

## **BOARD OF FIRE AND POLICE COMMISSION**

**September 7, 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 Chairperson Lynn Pearson.

Commissioner's present: William Watkins, Leonard Unes, John Williams, William Spears, Lynn Pearson, and Kelly Petersen

Commissioner's Not Present: Tom Burke

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

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

William Watkins motioned to receive and file the minutes of Regular Meeting August 3, 2022, as presented; seconded by Kelly Peterson; all approved 6-0.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

- A. Recognition Day Letter** – Police Officer James Krider
- B. Police Permanent Promotions** – Police Sergeant Erin Barisch to the rank of Lieutenant and Police Officer Seth Landwehr to Sergeant due the retirement of Lieutenant Kerrie Davis effective August 14, 2022
- C. Request to Promote** – Firefighter Kyle Cheatham to Fire Engineer effective July 25, 2022
- D. Request to Promote** – Fire Engineer William Hanks to Fire Captain effective July 25, 2022
- E. Request to Promote** – Firefighter Brandon Pinkston to Fire Engineer effective August 23, 2022
- F. Request to Promote** – Fire Captain Mike Johnston to Fire EMS/QAO effective August 24, 2022
- G. Request to Promote** – Fire Captain Jered Siebenthal to Fire Battalion Chief of EMS effective August 24, 2022
- H. Request to Promote** – Fire Engineer Brian Elston to Fire Captain effective August 24, 2022
- I. Request to Promote** – Fire Engineer Derek Neal to Fire Captain effective August 24, 2022
- J. Request to Promote** – Firefighter Tyler Farrell to Fire Engineer effective August 25, 2022
- K. Request to Promote** – Firefighter Ray Ramos to Fire Engineer effective August 25, 2022
- L. Request to Promote** – Fire Engineer Blaise Steffen to Fire Captain effective August 25, 2022

Kelly Peterson motioned to receive, and file communications A - L as presented; seconded by John Williams; all approved 6-0.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **A. Review of Revised Drug Use and Possession Policy**

Attorney Masum Perkins read over the changes made to the Drug Use or Possession Policy.

Kelly Peterson motioned to approve the Fire and Police Commission Drug Use or Possession Policy as presented; seconded by William Watkins; all approved 6-0.

## **B. Timeline and Recruiting Efforts**

Police Captain Earnest McCall stated that they are working on a recruit video and looking forward to going with the National Testing Network (NTN) to have the applicants test from all over the world and automatically have the results sent to the City of Peoria.

Police Captain McCall stated that they are looking to hire lateral transfers with a sign on bonus of \$15,000 to be distributed throughout their employment. The candidates can apply now for this career opportunity.

Police Captain McCall stated that they are losing quite a bit of officers through retirement as well as some leaving to go to other states.

Fire Chief Shawn Sollberger stated that they have a new Recruit class that has the five recruits from the City of Peoria along with one from East Peoria and Pekin in process right now.

Fire Chief Sollberger stated that they have one female and one African American male in the current recruit class.

Fire Chief Sollberger stated that they have eleven applicants left in the Eligibility Pool and when the SAFER grant is awarded, they will start another Recruit class in November, which is when the current class ends.

Fire Chief Sollberger stated that their CPAT process begins this week starting with the Orientation, which they are excited about.

Fire Chief Sollberger stated that they have a meeting regarding the recruitment video and that Police Chief Echevarria came up with a clever idea that each department would do their own recruitment video, but then do another recruitment video with both Police and Fire combined.

Fire Chief Sollberger stated that the catch phrase would be, "Which type of Hero do you want to be?" for the combined video.

Fire Chief Sollberger stated they are working with a young, upcoming local guy to produce their video. He will be coming to the Firehouses on the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> of this month to begin filming.

Fire Chief Sollberger stated they have a meeting with Illinois Central College's Women's Basketball and are glad to know there are two prospects taking Fire Science classes that would like to become a Firefighter.

Fire Chief Sollberger stated they are in the process of creating an Apprenticeship Program instead of a Cadet due to having more flexibility with the hiring process according to State law.

Fire Chief Sollberger stated that they wanted to get a three-year commitment for the program from the City, which would start in 2023.

Fire Chief Sollberger stated that they would like to get three City of Peoria residents between the ages 18-21 and get them started in the program for three years.

Police Captain McCall stated that they swore in six new Police Recruits on Monday, which had diversity of two African American males and one African American Female.

Police Captain McCall stated that that we continue to lose applicants because they do not pass the POWER test, so they developed a Physical Fitness Team that would work with the candidates and other interested in becoming a Police Recruit to prepare them to pass the test.

Commissioner Leonard Unes congratulated Fire Chief Sollberger on becoming the new Fire Chief and for getting pinned by his dad, who previously worked for the Peoria Fire Department as a Firefighter.

Commissioner Leonard Unes also congratulated Fire Chief Sollberger on his first official act of selecting and pinning Rick Morgan as Assistant Fire Chief, which was followed by an embrace of not just two Firefighter officials, but two brothers.

Commissioner Lynn Pearson agreed with Leonard Unes and congratulated the Fire Chief and Assistant Chief on their appointments on behalf of the Commission.

Fire Chief Sollberger passed out a list with the name, age, race, EMT certification, degree and other information pertaining to the Firefighter candidates left in the pool for the Commission to see what the diversity of candidates.

Fire Chief Sollberger stated that they will be having Accelerant Dogs in the arson investigation unit. The dogs are in the process of being trained and the plan is to get two dogs.

Commissioner Kelly Peterson stated that he was extremely proud of the current promotions in the Fire Department and of the newly hired Police Chief and appreciates the work that each department does for the City of Peoria.

#### **ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Kelly Peterson moved to adjourn to Executive Session under 2c (1) of the Open Meetings Acts, seconded by William Watkins; all approved 6-0.

#### **RECONVENE TO REGULAR SESSION**

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Lynn Pearson stated that while in Executive Session they reviewed the minutes from the August 3, 2022, meeting and they are okay to be released per Attorney Perkins.

William Watkins moved to approve the Executive Session Minutes of August 3, 2022, that are not to be released, seconded by Kelly Peterson; all approved 6-0.

Lynn Pearson stated that while in Executive Session they reviewed the Fire Captain Promotional Exam List, and it will be approved as presented.

John Williams moved to approve the Fire Captain Promotional Exam List as presented; seconded by Leonard Unes; all approved 6-0.

Lynn Pearson stated that while in Executive Session they reviewed the Police Recruit September 2022 Eligibility Pool, and it will be approved as presented.

Leonard Unes moved to approve the Police Recruit September 2022 Eligibility Pool as presented; seconded by Kelly Peterson; all approved 6-0.

Debra Bush stated that the Commission will need to interview Police Recruit candidates the week of September 26, 2022, which is right after the Police Department does their interviews.

**ADJOURN MEETING**

There being no further business, Kelly Peterson moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by William Spears; all approved 6-0.

Submitted by: Debra D. Bush  
Affirmative Employment Specialist

**APPROVED:**

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Lynn Pearson, Chairperson

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William Spears, Member

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Leonard Unes, Member

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William Watkins, Member

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John Williams, Secretary

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Kelly Peterson, Member