

Chehalis Civil Service Commission

Special Meeting, November 14, 2023.

Members present: Joe Mano, Sheila Johnson-Teeter, Dennis Dawes

Others present: Fire Chief Adam Fulbright, Police Deputy Chief Matt McKnight

Meeting was called to order by Chair at 6:00 P.M.

There was one item on the agenda, a request for separate lists for firefighters recognizing those with and without paramedic training.

Chief Fulbright discussed his request, stating that the candidates made choices when taking the test. They could choose about the designation for paramedic or firefighter. They would take the same test but be listed differently in the results.

There was much discussion about the lists.

Mr. Mano:

The Rules and Regs state that the top three on the list must be considered first, so if a candidate is hired farther down the list, that violates the rules provision.

Mr. Dawes:

The request would allow the chief to pass over the first five on the list, and that would cause some concern. This proposal should have been given to the Commission before the tests were given, and it looks like the Commission is going backward now.

Chief Fulbright:

If a second list, or a segregated list were prepared, the department would not have to go over the top three – those names could be considered for firefighter.

Mr. Dawes:

The positions are two different positions, and the Commission's position is that they are two separate positions, and this is not an easy fix.

Chief Fulbright:

That is why I have listed a possible new rule that would cover this situation. He added again that the candidates select the designation during the testing process. In some cases, candidates choose the paramedic test but have no actual paramedic

training. PST does not check and does not tell the departments, so the departments have to discover this situation during interviews, slowing down the hiring process.

Mr. Dawes:

He stated he wants to be sure that the Chief and the department know that he is in favor of adding paramedics to the department and that he is only concerned with the process of "getting the ducks in a row."

Mr. Mano:

The Commission and Rules recognize only one position – firefighter. The candidate can be asked if he has paramedic training but we have just one list unless the Commission makes a rule change. PST does the testing, and the names go on an Entry Level Firefighter list. The department needs paramedics, but the Commission has not been asked to alter the rules.

Mr. Dawes:

He asked Chief Fulbright about his experience before coming to Chehalis.

Chief Fulbright:

He replied that he came from an area that did not have civil service.

Mr. Dawes:

The correct process is for the City Council to fund the positions, then come to the Commission to create the position in the rules.

Chief Fulbright:

He assured the Commission that the candidates know what they are signing up for and that if the department were to skip over several candidates to hire a paramedic, the candidates would not be upset.

Mr. Dawes:

The liability for the city still would exist.

Mr. Mano:

The existing list cannot be changed. The process has to be followed before a change can be made to the list.

Mr. Dawes:

We cannot take action on a rule change tonight. The agenda gives us the opportunity to take final action on the list, but the position has to be done with a rule change, and that is not on the agenda.

Mr. Mano:

How critical is it to hire now?

Chief Fulbright:

Very critical, since the market is hot right now.

Mr. Mano:

The Commission will need to adopt a rule, perhaps separating the existing list, or a separate list could be created, recognizing two separate positions.

Mr. Dawes:

At the next regular meeting, a rule change can be considered. That would be the best path forward. The Chief should present his proposal at the next meeting.

Mr. Mano:

A rule can always be waived, but that would be a big step.

Mr. Dawes:

That way everything is fair.

Public Comments: none

For the Good of the Order: next meeting is Tuesday, November 28.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:58.

Joseph Mano
Chairman

Janelle Williams
Secretary