



BOARD OF FIRE AND POLICE COMMISSIONERS
Monday, February 3, 2020, at 1:30 pm
Carbondale Civic Center Room 103
200 South Illinois Avenue
Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

The City of Carbondale Board of Fire and Police Commissioners held a meeting on Monday, February 3, 2020, in Carbondale Civic Center Room 103, 200 South Illinois Avenue. Chairman Kerry Braswell called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: Kerry Braswell, Herman Williams, Gerald Edwards, Randy Burnside, and Ted Lomax

Absent: None

Acknowledgement of Guests

Also present were Deputy City Clerk Clinette Hayes, Human Resources Manager Tara Brown, Diversity and Compliance Officer Alicia Jackson, Police Chief Jeff Grubbs, Deputy Police Chief Stan Reno, and Fire Chief Mike Hertz.

2. Approval of meeting minutes from October 10, 2019*

Commissioner Braswell noted two items in the minutes that he believes needs correction. On page three under item #7, there are five bullet points summarizing the questions and/or concerns of the Board regarding the proposed Grown Your Own program for Entry-Level Police Officer. The third and fourth bullet points are the ones in question.

The third bullet point reads:

“Is this an unfair advantage for those who are not employees of the City?”

The fourth bullet point reads:

“Is this an unfair advantage for candidates who have already obtained their educational requirement?”

It was noted that the third bullet point should probably read “Is this an unfair advantage for those who are employees of the City” and the fourth bullet point should read “Is this an unfair disadvantage for candidates who have already obtained their educational requirement”.

Deputy City Clerk Clair Hayes stated that she will review the audio to determine what was actually said during the meeting.

There were no other corrections or questions regarding the meeting minutes.

MOTION: G. Edwards moved, R. Burnside seconded, to approve the meeting minutes from October 10, 2019, with the noted corrections.

VOTE: All voted Aye. No Nays. Motion declared carried.

* Note: The above corrections were made to the minutes, but the audio had not been reviewed prior to approval. Therefore, the minutes were approved with the noted corrections suggested on February 3, 2020. After the audio was reviewed to determine what was actually said, additional corrections were made and attached to the original set of minutes for October 10, 2019, as a reference along with an excerpt from the item transcription. The additional corrections could not be amended since the original motion was to approve the minutes with the noted correction suggested during the meeting. See attachments on the next page.

3. Approval of the Annual Report of the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners for Calendar Year 2019

MOTION: G. Edwards moved, H. Williams seconded, to approve the Annual Report of the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners for Calendar Year 2019.

VOTE: All voted Aye. No Nays. Motion declared carried.

4. Closed Meeting to Conduct Oral Interviews for Lateral Entry Police Officer

MOTION: T. Lomax moved, G. Edwards seconded, that the Board hold a closed meeting for the purpose of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), specifically to conduct oral interviews for Entry-Level and Lateral Entry Police Officer.

VOTE: All voted Aye. No Nays. Motion declared carried. Open session recessed at 1:36 p.m.

5. Return to Open Session

There was no formal action taken as a result of the closed meeting. There being no further business to come before the Board, T. Lomax moved, R. Burnside seconded, that the Board return to open session.

VOTE: All voted Aye. No nays. Motion declared carried. Open session resumed at 2:12 p.m.

6. Establishment and Approval of a Schedule of Regular Board Meeting dates for Calendar Year 2020

To better accommodate the outside schedules of the Board and City Staff, it was suggested that a schedule of regular meetings be established. This will allow everyone to coordinate their outside schedules around the Board meetings to ensure that all members will be available. Having advanced notice of the meeting dates will give City Staff enough time to prepare any items that needs to come before the Board. Meeting cancellations and special meetings can occur with ample notice per the regulations of the Open Meetings Act. Deputy City Clerk Clair Hayes informed the Board that whatever schedule is established will be pending until the dates, times, and locations are confirmed with the Civic Center Manager. The Board decided that the third or fourth Thursday of even numbered months at 9:00 a.m. will work best.

MOTION: T. Lomax moved, R. Burnside seconded, to approve a regular schedule of meetings for calendar year 2020 on the third or fourth Thursday at 9:00 a.m. of even numbered calendar months pending Civic Center availability.

VOTE: All voted Aye. No Nays. Motion declared carried.

7. Discussion and Approval of Authorizing the Human Resources Department to Administer the Entry-Level Police Examination Off-Site

At the previous meeting held on October 10, 2019 the Human Resources department (HR) proposed to the Board the idea of administering the Entry-Level Police Officer examination off-site at other colleges and universities and possibly at job fairs to reach out to a more diverse pool of candidates.

The city colleges in the Chicago area are ideal places to administer the exam. At this time job fairs will be a possible option for the future. It was suggested previously that job fairs could be an option for candidates to apply one day and take the exam the next day. However, the logistics for that option have

not been worked out as of yet. Instead the focus was shifted to colleges and universities. HR has reached out to career services at DePaul University who is willing to work with them to administer the police examination on their campus. HR will coordinate with the City Clerk's office and use the same process as previous exams held in Carbondale.

In order for this to happen, Human Resources needs authorization from the Board to travel off-site and handle the testing materials ordered from CPS HR. Chapter III, Section 1-C (General Testing Procedure) of the Board's Governing Rules states that *"Tests will be conducted under the supervision of the Board to preserve the integrity of the examination process"*. The Governing Rules also states that *"It is the responsibility of the Board to safeguard all testing materials. All examination materials shall become property of the Board and the grading thereof by the Board or its agent shall be final and conclusive..."*

Although the Board is responsible for the examination and all of its testing materials, the members of the Board are not involved with any aspect of the entire examination process until the oral interview portion. Administering the police examination and safeguarding the testing materials has been the responsibility of either the City Clerk's office or the Human Resources department and has moved between the two offices for a number of years. Currently it is being administered by the City Clerk's office. The Governing Rules does not designate a specific City staff person and/or City department to handle the police examination, however it does say "the Board or its agent" in certain sections. When or why either department was chosen/designated to administer the police examination is unknown.

Therefore, it was the consensus the Board that the language in the Governing Rules should be amended so that it is clear as to who is authorized to administer the police exam and to safeguard the testing materials on behalf of the Board whether it be on-site or off-site. The language should be consistent throughout the Governing Rules where applicable. The Board agreed to authorize Human Resources to travel off-site to administer the police examination pending the suggested amendments to the Governing Rules drafted by the City Attorney.

Questions, comments, and concerns from the Board regarding this item included the following:

- Is there enough personnel in HR to handle a traveling police examination and maintain manpower in the HR office?
- Will this option include the firefighter examination?
- When/if job fairs come into play, will the police and fire department be able to attend for recruiting efforts?
- Where does the liability fall when others are authorized?
- The Governing Rules as a whole should be updated to reflect modern day standards and regulations.

MOTION: R. Burnside moved, T. Lomax seconded, to authorize Human Resources to travel off-site to administer the police examination pending the suggested amendments to the Governing Rules reviewed and approved by the City Attorney. VOTE: All voted Aye. No Nays. Motion declared carried.

8. Discussion and Approval of Using Remote Testing Companies to Administer the Entry-Level Police Examination

At the previous meeting held on October 10, 2019, Police Chief Jeff Grubbs presented to the Board the idea of using Southern Illinois University (SIU) Testing Services to administer the police examination. According to Chief Grubbs, SIU Testing Services is a certified testing lab who administers the ACT,

SAT, and GRE to name a few. They are equipped with video surveillance coupled with a time stamp and have proctors to monitor the test takers. Allowing them to administer the exam will give students easier access to the City's police exam. They will have the option of taking the exam by appointment or on an established date and time for several candidates to participate. Testing on a monthly basis may be an option moving forward, but is not the intent at this time. It may be possible after running the exam through SIU Testing Services a few times. If testing through SIU Testing Services is successful this could lead to administering the police exam out of state or in other surrounding areas with testing labs. The cost is \$250.00 each time SIU Testing Services holds an exam. They will advertise each examination and "blast out" notices to students informing them of the testing dates and times.

The process of administering the police exam includes taking applications, ordering & returning the testing materials, proctoring the exam, grading the exam, posting the exam scores, coordinating with the Police Department for the physical fitness assessment, scheduling the oral interviews with the Board, and corresponding with candidates about exam dates, times, and testing results. It was asked if the duties will be split between the City Clerk's office and SIU Testing Services and, if so, how will it work. Since this is still in the early stages of development those questions and concerns remain unresolved.

Questions, comments, and concerns from the Board regarding this item included the following:

- How will the examination process be handled?
- Liability concerns.
- Will SIU Testing Services be willing to use our current testing company?
- Will the testing company allow SIU Testing Services to use their testing materials since the authorization is under the City of Carbondale?

Just like the previous agenda item, the Board needs to authorize SIU Testing Services to administer the police examination at their facility. The same amendments to the Governing Rules mentioned in agenda item #7 applies to this item. The Governing Rules should be amended so that it is clear as to who is authorized to administer the police exam and to safeguard the testing materials on behalf of the Board whether it be on-site or off-site. The language should be consistent throughout the Governing Rules where applicable.

The Board agreed to authorize SIU Testing Services to administer the police examination at their facility. The City Attorney should review and approve the amendments to the Governing Rules to reflect the changes that were discussed. The Board also agreed that a meeting will need to occur between the Police Department, City Clerk's office, and SIU Testing Services in order to outline how the entire testing process will operate moving forward.

MOTION: T. Lomax moved, R. Burnside seconded, to authorize SIU Testing Services to administer the Entry-Level Police examination pending the suggested amendments to the Governing Rules reviewed and approved by the City Attorney and a meeting with the Police Department, City Clerk's office, and SIU Testing Services to outline how the entire testing process will operate.

VOTE: All voted Aye. No Nays. Motion declared carried.

In the middle of discussion of this item, Chapter III, Section 2-B of the Governing Rules regarding the Lateral Entry Police Officer process was brought to the Board's attention. In that section it states that:

"Selected candidates shall participate in an oral pre-screening interview by Police Department command staff. Failure to pass this interview removes the candidate from the process."

Some Board members were unaware that an oral pre-screening by the Police Department was part of the Lateral Entry process nor were they aware that it was included in the Governing Rules. When Lateral Entry was originally implemented the applications were initially sent to the Police Department for review by members of their staff. At the time authorization was granted by the Board for the Police Department to ask preliminary interview questions. After the preliminary interview, selected candidate applications were forwarded to the Human Resources department and eventually scheduled for an oral interview with the Board.

This process only allows the Board to see who “passes” the preliminary interview given by the Police Department. It was stated that the Police Department should never have any contact or pre-screen any candidate and remove them from the process before the Board has a chance to interview them first.

Currently all Lateral Entry Police Officer applications are sent directly to the Human Resources department where no pre-screening occurs. It was suggested that any mention of pre-screening candidates be removed from the Governing Rules.

9. Discussion and Approval of an Amendment to the Governing Rules Regarding the Lateral Entry Hiring Program to include an Accelerated Entry Hiring Program

At the previous meeting held on October 10, 2019, Police Chief Jeff Grubbs presented a possible amendment to the Governing Rules that would include an Accelerated Entry hiring program, similar to the Lateral Entry program that is currently implemented.

- Lateral Entry requires candidates to have a minimum of two years’ (2 or more years) experience as a regular full time police officer and has graduated from a law enforcement training academy.
- The proposed Accelerated Entry program will accept candidates who have less than two years’ (0 to 2 years) experience as a regular, full time police officer and has graduated from a full time, part time, or pre-service law enforcement training academy. Accelerated Entry will include candidates who have no police officer experience, but can use their law enforcement academy training to make up for their lack of experience. For some, their only experience will be attending the academy.
- Candidates’ academy training must be equivalent to and approved by the Illinois Law Enforcement Training & Standards Board.

The difference between Lateral and Accelerated is that Lateral Entry candidates have been hired as a police officer and is currently doing the job of police officer. Just like any other officer, they have gone through the process of taking a police written, physical, and oral exam and was sent to the academy by the department who hired them. Accelerated candidates could potentially have no experience at all. Meaning they have not been hired as a police officer and is currently not doing the job even though they have attended the academy. It is not a requirement for a candidate to be sent to the academy without endorsement from a police department. Candidates can send themselves to the academy on their own.

The Board had a problem with hiring an accelerated candidate who has completed the academy, but has not yet done the job. They feel that the candidate should go through the same process as any other police officer by taking a written, physical, and oral exam as well as being hired by a police department to be sent to the academy, if applicable. They feel if a candidate did not undergo that process then it should be required in

order to be hired as a Carbondale Police Officer. Discussion continued about whether candidates should be considered if they put themselves through the academy rather than a sponsored agency (i.e. police department) and have not been hired by said agency. If they have been sent to the academy through a sponsored agency then it would be safe to say that the candidate has at least taken part in the applicable process to become a police officer and have obtained minimal on-the-job experience.

The Board agreed that they should move forward with the Accelerated Entry hiring program, but those candidates coming in under Accelerated-Entry should be required to be hired by a police agency if they have not yet served as a police officer. It was also mentioned that Chapter III, Section 1, B-1 regarding pre-screening candidates be removed and make a spelling correction in the same section under B-3 by changing the word at to and (...immediately eligible for appointment and their name shall be...).

MOTION: G. Edwards moved, T. Lomax seconded, to approve an amendment with the noted corrections to the Governing Rules regarding the Lateral Entry hiring program to include an Accelerated Entry hiring program with the amendment that it is required that Accelerated Entry candidates be hired by a sponsored agency if they have not yet served as a police officer. VOTE: All voted Aye. No Nays. Motion declared carried.

10. Board Comments

Deputy City Clerk Clair Hayes apprised the Board of the upcoming firefighter examination.

11. Citizen's Comments

None

12. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.

Clinette C. Hayes, Deputy City Clerk

Approved by the Board on _____