

*Sycamore Fire and Police Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes*

April 2, 2007

ROLL CALL

Chairman Dailey called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. Present at the meeting were: Commissioner Ron Short, Commissioner Jeff Petersen, Fire Chief Bill Riddle, Police Chief Don Thomas, and City Attorney Kevin Buick.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion

Commissioner Short moved to approve the agenda and Commissioner Petersen seconded the motion.

Vote

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Open Session

Motion

Commissioner Short moved to approve the minutes from the open session of the March 14, 2007 meeting, as written, and Commissioner Petersen seconded the motion.

Vote

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

Closed Session

Motion

Commissioner Short moved to approve the minutes from the closed session of the March 14, 2007 meeting, as written, and Commissioner Petersen seconded the motion.

Vote

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

COMMUNICATIONS

Recording Secretary Tritle reminded the Commissioners that they needed to submit their registration forms to her for processing if they wished to attend the Illinois Fire and Police Commissioners Association Spring Seminar, to be held in Springfield on May 4 – May 6, 2007.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Chairman Dailey reported that the Commission had received a bill from the Illinois State Police for \$88.00 to cover the cost of the fingerprint checks for the next two Firefighter candidates.

Motion

Commissioner Short moved to approve the payment of the bill totaling \$88.00 and Commissioner Petersen seconded the motion.

Vote

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

OLD BUSINESS

A. **Presentation by I/O Solutions Regarding Psychological Examinations for Police and Fire Candidates**

Chad Legel and Kate Kinsella from I/O Solutions addressed the Board regarding the services their organization offers to assist the Commissioners with the Police and Fire hiring and promotional processes, explaining that they can customize tests to particular situations and local clients. Chairman Dailey stated that they were specifically looking for someone to administer the psychological exams to Police and Fire candidates. Mr. Legel explained that I/O Solutions uses an Industrial Psychologist to administer their exams, adding that Industrial Psychologists use methods that are better than Clinical Psychologists (who only examine emotional traits) when determining if a candidate is a good fit for a job. He said that they use Theodore Polygraph Services to perform polygraph exams and the results of the polygraph are incorporated into the psychological exam. He clarified that the results of the background exam are not used by the psychologist. Both tests are administered in the same day, so that the candidate only needs to make one trip to Oak Brook to take both exams. Chief Thomas asked if I/O Solutions would still administer the psychological exam to a candidate who does not pass the polygraph. Mr. Legel answered that the Commissioners would need to decide on this issue. He stated the fee for the psychological exam is \$325 and the results would be reported to the Commission the next day. The cost of the polygraph exam is \$140. Chief Thomas stated that he was not adverse to the idea of using Theodore Polygraph Services instead of the polygrapher they currently use, as long as the psychological exam was not given to a candidate who did not pass the polygraph exam. Chief Thomas wondered about their pass/fail rate on psychological exams. Mr. Legel answered that it is approximately 60-70%, adding that the best entry-level assessment tool for candidates is the oral examination.

Mr. Legel explained that, for a \$35 fee per applicant, I/O Solutions can also manage the application process for the Commissioners; this fee includes the cost for the written exam. The Commission could recoup all or part of the \$35 fee by charging candidates an application fee. For a nominal fee, I/O Solutions can also assist with advertising and are also able to administer Physical Ability Tests.

Recording Secretary Tritle asked Mr. Legel about participating in a testing consortium. He explained that I/O Solutions does administer the written exam for the College of DuPage's Firefighter testing consortium. He explained that the use of consortiums for testing Police candidates, however, is dying, due to the fact that the dominant agencies in the consortium end up hiring all of the top candidates, since the smaller agencies cannot compete with their wages and benefits. Chief Thomas stated that he would like to see a process put into place that is similar to the one used for the LSAT exam. Within a specified time frame, candidates would go to I/O Solutions and take the written test at their leisure. At the end of the specified time period, the scores would be compiled and sent to the Commission. He asked Mr. Legel if this was feasible and if it would cost more to administer. Mr. Legel stated that his agency could do this at no increased cost. Chairman Dailey asked City Attorney Buick if this type of testing process would be within the parameters of the Rules and Regulations. Mr. Buick answered that the Commissioners would want to ensure that it was designed in such a way as to be in sync with the Rules and Regulations.

Chief Thomas stated that he was agreeable to the idea of having I/O Solutions do the advertising, application process, and the polygraph and psychological exams; the Commissioners would still perform the oral interviews. Chief Riddle agreed, stating that the Commissioners will need to look at their budget for the coming year to see which services they can afford to use and if they should charge candidates an application fee.

Motion

Commissioner Petersen moved to approve contracting I/O Solutions to perform Phase I application services, the polygraph and psychological exams (only for candidates who pass the polygraph test). Commissioner Short seconded the motion.

Vote

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

B. Update on the Review of the Rules and Regulations of the Sycamore Commission

City Attorney Buick explained that he was still in the process of reviewing and revising the current Rules and Regulations. He hopes to perform a dramatic restructuring of them so that they are more “user friendly” and conform to recent changes in the laws. He will be paying particular attention to the scaling of test scores in his review. Chairman Dailey asked Mr. Buick if he will also be putting together a list of procedures for the Commissioners to follow for the various processes they perform. Mr. Buick answered that, if the Rules and Regulations are rewritten correctly, separate lists of procedures will not be needed.

C. Application for Records Disposal

Recording Secretary Tritle stated that she had received permission from the State to destroy administrative correspondence, applicant files, certificates of publication, and eligibility and promotion lists up until the year 2005, if any of these documents are still on file. Recording Secretary Tritle asked City Attorney Buick if it was best to keep some of the items, such as the eligibility lists, even though they can be destroyed by State statute. She explained that they had just received a FOIA request for lists back to 1995 and, since they were still on file, she sent them. Mr. Buick answered that the Commission should not keep what it does not need; therefore, we should destroy items that are no longer needed or significant.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Testing to Establish an Entry-level Police Officers Eligibility List

Chairman Dailey explained that the current list expires on November 1, 2007. Chief Thomas stated that he would like a new list to be developed prior to that date, so it is ready to be put into place on November 1st. As previously discussed, he recommended that I/O Solutions be contracted to do the advertising and application process and that the candidates be allowed to go to I/O Solutions to take the written exam at their leisure, within a specified time period. He added that the Commissioners would still need to conduct an orientation session for those applicants who have completed the written exam. Chairman Dailey suggested that they begin advertising in June, administer the written exams July and August, and the oral exams in September or October. She asked City Attorney Buick again if the testing process could be handled in this way; he answered the overall concept is workable. The Commissioners were all in consensus with this testing process and schedule.

B. Semi-annual Review of Closed Session Minutes

City Attorney Buick explained that this review is done in closed session twice a year. During this review, the Commissioners decide if there are any closed-session minutes that may be opened to the public. The last review was completed by the Commissioners in October 2006.

C Fire Chief

Chief Riddle reported that the background examinations for Jacob Herrmann and Dustin Ruby, the next two candidates on the eligibility list are complete. The next candidate is scheduled to be hired in May. Therefore, the Commission needs to send a contingent job offer to Mr. Herrmann so that his medical and psychological exams can be performed. Recording Secretary Tritle stated that she will notify the Commissioners when the letter is received from the City Manager which authorizes them to make this hire. The offer letter will be sent to Mr. Herrmann at that time.

C. Police Chief

Chief Thomas reported that he is expecting to need three hires in August; one will be for a new position, one will be for a School Resource Officer position (if funding for the position is approved by the School Board), and the third will be a replacement for a Police Officer who is considering retirement in the fall. For two of these hires, the Chief recommends that the Commissioners hire two certified Officers from the current eligibility list (Jennifer Saam and Joe Meeks).

CLOSED SESSION

Motion

Commissioner Petersen moved that the Commissioners go into closed session to review past closed-session minutes. Commissioner Short seconded the motion.

Vote

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

Closed session began at 2:15 p.m.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Motion

Commissioner Short moved that the Commissioners return to open session and Commissioner Petersen seconded the motion.

Vote

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

Open session reconvened at 2:30 p.m.

Motion

Commissioner Short moved that the minutes from all closed sessions held during the period of May 9, 2002 through March 14, 2007 remain closed. Commissioner Petersen seconded the motion.

Vote

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

Recording Secretary Tritle reported that she had discovered that the closed session meeting conducted on January 11, 2007, for some reason, did not record (the audio tape was blank when she played it back). City Attorney Buick verified that there are written minutes (based upon notes taken) from this meeting which have been approved by the Commission. These minutes are the official record of what occurred in that session; the purpose of the audio tape is to determine, usually within 60 days of the date of the meeting, if the Open Meetings Act has been violated. There is some risk, in that the law requires us to keep verbatim recordings for an 18 month period before they can be destroyed. However, if someone is aggrieved by this, we will need to deal with it then.

ADJOURNMENT

Before adjourning, Chairman Dailey informed the Commissioners that they would need to meet in May to elect new officers and prepare the Annual Report to the City Council. The Commissioners decided to meet on May 3, 2007 at 1:00 p.m.


Motion

Commissioner Short moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:35 p.m. and Commissioner Petersen seconded the motion.

Vote

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

Minutes accepted by:

 5.4.07
Samantha Dailey, Chairman Date

Attest:

 5/4/07
Jean Tritle, Recording Secretary Date