



DES PLAINES BOARD OF FIRE AND POLICE COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

JANUARY 28, 2022

Call to Order: 10:03 a.m.

Roll Call:

Lester: Present (Zoom)

Albrecht: Present

Green: Present

| | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---|
| D. Michael Albrecht | Commissioner | David Anderson | Police Chief |
| Thomas Green | Commissioner | Daniel Anderson | Fire Chief |
| Debra Lester | Commissioner | Mark Burkland | Elrod/Friedman Atty |
| | | Becky Madison | Recording Secretary/ Director of Human Resources |
| Erik Bjork | Patrol Officer | Dorothy Wisniewski | Asst City Manager/Finance Director |
| Matt Matzl | Deputy Fire Chief | John Rice | Commander |
| Matt Bowler | Commander | Dan Shanahan | Deputy Police Chief |

Commissioner Albrecht requested a change in the agenda which moved executive session to the start of the meeting to accommodate the work of the police department, which was acceptable by all Commissioners.

Motion to go into Executive session for the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the City under section 2(c)(1) of the Open Meetings Act and discussion and approval of closed session minutes under section 2(c)(21) of the Open Meetings Act at 10:04 a.m.

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|----------------|-----------------|----------|-------|--------|
| Motion Made by | 2 nd | Albrecht | Green | Lester |
| Lester | Green | Aye | Aye | Aye |

Motion carried.

Back in Regular session at: 10:10 a.m.

Public Comment: For matters that are not on the Agenda: None

Old Business: None.

New Business:

Motions regarding PD Candidates Short Form/Background Investigations:

| CANDIDATE # | CANDIDATE NAME | Motion/ 2nd | COMM ALBRECHT | COMM LESTER | COMM GREEN | COMMENTS |
|-------------|----------------|--|------------------|----------------|---------------|--|
| 124 | Davila | Lester 2 nd Green to eliminate | Aye | Aye | Aye | Davila Eliminated Motion carried |
| 128 | Cabrera | Green 2 nd Lester to eliminate | Aye | Aye | Aye | Cabrera Eliminated Motion carried |
| 98 | Mercado | Green 2 nd Lester to eliminate | Aye | Aye | Aye | Mercado Eliminated Motion carried |
| 108 | Hassan | Lester 2 nd Green to eliminate | Aye | Aye | Aye | Hassan Eliminated Motion carried |

1. Discussion regarding the Fire Department applicant Physical ability Testing process.

Commissioner Albrecht requested that Fire Chief Anderson state on record who is considered “staff” in reference to the provided memo to recognize and appreciate their efforts. Fire Chief Anderson stated that the process was undertaken by Deputy Fire Chief Foster, Deputy Fire Chief Matzl, H.R. Director Madison and Assistant City Manager/Finance Director Wisniewski in addition to himself.

Fire Chief Anderson provided an overview of the Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) and the current Physical Aptitude Test (PAT). He discussed the similarities and the differences of the testing components of each type of physical exam. He reviewed the validation testing of each exam.

Fire Chief Anderson reviewed the City’s comparable communities use of the CPAT. Commissioner Albrecht requested that the list of the comparable communities be entered into the record:



| Community | CPAT | Own | Notes |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----|---|
| EVANSTON | X | | With ladder |
| STREAMWOOD | X | | With ladder |
| ARLINGTON HEIGHTS | X | | With Ladder |
| BUFFALO GROVE | X | | With ladder |
| CAROL STREAM | No Fire Department | | |
| ELMHURST | X | | With Ladder |
| ELK GROVE | X | | with Ladder |
| GLENVIEW | X | | With Ladder |
| HANOVER PARK | X | | with Ladder |
| HOFFMAN ESTATES | X | | Currently do their own Ladder test, but are requesting CPAT Ladder test on next exam. |
| LOMBARD | X | | With Ladder |
| MOUNT PROSPECT | X | | with Ladder |
| OAK PARK | X | | With Ladder |
| PALATINE | X | | with Ladder |
| SCHAUMBURG | X | | With Ladder |
| SKOKIE | X | | With Ladder in the last 6 months. |

Fire Chief Anderson stated that other options were reviewed including a new nationally accepted examination created by I.O. Solutions that requires a lease agreement and up-front costs in excess of \$40,000 plus annual fees for a participating community. This is similar to CPAT licensure, which is administered locally by other entities. This would require additional risk, costs and is not recommended by staff at this time.

Commissioner Albrecht reiterated that he would have preferred to see this information well in advance to make these important decisions and would like that honored moving forward. Fire Chief Anderson stated he could take responsibility in part, but could not locate the detailed information on the current PAT examination until recently.

Discussion regarding validation of the PAT and CPAT. Mr. Burkland stated that since the inception of the CPAT, he has not seen a situation where a test was invalid where the CPAT was used.

Commissioner Albrecht asked Fire Chief Anderson if he felt the CPAT met the high standards of the City and the Department and would not diminish the quality of the candidates. Fire Chief Anderson stated that he is recommending the CPAT and would not make this recommendation if he felt it diminished the quality of the candidates or the needs of the Department.

Commissioner Albrecht asked staff to look in to how the City can recruit the highest quality group of candidates and ensure the recruitment posting gets out to a diverse group of candidates. H.R. Director Madison assured the Commission that distribution of the call of examination and posting efforts were already being discussed.

Discussion pertaining to validating the current PAT for future use.

Discussion pertaining to the CPAT and the additional test – the ladder climb. Fire Chief Anderson stated that those entities in Illinois that administer the CPAT have a ladder climb component in response to the change in state statute in 2011 that required the additional testing component.



Discussion pertaining to the legality of a municipality hosting tests in addition to the CPAT. Fire Chief Anderson stated that it must still be validated. Mr. Burkland would not recommend changing or adding to an already valid test.

Discussion pertaining to a fear of heights of candidates and when the City would know they had a fear if a shorter ladder is used. Fire Chief Anderson stated the CPAT with ladder climb and at the start of the academy.

Commissioner Lester recommended the Board continue to evaluate the I.O. Solutions physical ability test to give candidates more physical testing options in the future.

Discussion regarding the timeline for the upcoming Probationary Firefighter testing process.

Motion to accept the Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) as the acceptable physical ability test for the next Probationary Firefighter testing process.

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|----------------|-----------------|----------|-------|-----------------------|
| Motion Made by | 2 nd | Albrecht | Green | Lester |
| Green | Albrecht | Aye | Aye | Aye with Reservations |

Motion carried.

2. Discussion and approval of the 2022 Fire Department Candidate Eligibility Testing requirements

Discussion regarding the total number of preference points awarded in the next Probationary Firefighter testing process. Including veterans, education, residency, experience, education, and paramedics.

Commissioner Albrecht recommended one point for residency preference point. Commissioners agreed with one point for incorporated Des Plaines residency.

Commissioner Lester lead a discussion on education points, specifically accepting bachelor’s degrees in an unrelated field vs. an associate’s degree with emphasis in fire science and/or paramedic licensure. Discussion regarding the responsibility and merits of obtaining a bachelor’s degree versus an associate’s degree were discussed. Fire Chief Anderson clarified that a candidate obtains points for their highest level of education achieved.

Preference Points discussed as follows from the Fire Chief’s memo:

- Veterans – 5 points
- Certified Fire Study/Cadet – 2.5 points
- Education –
 - Associate’s Degree in Fire or EMS Fields – 2.5 points
 - Bachelor’s Degree - 4 points
- Paramedic –
 - Paramedic at application 2.5 points
 - Paramedic in Region 8, 9, or 10 3.5 points
 - Paramedic in Lutheran General EMS System 5 points
- Experience (Section 5a) 1 point per year, max 3 years) 3 points
- Residency 3 points – Changed to 1 point during discussion



Board Points

- Certified FFII/Basic Operations Firefighter* 3 points
- Certified FFIII/Advanced Firefighter 5 points

*Graduations from an academy acceptable by the fire department.

Motion to approve the preference points pertaining to veterans, certified Fire Study/Cadet, Education (Associates Degree in Fire or EMS Fields only), Paramedic, Experience, Residency changed to one (1) point and Board points as listed in the Fire Chief’s memo.

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| Motion Made by | 2 nd | Albrecht | Green | Lester |
| Green | Lester | Aye | Aye | Aye |

Motion carried.

Motion to approve the preference portions pertaining to a Bachelor’s Degree to four (4) points total. Motion made by Comm. Green and seconded by Comm. Albrecht.

Discussion pertaining to an amended motion by Comm. Lester to provide a Bachelor’s Degree two (2) points to account for mission critical readiness (fire and EMS related field) due to the department’s staffing needs. No amendment made.

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|----------------|-----------------|----------|-------|--------|
| Motion Made by | 2 nd | Albrecht | Green | Lester |
| Green | Albrecht | Aye | Aye | Nay |

Motion carried.

3. Discussion and approval of the 2022 Fire Department Candidate Eligibility Testing Vendor.

Motion to approve I.O. Solutions as the 2022 Fire Department Candidate Eligibility Testing Vendor by Comm. Green and seconded by Comm. Albrecht.

Discussion pertaining to I.O. Solutions performance during the Police Department’s promotional examination. Fire Chief Anderson recommends I.O. Solutions because there is very limited interaction between I.O. Solutions and the testing facility and the strict guidelines of the applications. He will hold the vendor, City employees and applicants to the highest of standards.

Commissioner Albrecht would like to talk to I.O. Solutions in the future about their performance and expectations moving forward.

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|----------------|-----------------|----------|-------|--------|
| Motion Made by | 2 nd | Albrecht | Green | Lester |
| Green | Albrecht | Aye | Aye | Aye |

Motion carried.



Report of Commissioners:

Discussion pertaining to a vote on the formal call for applications and location of the test. Fire Chief Anderson will provide the draft application, finalized timeline and confirm the location of the test at the February 8, 2022 Special Meeting.

Motion to Adjourn

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|----------------|-----------------|----------|-------|--------|
| Motion Made by | 2 nd | Albrecht | Green | Lester |
| Lester | Green | Aye | Aye | Aye |

Motion carried.

Adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Next Special Meeting: Monday, February 8, 2022 - 9:00 a.m.

Next Regular Meeting: Monday, March 14, 2022 - 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Madison
Recording Secretary and Director of Human Resources

Approved this day 14th of March, 2022


D. Michael Albrecht, Chairman


Debra Lester, Secretary