

BOARD OF FIRE AND POLICE COMMISSION
October 9, 2025
8:30 a.m.
City Hall, 419 Fulton Street, Room 112, Peoria, Illinois

ROLL CALL

The Board of Fire & Police Commission meeting was called to order by Vice Chairperson William Spears.

Commissioner's present: William Spears, Kelly Petersen, Terry Cooper, Thomas Burke, and Barry Anderson

Commissioner's absent: Pastor Marvin Hightower and Mickeisha Armstrong

Others present: Senior Human Resources Specialist Debra Bush, Police Captain John Briggs, Police Sergeant Brian Richards, Police Officer Chris Collins, Police Officer Ciara Barker, Assistant Fire Chief Tony Cummings, and Fire Chief Shawn Sollberger

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no minutes to be approved at this meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS

A. **Promotions** – Effective Sunday, August 3, 2025, the permanent promotions of Lieutenant Eric Esser to Captain, Sergeant Stevie Hughes to Lieutenant and Officer Danny Marx to Sergeant due to the retirement of Captain Mike Clark.

Effective Wednesday, August 8, 2025, the permanent promotion of Officer Pablo Dominguez to Sergeant due to the retirement of Lieutenant James Chiola.

Chairman Burke asked for the approval of the Communication to receive and file.

Kelly Petersen motioned to approve Communications A as presented; seconded by William Spears, all approved 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Timeline and Recruiting Efforts

Assistant Fire Chief Tony Cummings passed out the Peoria Fire Department 2025 Application Data information sheet to the Commission.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that they went to Bradley University, Western Illinois University and Peoria High School to recruit.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that they were focusing on their Fire Apprentice program and the Explorers at Peoria High School where they handed out quite a bit of information.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that they will not be focusing on retention instead of recruitment by keeping contact with applicants in the pool to keep them engaged and stay interested in becoming a City of Peoria Firefighter.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that after completion of the written examination and CPAT, military, residency and apprentice points were added to the written score.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that there was a list of 88 candidates to interview broken down as follows: 16 African American males; one Hispanic female; 66 Caucasian males; 3 Hispanic males and two males who identify as Other.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that while the interviews were being scheduled, three Caucasian males withdrew from the process: reducing the list to 85 candidates.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that the top 50 candidates, consisting of eight African American males; one Hispanic female; three Hispanic males; two males who identify as other and 33 Caucasian males.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that three candidates did not show up for the interview: leaving a list of 47 candidates to interview.

Assistant Fire Chief Cummings stated that their goal is to hire 14 Recruits for the Spring 2026 class.

Commissioner Kelly Petersen asked if the Fire Department has an exit interview strategy on why candidates are dropping out of the process.

Fire Chief Shawn Sollberger stated that they will be compiling all the data that they have and contacting candidates through Interview Now to see if they could get some information.

Police Officer Ciara Barker stated the information below from the January 2026 testing cycle:

1. 111 Candidates applied and currently sitting at 51 left in the pool
2. Lost 59 candidates
 - a. 26 No Show to POWER test
 - b. 3 No Show to written
 - c. 2 failed the written
 - d. 1 didn't complete the NTN testing
 - e. 11 withdrawals

Officer Barker stated that she will have the breakdown of the statistics for the candidates that are no longer in the process at the next meeting.

Officer Barker stated that she had the breakdown of the applicants that applied and the were 90 male applicants; down 1% and 21 females; up 31% from the last hiring pool.

Officer Barker stated the following:

- a. 55 White males
- b. 24 Black males
- c. 7 Hispanic males
- d. 2 Asian males
- e. 2 Other males
- f. 8 White females
- g. 8 Black females
- h. 2 Hispanic females
- i. 1 Asian female
- j. 2 Other females

Officer Barker stated that the numbers have been good for the Fitness Team, with lower numbers on Saturday rather Tuesday and Thursday through the week.

Commissioner Petersen suggested that the Spoon River Drive would be a good place to set up a table and recruit Fire and Police applicants.

ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Kelly Petersen moved to adjourn to Executive Session under 2c (1) of the Open Meetings Acts, seconded by Terry Cooper; all approved 5-0.

RECONVENE TO REGULAR SESSION

NEW BUSINESS

A. Approval of Executive Session Minutes – Regular Meeting August 6, 2025

Chairman Burke stated that there were no minutes to approve at this time.

B. Approval of Police Recruit January 2026 Eligibility Pool

Chairman Burke stated that while in Executive Session they reviewed the January 2026 Police Recruit Eligibility Pool.

Kelly Petersen moved to approve the January 2026 Police Recruit Eligibility Pool as presented; seconded by Terry Cooper; all approved 5-0.

C. Approval of Fire Battalion Chief Promotional List

Chairman Burke stated that while in Executive Session they reviewed the Fire Battalion Chief Promotional List.

Kelly Petersen moved to approve the Fire Battalion Chief Promotional List as presented; seconded by Terry Cooper; all approved 5-0.

D. Approval of Firefighter Recommendation to Hire Candidates

Chairman Burke stated that while in Executive Session they reviewed the Firefighter Recommendation to Hire Candidates.

Kelly Petersen moved to approve the Recommendation to Hire Candidates as presented; seconded by William Spears; all approved 5-0.

E. Approval of Firefighter Polygraph Examinations

Chairman Burke stated that while in Executive Session they reviewed the Firefighter polygraph examinations.

Chairman Burke stated that while in Executive Session they reviewed the Firefighter polygraph examinations and that Firefighter candidate F25-007 will have their offer of employment withdrawn due to admission made on the polygraph examination.

Kelly Petersen moved to withdraw offer of employment from Firefighter candidate F25-007 due to admissions made on the polygraph examination; seconded by Terry Cooper; all approved 5-0.

Chairman Burke stated that while in Executive Session they reviewed the Firefighter polygraph examinations and that Firefighter candidate F25-010 will have their offer of employment withdrawn due to the examiner being unable to render an opinion. The candidate will have the opportunity to retake a second polygraph examination by the examiner of our choice at their own expense.

Kelly Petersen moved to withdraw offer of employment from Firefighter candidate F25-010 due to the examiner unable to render an opinion and they will have the opportunity to retake a 2nd polygraph with the examiner of our choice and at their own expense; seconded by Terry Cooper; all approved 5-0.

Chairman Burke stated that Firefighter candidates F25-005, 006, 008, 009, 011, 012, 013, 014, 015, 016, 107, 108 and 019 will continue in the process.

Chairman Burke stated that they would like to put on the next agenda to update the interview questions for the police and fire departments.

ADJOURN MEETING

There being no further business, Barry Anderson moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by William Spears; all approved 5-0.

Submitted by: Debra D. Bush
Senior Human Resources Specialist

APPROVED:

Thomas Burke, Chairperson

William Spears, Vice Chairperson

Kelly Petersen, Secretary

Terry Cooper, Member

Barry Anderson, Member