

BOARD OF FIRE AND POLICE COMMISSION
May 1, 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, and Attorney Max Walton

Commission Chairman Tom Burke called the meeting to order.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Vice Chairperson William Spears stated that nominations were now in order for the office of Chairperson.

Commissioner Leonard Unes nominated Tom Burke for the office of Chairperson.

Vice Chairperson William Spears stated that Tom Burke was nominated and asked were there any further nominations.

Vice Chairperson William Spears stated there were no further nominations for Chairperson, and the nominations were closed.

Chairperson Tom Burke stated that nominations were now in order for the office of Vice Chairperson.

Commissioner Mickeisha Armstrong nominated William Spears for the office of Vice Chairperson.

Chairperson Tom Burke stated that William Spears was nominated and asked were there any further nominations.

Chairperson Tom Burke stated there were no further nominations for Vice Chairperson and the nominations were closed.

Chairperson Tom Burke stated that nominations were now in order for the office of Secretary.

Commissioner Leonard Unes nominated Mickeisha Armstrong for the office of Secretary.

Chairperson Tom Burke stated that Mickeisha Armstrong was nominated and asked were there any further nominations.

Chairperson Tom Burke stated there were no further nominations for Secretary and the nominations were closed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Tom Burke, Chairman asked for the approval of the minutes of the regular meeting of February 7, 2024, Special Meeting February 19, 2024, Regular Meeting March 6, 2024, and Regular Meeting April 3, 2024.

William Watkins motioned to receive and file the minutes of the regular meeting of February 7, 2024, Special Meeting February 19, 2024, Regular Meeting March 6, 2024, and Regular Meeting April 3, 2024; seconded by Leonard Unes; all approved 6-0.

COMMUNICATIONS

Chairman Burke read the communications and asked for the approval of the communications.

- A. **Letter of Commendation** – Police Officer David Logan
- B. **Request to Promote** – Fire Engineer William Sullivan to Fire Captain effective April 5, 2024, due to the retirement of Fire Captain Nick Ellenwood
- C. **Request to Promote** – Firefighter Nicholas Syck to Fire Engineer Effective April 5, 2024
- D. **Completion of Probation** – Firefighters Matthew Foster, Jakob Johnson, Jillian Navarro, Zachary Shubert, and Jake Starkey effective April 6, 2024
- E. **Completion of Probation** – Firefighter Joshua Cregger effective April 23, 2024

Kelly Petersen motioned to receive and file the communications A-E as presented; seconded by Mickeisha Armstrong; all approved 6-0.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Timeline and Recruiting Efforts

Assistant Fire Chief Tony Cummings stated that they did some recruiting efforts at Limestone, Dunlap, and the Annie Jo Johnson schools and they were successful.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that the Recruitment committee has grown tremendously, and they are now able to go to more events.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that they also went to Western Illinois University for a career fair.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that they offered the EMT class to all applicants that are currently on their hiring list, which will run from May 7, 2024, to July 30, 2024, and nine have signed up so far to participate.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that they only have 12 spots so there were only three spots left before the class would be full.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that there was no cost for the applicants to participate in the EMT class.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that they will have the Firefighter Recruits graduating on May 17, 2024, and the ceremony will be held at the Gateway Building at 10am if anyone would like to attend.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that they would be attending the Medal of Valor awards ceremony on May 14, 2024, in Springfield, Illinois.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that Fire Captain Nick Hanson and Firefighter Tobias Roderick will receive medals for an event on Stevenson Drive last year for pulling a 92-year-old woman out of a burning house.

Police Captain Earnest McCall stated that they have 214 sworn personnel with an authorization of 222.

Police Captain McCall stated that they were starting the process all over again and they have 10 spots at PTI for the next class in September, but they may not use all of them.

Debra Bush stated that the Commission and the Police department will be conducting interviews with Police Recruit candidates, and she thanked those Commissioners that were able to participate in the interviews.

Police Captain McCall stated Wednesday, May 15, 2024, the Police Memorial Service will be held at Noon at the area by City Hall, and the Awards Program will be held in the Civic Center, Rooms 220-222, at 2:00 p.m. for anyone that would like to attend.

B. SR22 Insurance Update

Max Walton, Attorney passed out information regarding the research into an Employer's Responsibility Surrounding the SR-22 Status of Current and Prospective Employees to the Commission.

Attorney Walton went over the following information:

I. Background on SR-22 (Financial Responsibility) General

A. What is SR-22?

- > SR-22 is a requirement certain drivers need to file with the State of Illinois to prove they have car insurance meeting the minimum coverages required by law
- > SR-22 is not a type of insurance in and of itself but something a driver would need to carry in addition to their normal vehicle insurance
- > The financial responsibility form is handled through the insurance provider who endorses the SR-22 form with the existing or new insurance policy and then files the form with the State of Illinois
- > According to the Secretary of State, if a driver fails to be in compliance with SR-22, then their driver's license will get suspended. See Mandatory Insurance SR-22 Requirement

B. Who Needs to Carry SR-22?

- > There are various types of offenses that could lead someone to needing to carry SR-22
- > Primarily, all individuals receiving court supervision for a mandatory insurance offense under Section 3-707 of the Illinois Vehicle Code (driving a motor vehicle without car insurance) are required by law to carry SR-22. Id.
- > Additionally, a driver with three or more convictions for mandatory insurance violations. Id.
- > Once a triggering event occurs, a driver would need to carry SR-22 for a period of three consecutive years or restart the three-year period once in compliance again

C. Who Can Access SR-22 Information?

- > According to a representative of the Secretary of State only the specific driver, the driver's specific insurance company, and the Secretary of State can determine the current SR-22 status of a driver
- > The City of Peoria would need permission from the specific employee for Peoria to determine the specific SR-22 status of that driver
- > However, the Secretary of State will suspend the driver's license of a driver not in compliance with SR-22 which can lead to an alternative way of identifying employees without a valid SR-22

II. SR-22 Requirements and its Impact on Prospective Employees

A. City of Peoria Background Checks

- > The City of Peoria performs extensive background checks on all of its prospective fire and police employees once they get to a certain point in the process of being hired
- > This background check includes running a driving history of a future employee
- > Any violations that would trigger a SR-22 requirement would appear on this driving history background check

B. Role of Background Checks

- > Proper and in-depth driving record background checks on prospective employees can better inform decision makers on the ability of the employee to drive a vehicle safely and legally for the City

III. SR-22 Requirements and Current Employees

A. Tracking Current Employees SR-22 Status

- > Section 625 ILCS 5/6-506 prevents an employer from allowing an employee to drive a commercial vehicle if the employer knows or should reasonably know that the employee:

1. Has a suspended driver's license
2. Lost the privilege to drive a commercial motor vehicle
3. Has been disqualified from driving a commercial motor vehicle

- > An employee who is required to carry SR-22 and is not in compliance will also have a suspended driver's license

- > Effectively, this means employers are not allowed to let employees drive City vehicles, if the City knows or should reasonably know, the employee is not currently valid with SR-22 and has their license suspended

B. Means of Tracking Current Employees SR-22 Status

- > One of the easiest ways for the City to track employees not in compliance with SR-22 or who has a suspended license, is to go off of employee self-reporting and honesty

- > Under both current union contracts with the Fire and Police Department, all employees under the contract are required to notify their supervisors about a loss of driving privileges. See Current Police and Fire Collective Bargaining Agreements pertaining to Loss of License.

- > This includes a loss of driving privileges from a lapse in SR-22

IV. Legal Department's Analysis

A. Opinion from the Legal Department

- > The Legal Department does not see significant risk of current employees driving without a valid SR-22
- > Since drivers not up to date with SR-22 also lose their license, the two union contracts also technically cover situations where an employee is not up to date with their SR-22
- > Proper pre-employment screening and self-reporting are the two best ways the City can prevent employees from driving without a valid SR-22

Chairperson Burke stated the information was very helpful and thanked Attorney Walton for the presentation.

Kelly Petersen moved to receive and file the SR-22 presentation materials presented by Attorney Walton as presented; seconded by Mickeisha Armstrong; all approved 6-0.

ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

RECONVENE TO REGULAR SESSION

NEW BUSINESS

Chairperson Burke stated that while in Executive Session they reviewed the minutes from the Regular Meeting February 7, 2024, and they are not to be released per Attorney Perkins.

Mickeisha Armstrong moved to approve the Executive Session minutes from the Regular Meeting February 7, 2024, and they are not to be released per the Attorney Masum Perkins; seconded by Kelly Petersen; all approved 6-0.

Chairperson Burke stated that while in Executive Session they reviewed the minutes from the Special Meeting February 19, 2024, and they are okay to be released per Attorney Perkins.

Bill Spears moved to approve the Executive Session minutes from the Special Meeting February 19, 2024, and they are okay to be released per the Attorney Masum Perkins; seconded by Kelly Petersen; all approved 6-0.

Chairperson Burke stated that while in Executive Session they reviewed the minutes from the Regular Meeting March 6, 2024, and they are okay to be released per the Deputy Corporation Counsel Chrissie Kapustka.

Bill Spears moved to approve the Executive Session minutes from the Regular Meeting March 6, 2024, and they are okay to be released per the Deputy Corporation Counsel Chrissie Kapustka; seconded by Kelly Petersen; all approved 6-0.

Chairperson Burke stated that while in Executive Session they reviewed the Police Recruit Eligibility Pool, and it will be approved as presented.

Kelly Petersen moved to approve the Police Recruit Eligibility Pool as presented; seconded by William Watkins; all approved 6-0.

ADJOURN MEETING

There being no further business, William Watkins moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mickeisha Armstrong; 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