

BOARD OF FIRE AND POLICE COMMISSION

June 1, 2022

8:30 a.m.

City Hall, 419 Fulton Street, Room 404, Peoria, Illinois

ROLL CALL

The Board of Fire & Police Commission meeting was called to order by Vice Chairperson Tom Burke.

Commissioner's present: William Watkins, Leonard Unes, John Williams, William Spears, and Tom Burke

Commissioners Absent: Lynn Pearson and Kelly Petersen

Others present: Affirmative Employment Specialist Debra Bush, Police Chief Eric Echevarria, Police Captain Earnest McCall, Interim Fire Chief Shawn Sollberger, and Attorney Masum Perkins

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Leonard Unes motioned to receive and file the minutes of Regular Meeting May 9, 2022, as presented; seconded by John Williams; all approved 5-0.

COMMUNICATIONS

A. Letter of Commendation – Police Officer Keith Burwell

B. 2022 Police Department Awards – Police Department Awards Presented during Police Week

William Watkins motioned to receive, and file communications A and B as presented; seconded by William Spears; all approved 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Timeline and Recruiting Efforts

Police Captain Earnest McCall stated that they have two Police Cadets starting on June 13, 2022, for a total of four Cadets.

Captain McCall stated that they would be conducting the POWER test for the new Recruits from June 13 to 17, 2022. After that they polygraph, psychological, medical and backgrounds will begin.

Captain McCall stated that they will begin the Intern Program since they have some students that would like to be Interns in the Police Department.

Police Chief Eric Echevarria stated that they have one Police Recruit that did not pass the State Board Exam at the Police Academy and on his second try. He will be placed on Administrative Leave without pay for the next 30 days until he can take the test again.

Police Chief Echevarria stated that the Police Training Academy and various Police personnel have been working with him to get him prepared for the next test.

Interim Fire Chief Shawn Sollberger stated that they have one Firefighter Recruit that will be graduating the Fire Academy on July 1, 2022.

Chief Sollberger stated that they were working with Debra on the current list of Firefighter candidates to get them scheduled for their polygraph, psychological and medical examinations. The Fire Department is also starting to conduct background investigations.

Chief Sollberger stated that if they get the SAFER Grant, they would be able to hire eleven candidates and would probably lose five or six more employees through retirement.

Chief Sollberger stated that they will have a test this fall, and the information has been posted and up and running for that testing process.

Chief Sollberger stated that they put the Firefighter flier on social media and are in the process of working on a recruitment video with the recruitment team, which would be two to three minutes long.

Chief Sollberger stated that are getting back into the Western Illinois University Internship program and they will have two Interns through this fall and spring 2023.

Chief Sollberger stated that when they participated in the internship program a few years ago, they hired four of those Interns as Peoria Firefighters.

Chief Sollberger stated that Captain Rutledge is working with Captain Stimeling on the Explorer Program and working with the Tri County Urban League to get a greater reach of candidates.

Chief Sollberger stated that they want to get into the Middle and High Schools to get them involved with the Explorer Program instead of just on a volunteer Firefighter basis.

Chief Sollberger stated that they went to the Eureka College Job Fair last week, and they are also lined up with basketball teams Illinois Central College and Illinois State University to inform them of becoming a Firefighter.

Chief Sollberger stated that they were reached out by the Mayor to get two 14- or 15-year old to job shadow at the Fire Department for the next six weeks from 8:00 am to Noon.

Tom Burke stated that the Commission will wait to discuss the revisions to the Drug Policy at the next meeting due to Commissioners not being present at this time.

ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

William Spears moved to adjourn to Executive Session under 2c (1) of the Open Meetings Acts, seconded by William Watkins; all approved 5-0.

RECONVENE TO REGULAR SESSION

NEW BUSINESS

Tom Burke stated that while in Executive Session they reviewed the minutes from the June 1, 2022, meeting and they will not be released per the Attorney.

William Watkins moved to approve the Executive Session Minutes of June 1, 2022, that are not to be released, seconded by William Spears; all approved 5-0.

Tom Burke stated that while in Executive Session they reviewed the Recommendation to Hire Firefighter Candidates, and it will be approved as presented.

William Watkins moved to approve the Recommendation to Hire Firefighter Candidates as presented; seconded by William Spears; all approved 5-0.

Debra Bush stated that on June 7th and 8th, the Fire and Police Commission will be interviewing Police Recruit candidates.

Captain McCall stated that he could see the difference on how the Police Recruit candidates participated in the interviewing process after going through the mock interview process. The candidates felt more relaxed and confident about the interview process.

ADJOURN MEETING

There being no further business, William Spears moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Leonard Unes; all approved 5-0.

Submitted by: Debra D. Bush
Affirmative Employment Specialist

APPROVED:

Tom Burke, Vice Chairperson

William Spears, Member

Leonard Unes, Member

William Watkins, Member

John Williams, Secretary