

**CITY OF SPOKANE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES
December 15, 2015**

Cheryl Beckett, Chair, called the regular meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Present were Cheryl Beckett, Phyllis Gabel, Mark Lindsey, Craig Hult, and Kathy Sewell.

At the request of Ms. Cheryl Beckett to amend the agenda under Other Business, a motion was put forth by Ms. Phyllis Gabel to amend the agenda to include two items under Agenda Item V - Other Business. The first item was to discuss follow up to the rule change to Rule V, Section III with regards to the open entry firefighter test adopted at the last commission meeting. The second item was an update concerning a personnel management consultation contract. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mark Lindsey and a vote was taken with a unanimous agreement to amend the agenda to add the two items presented under Other Business.

Agenda Item I.

Approval of Minutes:

Ms. Cheryl Beckett introduced the minutes from the regular meeting of November 17, 2015. Hearing no changes, the minutes stand as written.

Agenda Item II.

Staff Activities:

The Chief Examiner, Ms. Gita George-Hatcher reported the following statistics for the month of December:

November:

Announcements issued:	9	Classifications revised:	3
Examinations:	52	Classifications new/deleted:	0/2
Requisitions received:	28	Requisitions certified:	32
Class Surveys completed:	18	Class Surveys in progress:	9
Requisitions pending:	37	Requisitions canceled:	6
Average days from department initiation of request to receipt in Civil Service: 11.9			
Average days from requisition receipt to certification: 1.6			
Percentage certified within 24 hours: 100%			

The Chief Examiner distributed packets that included the job specifications revised last month. She also distributed the draft business plan for 2016 for the Commission's review before adoption in January. She requested that the Commission let her know after they have had a chance to review, regarding any questions or clarifications that may be needed. Included, was also a copy of the recruitment initiative for 2016 that is a joint effort between the Office of the Mayor, Human Resources and Civil Service. There will be a first ever City sponsored Job Fair in April with the Mayor to announce a Recruitment Initiative kick off. Also included in the packet were approvals on additional step increases for 2016; information on a staff promotion to Analyst III with approval of starting pay step; information regarding internal career progression for staff member involving a voluntary demotion for the purpose of progressing up the Analyst line of progression, and copies of the Civil Service staff retreat summary for the retreat held November 10, 2015. The tasks from this retreat will be assigned shortly.

The Chief Examiner also reported that one minority was hired in the Police Department as a Crime Analyst last month, and a female was promoted in the Fire Department as an Assistant Fire Marshal.

At the request of Ms. Gabel, the Chief Examiner provided a summary of the CPAT Transportability Study that was completed. This study was conducted to ensure that the job of a firefighter was similar to the CPAT test. Ms. George-Hatcher provided information that validity testing is a requirement of CPAT for licensing purposes and for use of the test. She informed the Commission that during the original development of the CPAT, thirty-one tasks were identified as essential to the job of firefighter. From this list of thirty-one, eight events were tested and developed with timelines for passing. In studying the transportability and use of this test for Spokane, sixty-six subject matter experts were involved in the process of testing all the tasks with regards to the job of Firefighter for the City of Spokane. The CPAT was found to be transportable to the City of Spokane and valid for use in the City of Spokane Fire Department.

Agenda Item III.

Classification Resolution:

Adoption: SPN 597- Video Production Technician, a title change from Audio/Video Technician and revision of the specifications, keeping the same SPN number.

Deletion: The title of Examination and Classification Analyst I due to a title change to Personnel Analyst I that was adopted by the Commission, keeping the same SPN number.

Deletion: The title of Recreation Supervisor I due to a title change to Recreation Supervisor that was adopted by the Commission, keeping the same SPN number.

A motion was put forth by Mr. Lindsey to adopt SPN 597 and delete the two titles of Examination and Classification Analyst I and Recreation Supervisor I. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gabel. There was no discussion and the resolution passed unanimously.

Agenda Item IV.

Review of Administrative Decision

Mr. Scott Radtke requested a review of a decision made by the Chief Examiner regarding a denial of an alternate testing date for a Water Service Foreperson promotional exam. Mr. Radtke requested accommodation the week after the application period for the requirement had closed which was one week prior to the testing date of November 16, 2015. Rule 6, section 6 (a) states in part: "*applicants for promotional examination who are on approved extended leave due to military service, or who are sick or injured, may be administered the examination separately from other candidates if security and integrity of the examination process can be assured.*" The previous Chief Examiner had on occasion allowed remote testing accommodation for individuals on vacation when there was a shortage of applicants for the position. These were granted when test security and integrity could be assured, and these exceptions were not provided on a regular basis. The current Chief Examiner and staff take the position that decisions such as these should be made with caution to avoid any appearance of favoritism or discrimination. The current Chief Examiner stated that she has provided remote testing accommodation when the issue involved the applicant being required to attend a mandated work related conference.

In the case of the Water Service Foreperson recruitment, there was an adequate pool of candidates to take the examination, and the newly created eligible list consists of 16 individuals. Additionally, she explained that a regular practice of making accommodation available due to vacations scheduled by applicants could pose an administrative burden for staff given that there are close to two thousand employees in the City of Spokane. The Chief Examiner clarified that the request for accommodation from Mr. Radtke was for an alternate date for the test and not for a remote location.

The Chief Examiner recommended that the decision of the Chief Examiner be upheld. Ms. Beckett posed a question concerning timing and read from Rule 6, section 3, that promotional exams must be published in at least one issue of the Gazette. Ms. Beckett asked when this promotional exam was first posted in the Gazette and when notifications went out to departments and employees. The Chief Examiner informed the Commission that all promotional

exams are published at least two weeks in advance and notice is sent by email to all employees and job announcements are sent to each department to be posted for all employees. This particular job posting was begun in late October. Ms. Beckett wondered if this denial was a timing issue or due to an attempt to stop the relaxing of the rules that sometimes occurred under the former Chief Examiner. The Chief Examiner said the denial was made due to both the timing and inconsistency of past practices. She explained that her main concerns would be the appearance of favoritism or discrimination and the practicality of regularly accommodating employees on vacation while still maintaining the integrity of the testing process.

Ms. Beckett invited Mr. Scott Radtke to come up to the podium. The Chief Examiner swore Mr. Radtke in and he spoke on his behalf. He stated that he was appealing the decision of the Chief Examiner to deny his accommodation of an alternate test time. He stated that his vacation plans were made several months in advance and they could not be changed when the job announcement was published. He knew that the list was expired and was expecting a test to come out but there was no definite date sent for the test and he needed to make his vacation arrangements. Mr. Radtke said that he does not believe this is a fair rule and that management from his department agreed with him. He said he felt that vacations were very important to employees and their families.

Ms. Beckett asked Mr. Radtke what he thought the commission should do at this time since the test has already been given and the list has been made. Mr. Radtke stated that he realized this but that going forward; the rules should be changed for individuals in the future.

Mr. Paul Traynor, Foreperson for the south side, from the Water Department was also sworn in by the Chief Examiner. Mr. Traynor addressed the Commission and gave some perspective as to the consequences of not providing accommodations for Mr. Radtke to take the test and be on the list for out of grade purposes.

Ms. Beckett asked for a motion as to whether or not to uphold the Chief Examiner's decision. Ms. Gabel made a motion to uphold the Chief Examiner's decision and deny the accommodation requested by Mr. Radtke. The motion was seconded by Mr. Craig Hult. Discussion was opened up to Commissioners and Mr. Hult stated that he was wary of alternate testing dates due to the appearance of test integrity.

Ms. Beckett thanked Mr. Radtke for his comments. A vote was taken and the motion to uphold the Chief Examiner's decision passed unanimously.

Agenda Item V.

Other Business:

(1) Discussion of Rule V, section 3 change.

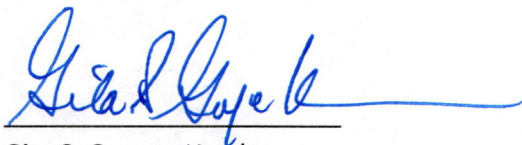
Ms. Beckett opened the discussion regarding the rule change regarding certification of names for Firefighter. At the November meeting, the Commission adopted a rule change to Rule V, Section 3 that had the unanimous support of labor and management.

The discussion about this rule centered on concerns that a rule of ten for the first vacancy plus four for each additional vacancy may be greater than 25% of the list in cases where there are for example, 20 vacancies and an eligible list of 100 to 200 or fewer. Ms. George-Hatcher stated that when tests were given only once every two years, the lists have been large. When the test is given every year and the list refreshed quarterly or on an ongoing basis, the list could be smaller. She explained that when there is a smaller list, the concern is that that the number of names certified to the department could be greater than 25% of the eligible list or involve certification of the entire list, possibly bringing into question whether merit system principles were being applied in those cases. The Chief Examiner stated that checking in regularly to see how this rule is working would be a good idea. Ms. Beckett said staff should monitor the list and how the rule is functioning and report to the Commission.

(2) Authorization for the Civil Service Committee Chair to increase the contract amount with a Personnel Management Company from \$10,000 to \$11,000.

A motion to increase the contract amount from \$10,000 to \$11,000 was made by Ms. Kathy Sewell. It was seconded by Ms. Gabel and passed unanimously.

There being no additional business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 10:13 a.m.



Gita S. George-Hatcher
Chief Examiner