

Meeting of the Civil Service Board

Present: Chair Ron Chapman, Jr., George L. Allen, Jr., F. Ray Hill, Marvin M. Lane, Jr., Pat Parrish, Alicia S. Voltmer

Attendees:

Louie Bright, Assistant Chief - Dallas Fire-Rescue Department
Gene Campbell, Assistant Chief – Dallas Fire-Rescue Department
Scott Clumpner, Grievance Chair – Dallas Fire Fighter’s Association
John Cook, Assistant Chief - Dallas Fire-Rescue Department
James Cunningham, Intern – Dallas Police Department
George Florence, Captain - Dallas Fire-Rescue Department
William Harper, Intern - Dallas Police Department
Billy Ingram - Driver Engineer, Recruiter - Dallas Fire-Rescue Department
Ronnie Lane – Rehire Applicant
Jason McClain – Assistant City Attorney

Civil Service Department Staff:

Randall Carman, Senior Human Resource Analyst
Michelle Hanchard, Assistant Director
Sheneice Hughes, Coordinator IV
Patricia Marsolais, Secretary to the Civil Service Board
Pamela McDonald, Manager – Examining and Recruitment Division
Poornima “Savina” Rikhilal, Coordinator
Martha Santos, Executive Assistant
Joyce Truelove, Senior Human Resource Analyst

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. Ron Chapman, Jr. was welcomed back to the Board as Chair.

The Board unanimously elected Marvin Lane, Jr. as Vice-Chair.

The Board unanimously approved the minutes of the Thursday, June 5, 2008 regular meeting. Not being on the Board when the June 2008 meeting was held, the Chair recused himself from the vote.

The Board heard the rehire appeal of former Dallas Fire-Rescue Department employee Ronnie Lane. After much discussion with Mr. Lane about his previous employment with the City and consideration of material provided for the Board’s review, the Board unanimously approved his request to apply for employment opportunities with the City.

The Secretary updated the Board on the progress of the Fiscal year 2008-2009 budget. She advised that she had good discussions with the City Manager about the department expenses that were still below the recommended funding line. As a result of this dialogue Mary Suhm recommended retention of the NEOGOV Process Review Manager through a contract arrangement. The budget is slated for Council approval in September.

The Secretary provided the Board with a progress report on the NEOGOV action items: functioning of the “read-only” feature, two portals, and change control system. The “read-only” feature is fully functional. Adjustments to ensure that users of the system are categorized properly are next on the list of things to do. The Secretary added that due to the greatly improved relationship with City Management and the assignment of NEOGOV responsibilities in Human Resources to Albert Johnson, a former Civil Service employee, she does not believe a two portal system is necessary now. Vice-Chair Lane said he would agree with that if the “read-only” capability is fully implemented.

Assistant Director Michelle Hanchard updated the Board on the Police and Fire testing schedule. She reported on the administration of the entry level Fire and Rescue Officer Trainee’s examination in April and the physical abilities testing for those who passed the test. For the Fire Prevention ranks, the Senior Fire Prevention Officer’s exam was given in April 2008. To ensure the currency of test plans, staff has reviewed the job duties and tasks of all Fire Prevention ranks.

Additionally, Ms. Hanchard provided information on the Police Sergeant’s promotional examination given in January. The Sergeant’s test has an assessment center component and is generally the largest group of candidates to be evaluated. Numerous compliments were received about the way in which the assessment center was conducted from assessors participating in the process. The Senior Corporal examination will be administered in late fall.

The Chair inquired if there had been any complaints about the administration of the Sergeant’s examination. Ms. Hanchard said there had only been one open records request submitted for information concerning the test.

The Secretary submitted the probationary extension report for the Board’s information. Mr. Lane inquired about one extension that was not approved. Although the employee had been on military leave the extension request was untimely. Employment considerations for veterans are based on USERRA (Uniform Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act) criteria. This particular case was conferenced with the City Attorney’s Office.

Fire Chief Burns and Assistant Chief Cook briefed the Board on the promotional examination review process they have initiated as a result of an efficiency study of the Fire-Rescue Department done a year ago.

Chief Burns introduced two new Assistant Chiefs, Campbell and Cook. Chief Campbell is part of the service delivery project. The Fire-Rescue Department will be going to service regions to enhance the focus on fire service. Chief Cook is dealing with the department’s professional standards, procedures, promotional practices, and recruitment.

As a result of a recommendation in the efficiency study to look at the promotional process, Chief Cook has undertaken steps in the department to do this. He says it is in no way a suggestion that there is anything wrong with what we’ve been doing. It will be a thoughtful process involving all of the associations and stakeholders. With up to 1,000 employees eligible to retire in the next five years it is incumbent upon the department to prepare the rank and file for future roles. Chief Burns wants to look at not only how people are promoted but also to begin to plan for the succession so that good, competent people will replace those who leave. Chief Cook detailed the steps they are taking to organize the review process. In response to a question from the Chair, Chief Cook confirmed that they will be benchmarking against cities of comparable size to see what has been successful. Chief Cook added that he is optimistic about having recommendations to Chief Burns by the end of the year.

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The Secretary submitted a copy of the draft record retention schedule to the Board. Each department is working on a retention schedule for documents specific to its business with the City's Records Manager, Lois Dillard. After the retention schedule is finalized a review of all documents in the department and in archives will take place. Documents that exceed the retention period will be destroyed. It will be a long and time-consuming project.

In department news the Secretary described the leadership development courses department managers and supervisors are participating in city-wide. She introduced two individuals, William Harper and James Cunningham, who currently work for the Dallas Police Department and requested their internship be with the Civil Service Department. This will complete their leadership development course entitled "Management Flight for Program Managers and Supervisors."

In other news, the Chair explained his idea about coming up with some sort of resolution or proclamation thanking Joe Phifer and Steve Sanderfer for their service on the Board. The resolution/proclamation would be presented to the former members at a future Board meeting. The Secretary said she had contacted the Park and Recreation Department to obtain examples of what they use.

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:31 a.m.

(A complete transcription of this meeting is available)

ATTESTED

APPROVED