

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of Merit System Commission

Held January 17, 2025

Call to Order

The Merit System Commission Meeting was called to Order at 2:35 p.m. Mr. Tom Watts was sworn in by Law Director Martina Dillon.

Members Present:

Mary Woeste	Chair	Present
Jim Kempe	Member	Present
Tom Watts	Member	Present

Staff Members Present:

Police Chief Craig Richardson	Law Director Martina Dillon
Fire Chief Traci Kuzminski	Public Information Officer Aaron Vietor
	Clerk of Council Karen Powell

Approval of Minutes

Merit System Commission - 12/05/24

Mrs. Woeste asked if there were any changes or corrections to the December 5, 2024, Merit System Commission meeting minutes. Hearing none, the minutes were approved as submitted.

Business

Police Division Hiring

Police Chief Richardson passed out information and stated a Lateral Entry process was opened after the meeting in November 2024. He said there were nine applicants, the majority of which did not meet the qualifications, and all other candidates were disqualified. He said there were discussions of leaving the process open until filled. He said this would be a good time to refocus and also run a no OPOTA required entry level process. He said a lot of the police academies have just started classes or will start soon. He said he would like to keep the lateral process open and begin an entry level to fill at least two positions in the next few weeks.

Mrs. Woeste confirmed with Chief Richardson that the information and salary listed in the advertisement are correct.

Chief Richardson said a change will need to be made to the Police Cadet advertisement, and that will be discussed in the next topic.

Mr. Watts asked how soon the Police Officers would have to acquire OPOTA?

Chief Richardson said the City would send the Officers to the next available academy, or if already in the academy, the City would begin paying a salary to those Officers while in the academy.

Mrs. Woeste said in the past a test was administered, the recruit did not have to have OPOTA, and the City would send the recruits to the academy and train the Police Officers. She said this request is not new.

Mr. Vietor confirmed that Chief Richardson wants to run the following three ads simultaneously: an ad for keeping the lateral entry process open; an ad for a new entry level

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process; and an ad for a new Police Cadet program.

Mrs. Woeste moved to approve keeping the lateral entry application period open; Mr. Kempe seconded the motion.

RESULT: Passed (*Yes 3, No 0, Abstained 0*)
MOVER: Mary Woeste
AYES: Mary Woeste, Jim Kempe, Tom Watts
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

Mrs. Woeste asked how the Police Cadet testing will be done.

Chief Richardson replied the practice has been going through a scored interview process for the Police Officers, both lateral and entry level. He said the same process would be used for the Police Cadet.

Mrs. Woeste discussed the options of a written test being a standard test that all Police Cadets would take vs. an interview where the questions may be different.

Chief Richardson said there is a set of standard questions used for scoring.

Mrs. Woeste moved to approve the Police Cadet advertisement.

RESULT: Passed (*Yes 3, No 0, Abstained 0*)
MOVER: Mary Woeste
AYES: Mary Woeste, Jim Kempe, Tom Watts
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

Mr. Kempe moved to approve the Full-time Police Officer Entry Level, No OPOTA Required advertisement:

RESULT: Passed (*Yes 3, No 0, Abstained 0*)
MOVER: Jim Kempe
AYES: Mary Woeste, Jim Kempe, Tom Watts
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

Chief Richardson briefly discussed the Sergeant process. He suggested the Police Division may need to explore a lateral Sergeant transfer process due to the experience level of the current Police Force and lack of interest in applying due to changing shifts. He reported that the Sergeant promotional process opened, and the Division only received one application and that person did not meet the qualifications at that time.

Chief Richardson and the board members discussed a lateral process but ended up tabling the promotional process for now in hopes of generating more internal interest before going with the lateral entry method. The decision was made to table the process until further notice from Chief Richardson.

Fire Division Promotion

Fire Chief Traci Kuzminski presented the advertisement for the Fire Lieutenant promotion. She discussed the testing mechanism and explained the Fire Division would be creating its own test using ClassMarker to conduct the exam.

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The commission set the exam date for March 6, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. at the Payne Recreation Center, and the protest period expiration date for March 13, 2025.

Mr. Kempe moved to approve the Fire Lieutenant promotion ad.

RESULT: Passed (*Yes 3, No 0, Abstained 0*)
MOVER: Jim Kempe
AYES: Mary Woeste, Jim Kempe, Tom Watts
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

Chief Kuzminski discussed the lateral entry process for the Full-Time Firefighter position to fill vacancies due to Firefighters retiring and due to the promotional exam results.

The Commission had no issues with the advertisement as presented.

Mr. Kempe moved to approve the Full-Time Firefighter ad.

RESULT: Passed (*Yes 3, No 0, Abstained 0*)
MOVER: Jim Kempe
AYES: Mary Woeste, Jim Kempe, Tom Watts
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

Other Business

The next meeting date was set for March 6, 2025, at 8:30 a.m. prior to the Fire Lieutenant - Promotional exam. A commission member will serve as a proctor for that exam following the meeting.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:06 PM.



Mary Woeste



ATTEST: Administrative Secretary, Kim Wallace