

**NOBLESVILLE FIREFIGHTER MERIT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 21, 2022
4:00 P.M.**

Commissioner Sarah Russell Goddard called the September 21, 2022 Noblesville Fire Merit Commission Meeting to order.

Commissioners present were:

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Commissioner Sarah Russell Goddard
Commissioner Dale Martz
Commissioner Chris Renner

Chief Matt Mitchell and Deputy Chief Chris Gellinger (representing the Noblesville Fire Department) and attorney Mark Wohlford were all present for the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Renner motioned to approve the minutes from the July 20, 2022 Merit Commission Meeting.

Commissioner Martz seconded the motion.

VOTE TO APPROVE MINUTES

Commissioner Goddard	Aye
Commissioner Martz	Aye
Commissioner Renner	Aye

The motion was passed.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Renner motioned to approve the agenda.

Commissioner Martz seconded the motion.

VOTE TO APPROVE AGENDA

Commissioner Goddard	Aye
Commissioner Martz	Aye
Commissioner Renner	Aye

The motion was passed.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Agenda Item 1: Merit Commission to consider the hiring of Jonathan Butler from the 2021 Hiring List effective August 22, 2022 (Chief Matt Mitchell)

Chief Mitchell said since this agenda item would have been the only item for an August Merit Commission meeting, the decision was made to cancel the August meeting and vote on this item at today's meeting. We went straight down the hiring list and Jonathan Butler was the next applicant on the list. He is one of the eight recruits who started on August 22, 2022. We are asking your consideration to approve the hiring of Jonathan Butler.

Commissioner Renner made a motion to approve the hiring of Jonathan Butler.

Commissioner Martz seconded the motion.

VOTE TO APPROVE THE HIRING OF JONATHAN BUTLER

Commissioner Goddard	Aye
Commissioner Martz	Aye
Commissioner Renner	Aye

The motion passed.

Agenda Item 2: Merit Commission to consider the 2023 Hiring Process including a Military Credit for Military Service (Chief Matt Mitchell)

Chief Mitchell said at the July 20, 2022 Merit Commission meeting, we had a discussion about the hiring process and a discussion that we are currently on the 2021 Hiring List and have exhausted that list. We need to be able to generate another list so we can start hiring people. The 2021 list is set to expire June 2023, but at the July 20, 2022 Merit Commission meeting, Merit Commission members voted to go ahead and start with a new process. Chief Mitchell distributed an informational sheet about the new process and said that while we're doing the hiring process in 2022, we won't hire from the new list until 2023 so it will be called the 2023 Hiring Process.

Chief Mitchell said the hiring process will not be changing over what we have done in the past. We contract with Testing for Public Safety (TPS). There is a written test which will be administered on October 8, 2022. We got 618 applicants so there will be two testing sessions that day. Hopefully we will have several show up for testing—only 17% of the applicants showed up for the written test for the 2021 Hiring Process. The oral interviews will be conducted by interview boards comprised of NFD firefighters. The list will be generated and then we will establish the list. We are asking the Merit Commission to approve the hiring process and are also asking for approval to give military service credit to qualified applicants. We are proposing if a person has four years of Active, Reserve or National Guard duty with an honorable discharge or if a person has a memorandum of good standing from a company commander, that person would be eligible for two additional points on the overall testing score. The wording provided to Merit Commission for this is as follows:

“Military Service Credit: An individual with at least four (4) years of Active Duty, Reserve or National Guard with documented honorable discharge or if currently serving, a memorandum of good standing from company commander may be eligible for an additional two (2) points in the Noblesville Fire Department (NFD) hiring process. Documentation MUST be provided on the day of their oral exam.”

Chief Mitchell said we took the 2021 Hiring List and applied this two point military credit to the scores to see how it would have affected the list. It would have moved people an average of six (6) spots, so for example, if a person had been number fifty on the list, the two additional military points would likely have bumped that person up to number forty-four. So this wouldn’t result in huge jumps, just small jumps as an incentive for those who meet this requirement for military service.

Chief Mitchell said we have partnered with some organizations to try to reach more military personnel in our recruiting efforts. One of which is INvets which is an organization that helps personnel who are leaving the military to transition to civilian life and employment assistance is one of the things INvets assists with via job fairs and other initiatives.

Commission Renner asked how the requirement for four years of service was determined. Chief Mitchell said some of the NFD members who have military service evaluated this proposed military credit and decided that four years was a normal length of service years.

Commission Goddard asked about the part that states “Documentation MUST be provided on the day of their oral exam.” She asked what would happen if the person forgot to bring documentation to his or her oral exam. She asked Chief Mitchell what he thought about saying “Documentation MUST be provided no later than the date of their oral exam.” He said that the wording proposed by Commissioner Goddard would be a good addition.

Commissioner Mitchell said INvets believes that military veterans generally transition better into the fire service than into law enforcement.

Commissioner Renner made a motion to approve the 2023 Hiring Process as presented by Chief Mitchell, including the change proposed by Commissioner Goddard.

Commissioner Martz seconded the motion.

VOTE TO APPROVE THE 2023 HIRING PROCESS WITH A CREDIT FOR MILITARY SERVICE AS DESCRIBED IF DOCUMENTATION IS PROVIDED NO LATER THAN THE DATE OF THE APPLICANT’S ORAL EXAM

Commissioner Goddard	Aye
Commissioner Martz	Aye
Commissioner Renner	Aye

The motion passed.

Commissioner Renner made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Martz seconded the motion.

VOTE TO ADJOURN MEETING

Commissioner Goddard	Aye
Commissioner Martz	Aye
Commissioner Renner	Aye

The meeting was adjourned.