reflects the removal of two individuals for failure of the Chief's interview and addition of four candidates. Staff is seeking approval of the proposed Entry Level Police Eligibility List as presented.

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

**APPROVAL OF LATERAL FIREFIGHTER ELIGIBILITY LIST:** Chief Examiner Sutherland reported the Lateral Firefighter Eligibility List is a continuous posting and list. Two candidates are proposed for addition to the list and two candidates withdrawn from the list because the candidates were hired by the fire department.

**MOTION:** **Commissioner Chard moved, seconded by Commissioner Schneider, to approve the Lateral Firefighter Eligibility List as presented. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF LATERAL PARAMEDIC FIREFIGHTER ELIGIBILITY LIST:** Chief Examiner Sutherland reported one candidate is proposed for addition to the list with three candidates removed. Two candidates failed the Chief's interview and the third candidate was hired by the fire department. Staff requests approval of the proposed Lateral Paramedic Firefighter Eligibility List.

**MOTION:** **Commissioner Schneider moved, seconded by Commissioner Chard, to approve the Lateral Paramedic Firefighter Eligibility List as presented. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

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**APPROVAL OF  
PARAMEDIC  
FIREFIGHTER  
ELIGIBILITY LIST:**

Chief Examiner Sutherland reported staff is seeking approval of the list reflecting the removal of six candidates. Two candidates were hired, one candidate failed the Chief's interview, and three candidates requested withdrawal from the list.

Commissioner Schneider asked about the reasons the candidates withdrew their names from the list. Fire Chief Hurley said the three candidates were hired by other jurisdictions. The department is hiring a number of paramedics at this time. A number of candidates receive conditional offers of employment. However, many of those candidates often accept another job offer with another fire agency.

**MOTION:**

**Commissioner Schneider moved, seconded by Commissioner Chard, to approve the Paramedic Firefighter Eligibility List as presented. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

**POLICE SERGEANT  
EXAM PLAN:**

Chief Examiner Sutherland said the proposed recruitment plan is an open recruitment posted for a two-week period in December 2024. The proposal outlines the steps and phases of the exam plan.

Chair Tee asked whether the proposed plan reflects any changes since the last plan.

Police Lieutenant Quiles advised that the exam plan has not been changed.

Commissioner Chard asked whether the prior approval of the exam plan would suffice. Chief Examiner Sutherland advised that the prior approval included an expiration date of mid-December 2024. The posting is scheduled for the last two weeks in December. Candidate screening will begin in January 2025 with a written test scheduled on January 9, 2025.

**MOTION:**

**Commissioner Chard moved, seconded by Commissioner Schneider, to approve the Police Sergeant Exam Plan with changes to reflect that the written test is scheduled on January 9, 2025, the assessment center will be conducted on January 23, 2025, and insert language stipulating that the posting date will be the last two weeks in December 2024. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF  
RECLASSIFICATION  
OF ADMINISTRATIVE  
ASSISTANT TO  
EXECUTIVE  
ASSISTANT:**

Chief Examiner Sutherland reported the role of the current Administrative Assistant in the Tumwater Fire Department has evolved over time with added job responsibilities that are typically beyond the scope of an Administrative Assistant. The request is to reclassify the position from an Administrative Assistant to an Executive Assistant to serve the fire department.

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Commissioner Schneider asked for information on the current and proposed job descriptions for comparison purposes. Fire Chief Hurley advised that many of the Administrative Assistant duties are in support of the Fire Chief and the fire department with many duties administrative in nature. The position has evolved to include supervision of the Department Assistant as well as assuming more budget responsibility, collective bargaining responsibilities, and payroll responsibilities. The department has 53 FTEs with new hiring totaling a department of 62 FTEs. As the department has grown and expanded, position responsibilities of the Administrative Assistant have evolved as well. The proposal only affects one position. An Executive Assistant position exists within the City to support the City Administrator and the City Council. That position description was modified to apply to the fire department.

Commissioner Schneider asked whether the increase in responsibilities automatically includes an increase in salary. Chief Examiner Sutherland affirmed the position would receive an increase in salary in addition to the non-represented employee market increase approved by the Council. The increase varies by position. The City completed a market analysis of all non-represented positions with comparable positions in other cities. Most of the non-represented positions in the City ranged from 10% to 25% less than other comparable positions in similar sized cities. The proposed action will increase the position by two salary grades equating to an increase of approximately 8% to 10%.

Commissioner Schneider requested information on the proposed salary and the source of funds for reclassification of the position. Fire Chief Hurley replied that the proposal was included in the Mayor's proposed budget adopted by the Council on December 3, 2024.

Chief Examiner Sutherland added that with respect to the difference in police and fire departments, the police department includes a Police Administrative Manager position and other administrative support positions. The Fire Department is assigned one Executive Assistant and a Department Assistant.

Fire Chief Hurley noted that the existing employee serving as the Administrative Assistant would be reclassified as an Executive Assistant with the fire department continuing to have two administrative support positions. Only one employee would be affected by the proposed reclassification.

In response to questions from Chair Tee, Chief Examiner Sutherland explained that the proposal does not affect other employees serving as Administrative Assistants in the City. The proposed action applies

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only to Civil Service positions. Other Administrative Assistants are assigned to different departments within the City.

Commissioner Chard explained that his perspective of the proposal is a reclassification of an existing position rather than reclassification of a class of positions.

Chief Examiner Sutherland added that the City currently has one position of Executive Assistant within the City. The position serves the City Administrator and the City Council. Each Executive Assistant position has different duties based on the department.

Commissioner Schneider reiterated her request for a copy of a job description as it would be helpful in determining whether the positions are equal in terms of job responsibilities.

Fire Chief Hurley noted that the department has included the Administrative Assistant position for a number of years. However, over the course of time, the position's responsibilities have evolved to the point where the work for the fire department does not align with the job responsibilities of other Administrative Assistants in other departments in the City. As a full-time employee within the Tumwater Fire Department, the position is subject to Civil Service rules.

Chair Tee affirmed Commissioner Schneider's request to afford the Commission an opportunity to review job duties and responsibilities. He suggested deferring action on the proposal.

Commissioner Chard asked staff to explore the Commission's authority as he has no issue with reviewing the job description but believes the Commission is tasked only with approval or disapproval of the request.

Chair Tee said it would be beneficial for the Commission to review the current job descriptions of Administrative Assistant and Executive Assistant to identify new responsibilities that align with the Executive Assistant classification.

Chief Examiner Sutherland affirmed staff would provide the information at the January meeting.

Chair Tee deferred action on the proposed action until the January meeting.

**NEXT MEETING  
DATE:**

The next meeting is scheduled on Thursday, January 9, 2025.

A correction of the date in the Police Sargent Exam Plan was noted from January 13, 2025 to January 9, 2025 for approval of the eligibility

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list.

**UPDATES:**

Fire Chief Hurley said efforts are continuing on the hiring of Paramedics for the new paramedic unit. The new unit requires nine new positions. The positions are included in the budget with Medic One funding a substantial amount of the salaries of approximately 80%. Three of the positions were hired on December 1, 2024 with two candidates signing their offers to begin working on January 1, 2025. Five other candidates are pending conditional offers if the candidates successfully complete the next steps of the hiring process. The department also has another Paramedic position created by a retirement and a promotion. A Fire Lieutenant was promoted to Fire Prevention Officer creating another opening. Five of the candidates are entry level candidates necessitating attendance to the fire academy. Five candidates are lateral candidates serving as paramedics for other agencies. One candidate is from Virginia and another candidate worked previously in Thurston County and is returning from Gig Harbor. The hiring pipeline includes 10 new employees.

Police Lieutenant Quiles reported a new officer is scheduled to begin working on December 16, 2024. The officer is scheduled to attend the police academy. Another lateral officer candidate is nearing completion of the background investigation. The officer worked for a police agency in Virginia. Another candidate has begun the background investigation process. The department has two vacant police officer positions. The department's current police academy recruit suffered an injury playing basketball and is unable to return to the academy. The officer resigned because of the recovery required for the injury.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Commissioner Schneider moved, seconded by Chair Tee, to adjourn the meeting at 6:37 p.m. A voice vote approved the motion.**

Signed by:  
*Simon Tee*  
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Simon Tee, Chair

Signed by:  
*Michelle Sutherland*  
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Michelle Sutherland, Secretary Chief Examiner