



**BOARD OF FIRE AND  
POLICE COMMISSIONERS  
Thursday, February 18, 2021, at 9:00 am  
Meeting Minutes**

**1. Call to Order / Roll Call**

The City of Carbondale Board of Fire and Police Commissioners held a special meeting on Thursday, February 18, 2021, virtually through Zoom. Chairman Kerry Braswell called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m.

**Roll Call**

Present: Kerry Braswell, Linda Flowers, Stephanie Jerstad, and Ted Lomax (9:31 a.m.)\*

Absent: Randy Burnside

**Acknowledgement of Guests**

Also present were Deputy City Clerk Clinette Hayes, Human Resources Manager Tara Brown, Diversity and Compliance Officer Alicia Jackson, Fire Chief Mike Hertz, and Interim Police Chief Stan Reno.

**2. Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes from December 17, 2020, and the Special Meeting Minutes from January 12, 2021.**

MOTION: L. Flowers moved, S. Jerstad seconded, that the Board approve the regular meeting minutes from December 17, 2020, and the special meeting minutes from January 12, 2021.

VOTE: All voted Aye. No Nays. Motion declared carried.

**3. Closed Meeting to Conduct Oral Interviews for Lateral Entry Police Officer**

MOTION: L. Flowers moved, S. Jerstad seconded, that the Board hold a closed meeting for the purpose of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), specifically to conduct oral interviews for Lateral Entry Police Officer.

VOTE: All voted Aye. No Nays. Motion declared carried. Open session recessed at 9:17 a.m.

**4. Return to Open Session**

There was no formal action taken as a result of the closed meeting. There being no further business to come before the Board, L. Flowers moved, S. Jerstad seconded, that the Board return to open session.

VOTE: All voted Aye. No nays. Motion declared carried. Open session resumed at 9:31 a.m.

*\*Commissioner Ted Lomax entered the meeting when open session resumed\**

**5. Update on the Lateral-Entry Police Officer Candidates**

Interim Police Chief Stan Reno updated the Board on the status of the last few Lateral-Entry Police Officer candidates. A special meeting had to be scheduled for their oral interviews with the Board. The candidates passed their interview, but certain circumstances kept them from moving forward in the hiring process.

## **6. Update on Entry-Level Police & Fire Exams and Promotional Fire Exams**

Deputy City Clerk Clinette Hayes apprised the Board of the upcoming entry-level police officer and firefighter exams as well as the Fire Captain and Assistant Fire Chief promotional examinations. A brief explanation of the processes was presented to the newer Board members who are unfamiliar with the examinations. It was noted that each of the exams require an oral interview with the Board and will more than likely have a special meeting scheduled for that purpose. In order to determine oral interview dates, it was the consensus of the Board for Ms. Hayes to poll the Board for their availability when it gets closer to the exam dates. All four exams will be conducted between the months of March and August of 2021.

## **7. Discussion and Approval of Amendments to Chapter II, Sections 1 & 2 of the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners Governing Rules as it Relates to Age Restrictions**

After an inquiry was made about the maximum age to participate in the entry-level police officer examination, it was discovered that the board Governing Rules and the entry-level firefighter and police officer applications do not properly reflect the age restrictions outlined in Illinois Statute 65 ILCS 5/10-2.1-6. According to the Statute, both entry-level police and firefighter's maximum age limit should be under 35 years of age.

In addition, there were exceptions to the rule listed in the Statute. Under certain criteria, the age limitation for police does not apply to veterans, persons who have served as an auxiliary police officer, persons previously employed as a police officer (in state or out of state), and those who have served as a member of the Illinois State Police. Age limitations for fire, under certain criteria, does not apply to any person previously employed as a firefighter (in state or out of state), those who have served as a volunteer fireman, and applicants who are 18 years of age who have successfully completed 2 years of study in fire techniques.

It should be noted that these age restrictions/limitations applies to police and fire eligibility for candidates interested in participating in the entry-level examination.

MOTION: T. Lomax moved, L. Flowers seconded, that the Board approve the amendments to Chapter II, Sections 1 & 2 of the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners Governing Rules as it relates to age restrictions contingent upon City Council approval.

## **8. Discussion regarding Closed Session Meetings**

The topic of who is authorized to attend closed meetings was brought to the Board's attention since it recently became an issue. There has been confusion about the topic because there is very little detail in the Governing Rules for any kind of guidance and changes in the makeup of the Board and City Staff over the years could also attribute to the problem. Without any guidance it is basically left to the Board's discretion to determine who can and cannot attend.

The main concern of the Board is to avoid opening the door to allow any City Employee to sit in on closed meetings. If allowed to attend it should be an employee specific to the police or fire department who would be involved in the purpose of the closed meeting. According to the Illinois Attorney General's FAQ's regarding the Open Meetings Act, "Only the members of the public body and others who are directly involved in the matter which is the basis for the closed meeting may attend."

It was the consensus of the Board to amend the Governing Rules to include language to allow the Police and Fire Chief to choose at their discretion a designee of their department to attend closed meetings. If the Chief is unavailable to attend a closed session a designee can stand in place of the Chief, or will be allowed to attend alongside the Chief. Notification to the Board of who the additional attendees will be is also requested.

**9. Board Comments**

None

**10. Citizen's Comments**

None

**11. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 10:16 a.m.

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Clinette C. Hayes, Deputy City Clerk

Approved by the Board on \_\_\_\_\_