

Police and Fire Commission Meeting

April 13, 2022

6:00 PM

River Falls City Hall
Council Chambers
222 Lewis Street
River Falls, WI

Police

Fire

POLICE & FIRE COMMISSION MEETING

April 13, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

City Council Chambers

222 Lewis Street

River Falls, WI 54022

***Please note that due to the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency, some or all members of this governing body may attend via telephone or internet. The City Council Chambers will be open to the public. To access, use the lower-level doors.*

NOTE: OFFICIAL ACTION MAY BE TAKEN ON ANY AGENDA ITEM

Agenda

Call Meeting to Order

Roll Call

Approval of Minutes: March 1, 2022 Regular Meeting

- 1) Election of President of Police & Fire Commission
- 2) Election of Vice President of Police & Fire Commission

Fire Department

- 3) Fire Chief Hiring Process Update

Police Department

- 4) Modification to Patrol Officer Eligibility List
- 5) Appointments from Patrol Officer Eligibility List

Other

- 6) Review of Police and Fire Commission Duties

Adjournment

Posted: April 7, 2022

*Council members may be in attendance for informational purposes only.
No official Council action will be taken.*

NOTE: Any person who has a qualifying disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act that requires the meeting or materials to be in an accessible location or format, may contact City Clerk Amy White at (715) 426-3408 or in person at 222 Lewis Street, for accommodations. Requests for accommodations should be made at least three (3) business days in advance of the meeting. Every effort will be made to arrange accommodations.

POLICE & FIRE COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

March 1, 2022 @ 6:00 p.m.

River Falls City Hall
Training Room
222 Lewis Street
River Falls, WI

Meeting called to order at 6 p.m.

Commission Members Present: Mark Sams, Jon Longsdorf, Gary Donath,
Grant Hanson (Virtual), Dick Rinehart

City Staff Present: Jason Stroud, Karen Bergstrom, Scott Nelson,
Matthew Kennett, Sterling Hackney, Jon Smits

Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting Minutes from August 23, 2021.

MSC Rinehart/Donath. Unanimous.

1. Establish Police Officer Eligibility List

Kennett referenced February 25, 2022, Memo from Chief Young, included in agenda packet, requesting to add five applicants to create an eligibility list. Kennett explained the applicants have completed written examination, physical agility test and oral interviews. As of now, the department has five individuals they would like to add to an eligibility list. Kennett explained the police department is looking to fill four vacant positions from the eligibility list. Kennett advised there are still two applicants in the process, who have completed written exam. The results of the physical agility and oral interviews will determine if they proceed. Kennett also explained the difference between certifiable and not certified column on the memo.

MSC Donath/Rinehart to establish the eligibility list with the five candidates on the Memo. Unanimous.

2. Fire Chief Hiring Process Discussion

Chief Nelson thanked the City and Commission for their support to him and the department. As referenced in his retirement letter dated February 9, 2022, included in the agenda packet, Chief Nelson's last day will be Monday, May 2, 2022. He also supports the City Administrator's recommendation for acting fire chief. The Commission thanked Chief Nelson for his service.

Assistant City Administrator Jason Stroud and Human Resources Director Karen Bergstrom then discussed the hiring process as outlined in his Memo to the Commission, the City would like to proceed with, upon approval from the Commission.

Stroud asked for authorization for staff to partner with the recruitment firm of Gov HR USA to assist with the initial screening and ranking of candidates. With the cafeteria plan approach with Gov HR USA, they would create a position profile, do nationwide posting,

create an assessment matrix that grades applicants based on knowledge skills and abilities of the job.

Stroud explained the City will manage the rest of the hiring process, with Commission participation and approval. This could include an initial virtual screening, a day of panel interviews and presentation. They would then bring their findings to the Commission. Stroud explained they would create an interview panel that consists of Commission representation, mayor, city administrator, assistant city administrator, human resources director, police chief, community development director, representative from a local business, representative from the fire department chief advisory committee and a fire chief from a peer agency.

Stroud acknowledged the Commission's responsibility and authority for hiring and appointing the fire chief and stated the City would remain transparent through the process. He asked for trust to get the process started and work through the process. Any final candidates would be presented to the Commission for final approval.

Stroud indicated the job description for the Fire Chief was updated after meeting with fire chief's advisory committee, removing the residency requirement. The city felt this requirement could be included in the job offer agreement letter, if the City or commission feels it needed to be revisited, based on the candidate selected. An updated job description was handed out at the meeting.

Donath asked for clarification on how comprehensive the services provided by GovHR USA are with prospecting for applicants. Stroud further explained how they compile the applicant ranking. Donath asked for clarification of what the company does. Stroud and Bergstrom replied that they will identify the top tier of candidates. Company will do stakeholder interviews before the process to see what the Commission and the City are looking for in terms of the candidate. They will set up grading criteria based on those meetings. In response to further a clarifying question, Bergstrom explained city staff have come up with their own internal assessment center and are confident in the ability to conduct this in-house.

Rinehart asked for information on the hiring process for Chief Nelson. Since that predates current human resources staff, Nelson explained it was done through Springstead and was a full recruitment package since he is the first full-time Chief for the department and there was no HR director at that time. Nelson described the extensive process.

Stroud stated he would not rule out possibility of PFC/staff visit current department of the candidates during a background check. He also stated, when down to two finalists, he suggested having the interim fire chief give a tour. Sams stated the background check portion is vital to the process and believes a firefighter should be included in a background visit.

Stroud mentioned that as they are planning out interview panel participants and questions, internal candidates will need to be identified so they are not part of the process of creating the questions and doing the behind-the-scenes work.

Stroud requested permission from the Commission to allow the city to initiate a recruitment and allow city staff to go forward as outlined in the meeting.

MSC Longsdorf, Donath Second to move forward with the plan outlined by Assistant City Administrator Stroud for the recruitment of the Fire Chief. Unanimous.

3. Appointment of Acting Fire Chief

Stroud recommended to the Commission the appointment of Tom Foley to the Acting Fire Chief Position upon the retirement of Scott Nelson.

Jason Stroud then addressed the Commission to discuss Memo to the Commission from City Administrator Scot Simpson recommending appointment of Tom Foley to Acting Fire Chief up on the retirement of Chief Nelson on May 2, 2022. Stroud indicated there is a typo in the Memo; Foley served as Chief of the department from 2000 to 2001, not 2020-2021. He is currently the Division Chief of Operations.

MSC Rinehart/Longsdorf to appoint Tom Foley as Acting Fire Chief upon the retirement of Scott Nelson on May 2, 2022. Unanimous.

Hiring Panel Discussion:

A hiring panel will be used during the interviews, which would include a representative of the PFC. Discussion was held over whether that would be one member as the day-to-day contact, or the Commission, as a whole. Due to commitments, scheduling, and timeliness required for the process, the Commission agreed that one Commissioner would be delegated to be the main contact person for the process. Gary Donath was selected as the Commission's point person for the hiring process, Mark Sams may be available to tag team with him.

Donath had questions about open meeting requirements for communications between the Commission members. His concerns will be discussed with the City Clerk. Stroud stated he would send regular updates to the Commission on the process. He reminded Commission members to reply individually, not "Reply All".

Adjournment: **MSC Rinehart/Longsdorf.** Meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Ailene Splittgerber
Recording Secretary



**RIVER FALLS
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Office of the Chief of Police
2815 Prairie Drive
River Falls, WI 54022
715.425.0909

To: Police & Fire Commissioners
From: Gordon Young, Chief of Police
Date: April 7, 2022
Re: Patrol Officer Eligibility List and Appointment

After conducting the physical agility test, written examination, and oral board interviews, the following applicants scored above 70% and meet the Police & Fire Commission rules for the eligibility list:

Candidate	Oral Interview Raw Score	Total	Veteran's Preference Pts	Total w/Vet Pts	Law Enforcement Certification
Allison Weaver	327	81.75	10	91.75	Certifiable
Adam Amaro	310	77.5	10	87.5	Certifiable
Maverick Deschamp	314	78.5	n/a	78.5	Not Certified
Colin Fluno	307	76.5	n/a	76.5	Not Certified
Janari Glover	298	74.5	n/a	74.5	Not Certified
Paige Harlow	292	73	n/a	73	Not Certified

The police department currently has four (4) vacant positions. Upon the Commissioners approving this eligibility list, I recommend appointing candidates Allison Weaver, Adam Amaro, Colin Fluno, and Paige Harlow to the position of police officer.

Once the candidates have been appointed, they must successfully pass our conditional offer prepared by Human Resources (psychological evaluation, drug, and medical examination).

As a note, Mr. Fluno and Ms. Harlow are currently reserve officers with our agency.