



## GURNEE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

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### MEETING MINUTES

October 22, 2024

**Present -** Ty Bonds, Chairperson  
Diane Summers, Secretary / Commissioner  
Erika Weiman, Commissioner

**Absent -** None

**Staff -** Christine Palmieri, Director of Human Resources  
Brian Smith, Police Chief  
David Douglass, Deputy Fire Chief  
John Kavanagh, Fire Chief [arrived at 7:51 pm]

**Public -** None present

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairperson Bonds

AYE: 3 Bonds, Summers, Weiman

NAY: 0

ABSENT: 0

**Pledge of Allegiance** – Chairperson Bonds led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Comment** – None

**Minutes** - Motion to approve May 21, 2024 regular meeting minutes: motion by Summers, second by Weiman; all Aye

Motion to approve Special Meeting Minutes – Open Session: May 21, 2024; August 8, 2024; August 27, 2024; August 28, 2024; September 3, 2024; September 4, 2024; September 17, 2024; September 18, 2024; October 1, 2024; October 3, 2024; motion by Summers, second by Weiman; all Aye

Motion to approve Special Meeting Minutes – Closed Session: May 21, 2024; August 8, 2024; August 27, 2024; August 28, 2024; September 3, 2024; September 4, 2024; September 17, 2024; September 18, 2024; October 1, 2024; October 3, 2024; motion by Summers, second by Weiman; all Aye

**Bills** – no bills

**Executive Session** – No items

**New Business** -

1. Notices of Vacancy; Commissioners acknowledged notice of vacancies in the Police Department due to voluntary separations and retirement and in the Fire Department due to retirement
2. Certification / Non-Certification of Firefighter / Paramedic candidates from the February 2024 eligibility list: Commissioners certified four candidates for continuation in the hiring process; Commissioners did not certify the

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continuation of nine candidates and names will be removed from the eligibility list; all aye

3. Certification / Non-Certification of Lateral Police Officer candidate(s): Commissioners certified two lateral police officer candidates
4. Certification / Non-Certification of Police Officer candidates from the February 2024 eligibility list: Commissioners certified one candidate for continuation in the hiring process; Commissioners did not certify the continuation of three candidates and names will be removed from the eligibility list; eligibility list is exhausted; all aye
5. Certification / Non-Certification of Police Officer candidates from the August 2024 eligibility list: Commissioners did not certify the continuation of twenty nine candidates and names will be removed from the eligibility list; all aye
6. Certification / Non-Certification of Police Sergeant candidate from the August 2023 promotion eligibility list: Commissioners certified the promotion of one candidate; all aye
7. Certification / Non-Certification of Fire Lieutenant candidate from the February 2024 eligibility list: Commissioners certified the promotion of one candidate; all aye
8. Review of draft 2025 meeting schedule: Commissioners reviewed the proposed schedule, generally the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month for regular meetings, unless adjusted due to holiday schedule; Commissioners also approved a change in start time to 6:30 pm; motion by Summers, second by Weiman; all aye
9. Review preliminary 2024 Annual Report draft: Commissioners reviewed the preliminary Annual Report; Commissioners will provide feedback with additional items for inclusion in the report, including diversity statistics; staff will provide Commissioners with updated reports prior to Village Board submission
10. Discussion regarding changes to entry level Police Officer interview process: staff presented the Commissioners with a proposal to adjust the Commission's role in the entry level screening process. Currently the Commission interview is the first step after the eligibility list is established and candidates are recommended on to staff interview. Given the competing schedules of fire candidate interviews and police candidate interviews with Commissioner schedules, it was asked that the process be modified to follow the same process used for Lateral Police Officers, where the Commission interview is the last step in the process after a candidate has passed all other screenings. Commissioners would continue to review polygraph, psychological, and background of candidates referred on after staff interview prior to interview. Chair Bonds asked about what issue this solves / how much time is saved. It was estimated that for every 4 interview nights currently scheduled, it would be reduced to 1 night. Additionally, it would speed up the department screening process by approximately 1

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month. Chief Smith explained the deadline for paperwork ahead of academy start is 45 days prior. In past years, it was 2 weeks and has gradually increased over the years due to demand. It was asked if a staff member would continue to be present during the Commission interview portion. Chief affirmed that this could continue. It was discussed that in the current process, having staff sit in on Commission interviews before staff interviews would be valuable to the staff interview process. Chief affirmed that this does form the basis for many of the questions asked during that process, often to see if the responses are the same and if the candidate demonstrates integrity. If the process was modified, staff could also provide insight to the Commission if responses changed when in front of the Commissioners. Commissioners were concerned that they would be a rubber stamp. Chief explained that the Commission would retain the right to say no to a candidate if there was something that did not sit right with the candidate, either during the interview process or during any previous screening step (polygraph, psychological, background). It was explained that, while the department gives a recommendation regarding candidate status, if a Commissioner has a concern, it can be discussed further or the Commission can elect to not concur with the department recommendation. Commissioner Summers asked if there could be some way to get a summary of why candidates were not passed through the staff interview process. Staff will look into this further and seek legal counsel assistance. Commissioners agreed to temporarily modify the process to adjust the timing of the Commission interview to the end of the process for entry level Police Officers for the next eligibility list process. It was also requested that staff provide reviews of candidate demographics to ensure that there is no reduction in diverse candidates and to continue to provide updates as to the process change. It was also asked that staff determine future dates for Commission interviews so placeholders could be put on calendars.

11. Discussion regarding polygraph use in screening: staff presented Commissioners and department attendees with a memo outlining current polygraph language from comparable communities along with a review of how the polygraph is interpreted or utilized as a screening tool. Of the comparable communities surveyed, only Gurnee utilizes it as an absolute disqualifier. The other communities surveyed utilize the polygraph as a tool and part of additional screening processes, i.e. background, additional interviews, etc. Staff requested that the Commission consider revising the rules to use the polygraph in a manner that would allow further investigation into the findings on the polygraph when a candidate may receive an untruthful response. Staff provided several examples of when the responses didn't make sense and allowing the candidate to move forward and further investigate the findings in the background would have been more advantageous. Commissioner Weiman stated that we are putting ourselves at a disadvantage with other communities in the hiring process with the current absolute standard. Commissioner Weiman also reviewed the knock out statistics that were provided during the May Commission



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meeting to review how many candidates were eliminated during the polygraph process. Fire had a higher percentage than Police, but it was discussed that Police also has an additional interview process where some of those candidates that would potentially not pass the polygraph are removed during the interview process. Commissioner Summers raised concerns over subjectivity and asked if some guidelines could be put in place. Commissioners discussed if certain questions could be automatic failures versus others but it was decided that was not a viable option. Commissioners agreed to adjust how the polygraph is used in the screening process and requested updated language for the rules and regulations. Staff will draft and review with counsel in preparation for future meeting approval.

**Confirmation of Next Meeting – November 19, 2024**

**Adjournment** - motion to adjourn by Bonds, second by Weiman; all aye.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm

Prepared by Christine Palmieri on behalf of

*Diane Summers*

Secretary, Civil Service Commission