

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
ACTIONS
APRIL 14, 2004
6:00 P.M.
CIVIL SERVICE CONFERENCE ROOM
3RD FLOOR, CITY HALL

Roll Call

Chief Examiner Julio Lopez called the meeting to order. In attendance were Chairman Michael Finn, Chief Examiner Julio Lopez, and Commissioner Geraldine George. Commissioner Frank Caracansi was unable to attend due to business (end of tax season).

NEW BUSINESS:

Information on Positions:

Julio Lopez gave information on the following positions:

Superintendent of Highway - Chief Examiner Lopez and William Buckley, Director of Public Works, conducted interviews on April 7, 2004. They interviewed six candidates and we provided to the Mayor the names of the individuals that we felt would fit the needs of the department and the future plans of the department. We are awaiting a decision from the Mayor.

Lateral Entry Police Officers – We processed two individuals. One is from New Milford and the other candidate is from New Fairfield. They will be sworn in on Friday, April 16, 2004 at 11:00 a.m. They will start training the following week. Commissioner George asked for the name of the New Fairfield police officer. Chief Examiner Lopez said his name is Drew Carlson. Drew was actually on the City of Danbury's Police List. New Fairfield asked if they could hire candidates from the City of Danbury's list. The New Milford police officer is James Antonelli.

Superintendent of Parks - Chief Examiner Lopez was talking with Chairman Finn prior to the meeting about this. There is a situation that has developed around this position. The position is not reflected in the budget for 2004 and 2005. Chairman Finn is requesting that discussion on this position be deferred to the next meeting. Chairman Finn states that the reason for postponing this discussion because he received information from the Finance Department that states that this position is not going to be in the budget. But, Chairman Finn has a letter from the Mayor asking that an ad be run for this position. Chairman Finn does not want to run a test if the position does not exist. That would be wasting City money. Chairman Finn did not like the fact that we advertised for this position and collected application fees (to help offset the cost of the testing) and now we may have to tell the applicants that there will not be a test. The application fee was a new concept. Chairman Finn would like to put this discussion off for one month until he finds out if the position is not going to be filled, then there won't be a test. Chairman Finn would like to reimburse the applicants for their application fees. If the position is going to be filled, then a test will be run. Chief Examiner Lopez already contacted an outside testing company that is just waiting to come forward with a bid for the exam. They've been put on hold. If Chief

Examiner Lopez gets the go ahead, he will move forward. Everything is in place to move forward promptly. There will be a written and an oral exam.

Summer Employment Program - This program does not fall under the jurisdiction of the Civil Service but just to inform the Commission of the status. It's a summer employment program that is put in place for local students with preference to students from Danbury. Some open positions are Park Maintainers, summer camp playground leaders for the different schools, swimming instructors, lifeguards, etc. The majority of the positions are lifeguards. The programs keep the kids busy and helps the parents. Chairman Finn asked for a list of available jobs. Chief Examiner Lopez said he will give Chairman Finn a list.

Preferential Points for Volunteer Firefighters - At one time, in Danbury, volunteer firefighters used to be awarded some benefits for being volunteers. There was a case many years back that was decided by the courts because there was a challenge by a female saying that there were not enough minorities including females in the volunteer firefighters. There was a disparity. It went to the court and Judge Daly in Bridgeport decided in favor of the plaintiff. The concession for points stopped. The rule was until such time that the volunteer forces reflect the community. Now, based on the statistics, the volunteer firefighters have minorities on their forces. A committee was formed by the leadership of the volunteer forces to explore the possibility of going back to address this issue. Chief Examiner Lopez gives the Commission meeting minutes from July 2002 that this was brought up. He checked with the Corporation Counsel and there are no illegalities because the force now reflects the diversity of the community. Volunteer firefighters are awarded a series of points based on certifications. They are required to show the certification is active. They can accumulate a total of 11 points. Chairman Finn thinks 11 points is quite high. Commissioner George asks if these points apply to servicemen (military personnel). Chief Examiner Lopez explains that military personnel can receive five points. If you are a disabled veteran, and your disability does not prevent you from performing your job, it's ten points. You will rarely find individuals with all the certifications. Chairman Finn would like to review this. For example, someone could be a World War II veteran, with a Purple Heart, a volunteer firefighter since he came home from the war, and he goes into the test with 21 points. Couldn't this happen? Chief Examiner Lopez said it could happen. Chairman Finn asks wouldn't the individual be too old to take the test? Chief Examiner Lopez said under new laws, if the individual is capable of performing the functions, age should not be a factor. Age is never a factor. For example, we have hired police officers who were 42 years old and they breeze through. The new laws prevent age discrimination. Regarding the certifications for volunteer firefighters, there are detailed explanations that the Commission can review. The Commission can go forward and award points to volunteer firefighters because it is protected by the Court's decision.

Provisional Appointments - Past practice has been that we have several positions in which the Commission was requested to act upon employees that have been performing a function for quite a while on a provisional or temporary basis. And they have demonstrated that they have the capacity and more to perform the job. We did that with Superintendent of Public Utilities, the Deputy Building Inspector and we have done that in Finance. Right now we have a request from the Director of Finance regarding Nancy Lahoud. Nancy was an Account Clerk II and she has been placed in an Account Clerk II Payroll position on a provisional basis since July 1, 2003. Chief Examiner Lopez agrees with the request. The position is one grade up from a 7 to an 8. She's very capable and she is doing a good job. Chief Examiner Lopez is requesting that the Commission consider to grant this position to Nancy Lahoud based on her demonstrated skills and capacity of performing the position. Chairman Finn proposed a motion to accept the recommendation. However, Chairman Finn thinks this has been done already and it may already be in the record. He remembers hearing this proposed once before and thought it had been done. Chief Examiner Lopez will review older meeting minutes to see if this has been done. If this has been done, Chief Examiner Lopez will go back retroactive for this position. Commissioner George seconded the motion. Once Nancy moves into this position as a regular employee, this opens up for an internal promotion from Account Clerk to Account Clerk II. There is a promotional eligibility list for this

position. These positions opening up for promotion are a morale booster. It has a positive impact on the employees.

Chairman Finn made a motion to accept the previous meetings minutes. Commissioner George seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chief Examiner Lopez adjourned the meeting at 6:35 P.M.

JAL/ecc