

SOLON CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
February 8, 2011 – 6:33 p.m.

The Solon Civil Service Commission met at Solon City Hall.

PRESENT: Commission Members Doberstyn, Huml, and Patton, Human Resource Director Cornhoff, Fire Chief Shaw and Secretary Perry

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Doberstyn moved to approve the minutes of January 25, 2011 as prepared and submitted by Secretary Perry. Mr. Huml seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Aye: Doberstyn, Huml, Patton
 Nay: None The Motion Carried

APPROVAL OF PAYROLL

Mr. Doberstyn moved to approve the Hourly/Salary Payroll for Pay End Date January 31, 2011 as prepared and submitted by the Payroll Department. Mr. Patton seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Aye: Doberstyn, Huml, Patton
 Nay: None The Motion Carried

REVIEW OF PAYROLL CHANGE/RATE SHEETS

The Commission reviewed and signed the available payroll change/rate sheets provided by the Payroll Department. No action was taken by the Commission.

CORRESPONDENCE

A Classified Order was received from Chief Viland regarding the retirement of Detective Ross Faranda effective January 28, 2011.

A Classified Order was received from Chief Viland regarding the disability retirement of Patrolman Tina Austin effective February 4, 2011.

A memorandum was received from Mayor Drucker promoting Sgt. Rick Tonelli to the rank of Lieutenant effective February 15, 2011.

A Classified Order was received from Chief Viland regarding the hiring of Rena Booker as a part-time records clerk effective February 7, 2011.

A Classified Order was received from Chief Viland regarding the promotion of Sgt. Rick Tonelli to the rank of Lieutenant effective February 15, 2011.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Eligibility List

Correspondence dated January 15, 2011 and February 7, 2011

Chief Shaw addressed the Commission regarding the current eligibility list for entry level firefighters. After receiving approval from Mayor Drucker to hire additional firefighters, he contacted Secretary Perry for the first 10 names on the list to begin background checks. However, it was discovered the list had only been certified by the Civil Service Commission for a period of one year and the list had already expired. Chief Shaw noted that during his tenure previous lists had always been certified for a two-year period. After conferring with Director Cornhoff a ruling was requested from Law Director Lobe.

Director Cornhoff summarized to the Commission the two opinions presented by Todd D. Cipollo of the Law Director's office who researched Ohio Revised Code, the City's Charter and the City's Rules and Regulations. He determined the Civil Service Commission can

extend its own lists, regardless of the timing of the extension, at anytime within its own rule of not less than one nor more than two years.

Mr. Huml moved to extend the list an additional 12 months consistent with the opinion of the Law Director's office. The new expiration date will be December 8, 2011. Mr. Patton seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Aye: Doberstyn, Huml, Patton
 Nay: None The Motion Carried

Seniority

Correspondence dated February 8, 2011

Director Cornhoff addressed the Commission regarding seniority credits applied to promotional exam applicants. After the written portion of the recent fire promotional examination, it was questioned as to why part-time credits are not permissible and for a definition of equivalent service. This particular firefighter worked part-time in two separate municipal fire departments logging in 40 to 60 hours per week and feels those hours should be given consideration. The Rules are vague and can be interpreted that someone with full time status in any municipal department, not just a safety force employee, is permitted equivalent service credit. Director Cornhoff requested an opinion from the Law Director.

In his memo dated February 8, 2011, Todd D. Cipollo of the Law Director's office researched the City's Rules and Regulations and Ohio Revised Code regarding the terminology of equivalent credit. He noted equivalent service was introduced to provide credit for service as a full-time firefighter or police officer in another jurisdiction, which complies with Ohio case law.

Chief Shaw said most entry level firefighters work in multiple jurisdictions on a part-time basis during the testing process to gain experience. Eventually they score high enough on one of the tests to obtain full time employment. That takes, on average, anywhere from three to five years to complete all the necessary training and take the multiple tests that go through two year cycles. It is very rare for anybody to be high enough on a list the first time around to be hired. He said a large portion of the employee pools have part-time experience. They are performing the same functions in a part-time status as our full-time status employees. The term full-time anymore is just a pay status. There are many individuals out there who are working close to full-time hours, if not more, but are not given the full time benefits such as paid vacations and hospitalization. There are some departments who work the same 24 on/48 off hour shifts utilizing only part-time members. Therefore, someone with full-time status in another field will not be as valuable to the department as a part-time firefighter. In addition, the department would be gaining the advantage of the valuable experience the part-time employee has to offer. In many part-time departments, fire training is paid for by the department because they do not have to pay the large hourly rates of full-time employees. This is where the City could gain some highly qualified individuals than somebody from another full-time department where there may be budget cuts and they cannot afford to send the employee for additional training. Where the part-time employees may lack in experience, they certainly make up for it in training.

Because promotions are involved, Chief Shaw said he is not advocating for one employee over another. However, he requests, that sometime before the next promotional test is given, that this rule be revisited and reworked to allow a certain amount of part-time credit. He suggested taking the amount of hours a full-time Solon employee works and if the part-

time employee can prove they meet those hours, credit could be applied. The numbers should be equal to a career full-time firefighter in Solon.

Chief Shaw said the fire service has greatly changed since the Rules and Regulations were written. Many years ago part-time departments were voluntary and the volunteers did not have a lot of experience. Now most part-time employees are working close to full-time hours. They are just not receiving the fringe benefits of a full-time employee. As far as licensing goes, a part-time firefighter needs the same amount of training as a full-time firefighter. He said reviewing Ohio Revised Code's definition of a firefighter may offer some guidance.

Mr. Huml asked the secretary to include this subject on the agenda of the first meeting in the month of May. Director Cornhoff said he would survey his Human Resources organization to determine what other municipalities permit for additional credits. He will also send a memo to each of the Directors asking if there was anything they would like to see addressed.

Mr. Huml also asked that Director Cornhoff respond to the promotional candidate who initially raised this issue and provide her with a copy of the opinion from the Law Director. Because the issue was raised after the promotional exam was given, the part-time credits will not be permitted at this time.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 24, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Patton moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m. Mr. Doberstyn seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Aye: Doberstyn, Huml, Patton
 Nay: None The Motion Carried
