

BOARD OF FIRE AND POLICE COMMISSION
April 3, 2024
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 Thomas Burke
Commissioner's present: Thomas Burke, William Watkins, William Spears, Kelly Petersen, Mikeisha Armstrong, and Leonard Unes

Commissioners Absent: John Williams

Others present: Affirmative Employment Specialist Debra Bush, Assistant Fire Chief Tony Cummings, Police Captain Earnest McCall, Police Sergeant Ryan Winkle, Police Officer Christopher Collins, and Attorney Michael Toren

Commission Chairman Tom Burke called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Tom Burke, Chairman stated that the minutes of the March 6, 2024, meeting were not available at this time and will be reviewed at the next meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS

Chairman Burke stated that there were no communications received.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Timeline and Recruiting Efforts

Assistant Fire Chief Tony Cummings stated that they had posted the Fire Apprentice positions and received 20 applications.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that out of the 20 applications; four were too old so they will interview from the other 16 applications and select three to hire in June.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that the next Academy Class will start in the fall, 2024.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that they are trying to get approved to teach an EMT class for applicants that are in the current Firefighter pool, so that this would be one step that they would have completed before being hired.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that they have seven Firefighter Recruits going through the academy right now with an expected graduation date of May 17, 2024.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that the graduation of the seven Firefighter candidates will take place on May 17, 2024, at the Gateway Building.

Police Captain Earnest McCall stated that they are authorized to have 222 Officers and they are currently at 214.

Police Captain McCall stated that they will be six Police Recruits graduating from the Police Training Institute on May 25, 2024.

Police Captain McCall stated that they will be working on the next testing cycle that has a deadline date of April 2024, which would be hired in September.

Police Captain McCall stated that nine Police Recruits hired on May 29, 2024, and one lateral Officer being hired on May 25, 2024.

Police Sergeant Ryan Winkle passed out the Recruitment Team Information Sheet for March 2024 to the Commission.

Sergeant Winkle stated that there were 47 applicants currently going through the hiring process for September test cycle; 37 applicants had successfully turned in all their documents; there are currently eight in the Academy and 23 currently in the field training program.

Sergeant Winkle also discussed the following:

Career Fairs Attended in February:

- Northern Illinois University
- University of Illinois Springfield
- Illinois Wesleyan University

Community Engagement:

- Birthday Buddies at Pleasant Valley Elementary
- Rolling Acres Middle School

Networking:

- Lost Art Design – Awarded a \$25,000 grant for Swag items.
- 2024 Recruitment video with Discover Peoria
- Equity and Procurement Expo

Mentoring & Peer Support:

- Intern Cameron Dillefeld – Western Illinois University – He is currently in the testing process for September.
- Intern Patrick Ziegler – Bradley University
- Intern Ethan Church – Western Illinois University – He is a new Intern through the “On-Boarding For Summer.”

Applicant Engagement:

- Physical Fitness Team – 3 times a week utilizing the Peoria Police Department gym and Riverplex personal training facilities.

Officer Collins stated that they will be upgrading their swag items to distribute to VIP guests, kids and use for gifts at job fairs.

Police Captain McCall stated that on Wednesday, May 15, 2024, at noon outside of City Hall and the awards ceremony will be held in Room 220-221 in the Civic Center.

Debra Bush passed out the invitation to all the Commission members to attend the Police Week activities.

Police Captain McCall stated that starting first Thursday in April will begin their Walk and Talk project.

Police Captain McCall stated that there is a Virtue Center in the Communications Center at Illinois Central College that teaches you how to shoot, don't shoot scenarios on the computer and he invited everyone to come out and see how that works.

Debra Bush stated that one of our Police Cadets, Taya Bates, applied and was selected by the Mayor to supervise the Mayors Intern Program for the Summer. She will continue to work in her Police Cadet capacity on weekends and when the program ends, she will go back to her regular duties as a Police Cadet.

Debra Bush stated that Ms. Bates will be submitting her application for the next testing cycle to become a Police Recruit.

B. SR22 insurance discussion

Commissioner Kelly Petersen stated that he had requested that the SR22 discussion be put on the agenda to have someone from the Legal Department come to discuss what the City is doing to monitor this and if there was anything the Commission should be doing differently when making decisions on this subject in their polygraph or psychological examinations.

Commissioner Petersen asked what the City is doing to monitor SR22 insurance like pulling their license information through the driver's license bureau periodically for employees that have been hired.

Attorney Michael Toren stated the City does have some driver's outside of Police and Fire that this could potentially affect since it is not an automatic disqualifier.

Attorney Toren stated that in talking with Corporation Counsel, the City is made aware of these issues, and they are escalated internally, and they are focused on unrestrictive driving privileges rather than monitoring the insurance of individual employees.

Attorney Toren stated that in most cases, if an employee doesn't have full driving privileges, where they don't need SR22, they are not driving city vehicles, so the City shouldn't have employees driving with SR22.

Commissioner Petersen thanked Attorney Toren for coming and stated his experience with SR22 was that the money is supposed to be taken from your bank account, but if the funds are not available, their license becomes suspended, and due to the notification being sent by mail, the person may not know their license was suspended right away.

Commissioner Petersen stated that window is an opportunity for an unlicensed driver like a Police Officer or Firefighter to be driving unlicensed.

Commissioner Petersen asked how the City monitors whether an employee might have SR22 insurance or does the City have a plan in place, and if not, maybe the City should get a plan in place due to the enormous exposure.

Attorney Toren stated that if an employee happens to get SR22 insurance in the City of Peoria, it will get to the City quicker than if it happened outside of the area.

Attorney Toren stated that he was not aware of any employees driving with SR22 insurance, but they want to make sure there is a process for that.

Attorney Toren stated that he would report back at the next meeting to make sure this is being fully addressed.

Debra Bush stated that she would be the SR22 Insurance discussion on the agenda for the May meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Debra Bush stated that due to the Police Lieutenant and Police Sergeant Promotional Lists needing to have the terms of the list from three years to two years, the Police Department and the Union would need to get a side agreement to get this changed, so they will not be reviewed at this meeting.

Debra Bush stated that a Special Meeting would be needed to approve the new lists due to the lists expiring on April 30, 2024, which is before our next meeting in May.

Debra Bush stated that the Executive Session Minutes will also be reviewed at the next meeting also.

ADJOURN MEETING

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

Submitted by: Debra D. Bush
Affirmative Employment Specialist

APPROVED:

Thomas Burke, Chairperson

William Spears, Vice Chairperson

Kelly Petersen, Member

William Watkins, Member

Leonard Unes, Member

Mikeisha Armstrong, Member