

# CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

August 16, 2021

5:15 pm – Front Conference Room – 631 Perry Street

Present: CSC Members: Chairman S. Korhn, N. Walker, J. Fitzenrider and Clerk C. Homan  
Guests: T. Schroeder—Human Resources Manager, Fire Chief Bill Wilkins and Assistant  
Fire Chief Tim Bowling

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## CALL TO ORDER

Clerk C. Homan assured the Civil Service Commission is in compliance with all Sunshine Law notices. The meeting was called to order at 5:15pm in the Front Conference Room located at 631 Perry Street by Chairman S. Korhn.

## 1. Approval of Minutes from the May 18, 2021 Meeting

**Motion:** N. Walker made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 18, 2021 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by J. Fitzenrider. All members voted aye, and the motion carried.

## Approval of Minutes from the June 3, 2021 Meeting

**Motion:** J. Fitzenrider made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 3, 2021 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by N. Walker. All members voted aye, and the motion carried.

## 2. NEW BUSINESS

### A. Firefighter Testing – Promotional

Chief Wilkins informed everyone a little over a year ago the department began to offer a monthly professional leadership development class for any interested firefighter in the department. This class gives those who participate projects to work on that are specific to our city, such as downtown problems, preparing a budget to present to administration, developing a school program, ways to bring in new recruits, and other topics. With this offering, some firefighters have taken advantage of the opportunity and

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have chosen to participate; but there are some who are not participating, partly because they appear to be uninterested in a leadership position or uninterested in investing preparation time so as to be more likely to be a successful leader.

Chief Wilkins said the reason he is seeking a change in the promotional testing procedure is to create a career path for firefighters who already have some knowledge of the duties if they become a managerial officer. He pointed out with the current promotional testing procedure, a promotional test is held and someone could go from a firefighter today to an officer tomorrow without any practical knowledge of what the leadership portion entails. Firefighters who are putting forth extra effort to prepare for leadership positions should be rewarded for those extra efforts in some way. The City's interests are greatly enhanced when new Lieutenants and Captains are "ready" for their new positions. Historically, promoted candidates have been less likely to "fail" when the promoted candidates have already developed and documented leadership skills.

Chief Wilkins outlined to the Commission two possible ways to offer extra examination points to those firefighters who have taken the initiative to better prepare to become an officer with the minimum of on the job training. One option he suggested was to make successful completion of the classes a prerequisite to being eligible to sit for a promotional exam. Firefighters could either complete these classes online or the department could bring in an instructor to conduct the classes at the station. A benefit of prerequisites is that it puts in place a career path with a set process for firefighters interested in being an officer. The other option Chief Wilkins suggested was to give extra credit in a promotional exam to those firefighters who are putting in the time to complete classes preparing themselves to be an officer.

Chairman S. Korhn stated a concern of his is that everyone has the necessary time with the department to take the classes. Chief Wilkins replied the classes are available online so firefighters are able to complete them at the station while they are on duty and the department pays for the classes out of their training budget. So, everyone has the opportunity, but not everyone is participating. Furthermore, there is no time crunch because this proposal would be applicable with promotional exams as of January 1, 2023.

Discussion took place regarding other departments offering such things in their promotional exams and benefits to the firefighters of the extra classes.

The question was posed how this might affect someone who joined the department as a lateral transfer candidate. It was reiterated previous years at other departments do not count toward the years required before being able to participate in a promotional exam.

Chief Wilkins stated if a change is made to the promotional testing procedure, we will need to give the department a block of time to include the classes in their budget and

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give firefighters a chance to participate in the classes before making the classes a prerequisite or giving additional credit. So, that is why he wants to get something in place now.

Additional pros and cons of each option were discussed amongst those in attendance.

N. Walker brought up the possible scenario for a promotional test for Captain where there are not enough Lieutenants willing to sit for a promotional exam and the Commission has to drop down a level in the pay scale to include firefighters. In that case, those firefighters may not have all the necessary prerequisite classes. It was determined if that were to happen, it would need to be handled on a case-by-case basis and an exception would need to be made.

**Motion:** Chairman S. Korhn made a motion to make the successful completion of professional leadership development classes an additional prerequisite for eligibility to participate in a Fire Department Lieutenant or Captain promotional exam. These required classes must be completed prior to the test date for a candidate to be eligible for the exam.

The required prerequisite classes to sit for a Lieutenants Promotional Exam will be Preparations for Initial Company Operations (PICO) 12 hours, Decision Making for Initial Company Operations (DMICO) 14 hours, and Strategy and Tactics for Initial Company Operations (STICO) 12 hours.

The required prerequisite classes to sit for a Captains Promotional Exam will be the three required for the Lieutenant exam and Incident Safety Officer, NFPA 1521, 40 hours.

The corresponding Local Rules shall be amended to incorporate these changes.

The new prerequisite requirements will be effective for all promotional testing as of 1/1/2023. In the interim, these additional requirements will not apply

The motion was seconded by J. Fitzenrider. All members voted aye, and the motion carried.

Pursuant to CSC Local Rule 100, the CSC Local Rules Section 50.13 will be amended in substantially the following format:

Changes are indicated in **bold**.

Section 50.13 – Promotional Examinations (Fire Service): Fire service promotion in the Fire Department shall be in accordance with the provisions of Section 124.45 of the Ohio Revised Code.

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**Furthermore**, no person shall be eligible to take the examination for a vacancy in the rank immediately above the rank of regular fire fighter unless the person has served at least forty-eight (48) months not including their probationary period, in the rank of regular fire fighter, provided that in those cases where there are less than two (2) persons in the rank of regular fire fighter who have served forty-eight (48) months, not including their probationary period, in that rank and who are willing to take the examination, this service requirement does not apply.

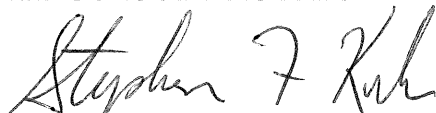
**Effective January 1, 2023 no person shall be eligible to sit for a Lieutenants Promotional Examination if they have not successfully completed the classes: Preparations for Initial Company Operations (PICO) 12 hours, Decision Making for Initial Company Operations (DMICO) 14 hours, and Strategy and Tactics for Initial Company Operations (STICO) 12 hours, prior to the promotional testing date.**

**Effective January 1, 2023 no person shall be eligible to sit for a Captains Promotional Examination if they have not completed the classes required for Lieutenants testing stated above and Incident Safety Officer (NFPA 1521) 40 hours, prior to the promotional testing date.**

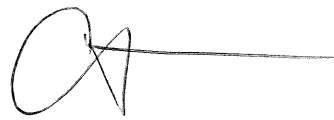
When a vacancy occurs in a promoted rank, other than the promoted rank immediately above the rank of regular fire fighter, no person shall be eligible to take the examination unless the person has served twelve (12) months in the next lower rank, provided that in those cases where there are less than two (2) persons in the next lower rank who have served twelve (12) months in that rank and who are willing to take the examination, this service requirement does not apply. If the non-application of the 12 month service requirement to persons in the next lower rank does not produce two (2) persons eligible and willing to compete, the same method shall be followed by going to successively lower ranks until two or more persons are eligible and willing to compete in an examination for the vacancy. If this process of searching successively lower ranks reached the rank of regular fire fighter, the provisions of Section 124.45 of the Ohio Revised Code applies.”

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 6:15pm.

**MINUTES APPROVED:**



S. Kohn, Chairman



C. Homan, Commission Clerk

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THE ABOVE MINUTES REPRESENT OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THAT WHICH SHOULD BE RECORDED. IF CHANGES SHOULD BE MADE, PLEASE FORWARD PROMPTLY SO AN ACCURATE RECORD CAN BE MAINTAINED FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL.

Cc: Mayor Mike McCann, Jeff Leonard, Sean O'Donnell, Tracey Schroeder, Division Heads.