

Whatcom County Civil Service Commission
February 8, 2018- 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Human Resources Conference Room – Suite 107

Minutes

Commissioners Present: Bart Miller, Paul Myers

Sheriff Staff Present: Sheriff Elfo, Undersheriff Parks, Dawn Pierce

Human Resources (HR): Bea Acland, Chief Examiner
Shara Struiksma

Other: Steve Harris

Approval of Minutes

The Commission approved the minutes from the January 11, 2018 meeting as presented.

New Business:

1. Eligibility Registers

Steve Harris, President of the Whatcom County Deputy Sheriff's Guild, attended the meeting to discuss Civil Service Rules Section 10.03 C "Certification – Filling Vacancies" in relation to RCW 41.14.

Steve presented the Commission his concern the Rules and RCW may be in conflict. Whatcom County certifies the top 5 for promotional registers and the top 15 for entry level registers. Steve's reading of the RCW is that it allows only the top 3 names to be certified onto an eligible register for hire. Steve wants to be sure Whatcom County is complying with State law.

Sheriff Elfo said he is familiar with the RCW but understood there was latitude for Charter Counties.

Steve expressed concerns about Charter Counties having latitude, as the intent of RCW and Civil Service is to prevent a spoils system and prevent hiring authority for giving preferred, preferential treatment to known applicants.

Bea noted that the rule appears to have been changed to its current working in approximately 1996. The Civil Service Rules were revised in 2011 after a lengthy review process, but this part of the rules was unaffected by that revision. The Civil Service Commission will need to seek additional guidance on Steve's concern.

Bart moved to table the discussion for further study and legal assistance. Paul Myers seconded. Motion approved. Bea will reach out to the Prosecuting Attorney's Office for review and legal counsel.

2. City Contracts

Steve informed the Commission there have been discussions about the County providing legal services for some cities. Currently not in negotiations but there is a potential opportunity. The RCW's provide guidance and the Commission may want to review in preparation.

Sheriff's Discussion Items

Sheriff Elfo reviewed the employment activity happening within the Sheriff's office. The Sheriff's Office had a Deputy transfer from Corrections to Patrol and he has recently requested and been approved to return back to Corrections. Commissioners approved certification of a reinstatement

register.

The Sheriff's Office is working on implementing more standardization to the Oral Board process. Oral Board dates have been scheduled for Corrections and Patrol for the remainder of 2018. Jeff is working on a summary of the current recruitment efforts and will bring to the March Civil Service meeting to share with the Commission.

The Sheriff's Office is also in discussions with the Planning and Development Services Department (PDS) about Fire Marshal Duties. These duties are currently performed by employees in PDS and they are looking at transferring the employees to the Sheriff's Office. Only the concept has been agreed on so far; it may require changes to the County Code.

Commission Discussion Items

Bart Miller recently observed the Corrections Oral Boards. He would like to meet with Jeff to discuss his suggestions for improvements.

Bart asked if the Sheriff's Office invites civilians to participate on the Oral Board panel. This is something that has been done and Jeff is drafting language to standardize the process and provide guidelines for assembling a panel.

There will be more discussion on recruitment at the March meeting.

Chief Examiner's Discussion Items

Bea reviewed the work performed by Civil Service staff since the last meeting. There has been a lot of focus on recruitment efforts and Shara has begun drafting new recruitment brochures for Corrections and Patrol. Draft brochures were presented.

Tasks for Next Meeting:

Jeff will finalize Sheriff's Office recruitment plans and share updates with the Commission at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.

Minutes by Shara Struiksma