

**MINUTES OF THE ZION BOARD OF FIRE & POLICE COMMISSIONERS  
MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, MAY 10, 2016, AT 5:30 P.M.  
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT ZION CITY HALL  
ZION, ILLINOIS**

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Chairman Lewis called the meeting to order.

On call of the roll the following answered present: Commissioners Idleburg and White and Chairman Lewis.

Mayor Hill and Commissioner Frierson were also present.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Idleburg, to approve the minutes of a Zion Board of Fire & Police Commissioners meeting held on April 12, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. The vote on roll call was: Commissioner Idleburg, aye; Commissioner White, aye; and Chairman Lewis, aye. Motion carried.

**TESTING PROCEDURES AND CANDIDATE RECRUITMENT**

Mayor Hill stated that he and Commissioner Frierson were in attendance to get a clear understanding of how the testing process works and to see what can be done to recruit more minority representation in the Fire and Police Departments. He stated that he has been told that it is difficult to get minority applicants to take the test. He stated that he would like to see the Board put together a plan to recruit minorities.

Attorney Franks gave an overview of the testing process. He stated that the testing process must follow the statute and was designed to keep it non-political. He stated that the process includes an application, physical agility, written exam, oral interview/assessment center, preference points for military service, education and prior certification. He stated that a final eligibility list is created from which candidates are taken in their order of excellence. Attorney Franks stated that a position may not be filled until the Board has received a letter of direction from the Corporate Authorities requesting to fill the position. A conditional offer of employment is made to a candidate who must then successfully pass a psychological exam (not for Fire candidates), medical physical and drug screen, and a final background investigation. The medical physical is important to establish a candidate's fitness for duty and general medical condition for pension and health insurance purposes.

Attorney Franks recommended that the Board be careful when recruiting for specific groups to avoid discrimination lawsuits. He stated that Zion has a great diversity of churches and suggested that the Board enlist the help of ministers to recruit minorities.

Commissioner White stated that there is an intangible in recruitment and the Departments need to have positive interaction with the "outside".

Chief Dumyahn stated, that in the past, the Police Department has asked the Zion Benton Ministerial Association and the North Baptist Ministers Alliance to help recruit minorities. The department held a recruitment fair at ZBTHS with was unsuccessful. They have recruited on Facebook. Recruitment information was provided to Robert Morris University in Waukegan. Recruitment flyers were provided to the Zion Minority Caucus. He stated that no contact was made with the NAACP in Waukegan. Chief Dumyahn stated that, in the last recruitment process, 106 candidates took the written test, 3 of which were Black and 5 of which were Hispanic.

Mayor Hill challenged the Board to do more to recruit minorities stating that what has or is being done is not working. He asked if minorities could be targeted in advertising.

Attorney Franks stated that minorities should not necessarily be targeted in an ad, but officials can work with ministers specifically as there is nothing illegal there. He stated that the ministers may be successful in bringing minorities into the process and sponsor study groups led by Zion officers. He stated that perhaps if they were recruited by someone other than the Zion Police Department, it may be more successful. He also stated that candidates may not be aware that misdemeanors can be expunged from their records if such a matter may be a deterrent to some.

Mayor Hill stated that 66% of Zion's population is comprised of minorities and the City's work force should reflect it.

Chief Lewis stated that the lack of diversity on the Fire Department is not unique to Zion. He stated that a candidate must already possess an EMT Certificate in order to apply for Firefighter/Paramedic. He stated that he teaches an EMT class at Vista and he sees very few minorities attending the classes. He stated that young people should get on the path in high school or in early college in order to get a degree, the EMT certification, and the Firefighter Certificate. He stated that the mind set must be changed at an early age. Chief Lewis stated that currently the City does not have the resources to hit the schools hard.

Mayor Hill asked what the racial makeup is in the North Chicago and Waukegan departments. Commissioner White stated that North Chicago is moving toward a predominately White police force. Chief Lewis stated that the Waukegan Fire Chief is Black, the Deputy Chief is Hispanic, and there are 2 or 3 Black firefighters and 2 or 3 Hispanic firefighters. He stated that, in North Chicago, the Fire Chief is a female and there are 2 or 3 Hispanic firefighters on the department.

Chief Dumyahn stated that relationships should be established in the grade schools now to protect young people's records so criminal activity would not disqualify them from the process.

Chief Dumyahn stated that the Fire and Police Youth Academy in the schools was used to attract minority CSO recruits which is not working very well. Employees who are hired are intimidated by fellow students and friends because they work for the Police. Commissioner Idleburg stated that the perception must be changed and young people must be educated to have a positive outlook on law enforcement.

Mayor Hill asked if the Board could tap into persons being discharged from the military. He stated that he is learning that minority recruitment is a long term project and that there is no quick fix.

Chief Dumyahn stated that perhaps the Board allowing lateral transfers from other departments may help with recruitment. He stated that the FOP has not been in favor of lateral transfers in the past due to where they would start on the salary scale.

Attorney Franks stated that, in a non-home rule municipality, lateral transfers are not permitted under the general statute. He also stated that the Board would still have to conduct a medical physical/drug screen and psychological assessment for health insurance and pension purposes. He stated that the lateral transfer process is a very complex one to implement.

Commissioner Frierson asked what the City can change to attract minorities to Zion over other communities. Commissioner White stated that the City could raise the starting pay. Chief Dumyahn stated that the Blacks in Zion harass the City's Black officers which he believes keeps applicants away from Zion. Chief Lewis stated that the Fire Service is educationally based work now rather than a labor based position as it was years ago. It's a career track not just a job. Commissioner Idleburg stated that the City could advertise in the Navy Great Lakes Bulletin which has distribution in both Great Lakes and Fort Sheridan. Advertising costs are \$800 for a full page, \$400 for a half page and \$200 for a quarter of a page.

### **ORIGINAL ENTRY FIREFIGHTER/PARAMEDIC TESTING**

Clerk Burkemper stated that the Original Entry Firefighter/Paramedic candidate testing process has begun. Clerk Burkemper reported that she contacted I/O Solutions and September 10, 2016 has been confirmed for administration of the written exam. She presented an amended time line. She stated that she will continue to work with I/O Solutions on the next step in the process which is candidate application preparation.

### **OTHER MATTERS**

Clerk Burkemper updated the Board regarding the hiring of two Patrol Officers and three Firefighter/Paramedics. She stated that two police candidates failed their psychological assessments and two candidates passed, totaling \$2,200. The two continuing police candidates will have their medical physical and drug screens on May 12 and May 27, totaling \$700. The Police Department has been provided with the information necessary to conduct the final background investigation on the two police candidates. Both candidates should be ready well in advance of the academy start date of June 26, 2016.

Two firefighter candidates have passed their medical physicals and drug screens. The third candidate has had the physical but results have not been received. These three physicals totaled \$2,250. All three firefighter candidates successfully passed their final background checks. Two of three candidates are currently Paid-on-Premise employees of the Department. All candidates will begin their full time employment in May 2016.

Clerk Burkemper reported that, with the testing totals reported herein, the Board's Medical and Physical Exams 2017 budget line item has been reduced from \$4,000 to \$365.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, it was moved by Commissioner Idleburg, seconded by Commissioner White and unanimously approved the meeting be adjourned at 6:35 p.m. Motion carried.

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Diane Burkemper, Recording Secretary