



**DENVER**  
THE MILE HIGH CITY

**Civil Service Commission**  
Police and Fire Classified Service

Webb Municipal Building, 2nd Floor  
201 W. Colfax Ave, Dept 1208  
Denver, CO 80202-5332  
P: 720-913-3370  
F: 720-913-3373  
[www.denvergov.org/civilservice](http://www.denvergov.org/civilservice)

MINUTES  
**FIRE EXAMINATION DIVERSITY REVIEW COMMITTEE (FEDRC)\***  
October 12, 2016  
Civil Service Commission  
9:30 a.m.

**ATTENDEES**

Larry D. Trujillo, Commissioner	Jeannette Madrid, CSC Associate HR Professional
Anna Flores, Commissioner	Wendi Smith, Engineer DFD, Local 858
Earl Peterson, CSC Executive Director	Greg Pixley, Captain DFD
Antoinette Torres-Janke, CSC H.R. Supervisor	Ahmid Nunn, Lieutenant, DFD
Jeff Wilson, CSC Sr. H.R. Professional	

**ISSUE #1: APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Earl Peterson called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. A motion to approve the minutes of May 18, 2016 was made by Commissioner Trujillo; seconded by Commissioner Flores. The motion carried.

**ISSUE #2: Entry Level & Promotional**

**Promotional**

Jeff Wilson updated everyone on the status of upcoming Promotional Testing.

**2017 Fire Lieutenant**

- Registration will open December 5, 2016 and close January 6, 2017
- Written Test will be administered June 5, 2017 in the Webb Building
- Assessment Centers scheduled for July 17-21, 2017
- Eligible Register will be presented to Commissioners for approval on August 4, 2017 for posting August 5.

Jeff asked if anyone had questions. Hearing none, Jeff added that Booth Research Group had been awarded the contract for the Fire Lieutenant testing.

**2016 Assistant Fire Chief**

- Written Exercise will be administered October 19, 2016
- Assessment Centers scheduled for October 24-27, 2016
- (20) Candidates registered

Commissioner Trujillo asked if the Assessors would be rating the Written Exercise, as he hadn't heard about it before. Jeff answered that a separate panel scores the Written Exercise, and CSC has been administering it for several years. Jeff added that it has been working out quite well, because it addresses a skill that had not been previously addressed.



**An Equal Opportunity Employer**  
**Commissioners**

Federico C. Alvarez – Neal G. Berlin – Anna Flores – Joseph G. Sandoval – Larry D. Trujillo  
**Executive Director**  
Earl E. Peterson

## Entry-Level Firefighters

### **Fall Academy (9/6/16)**

- Class of (25), comprised of (24) off the new list, plus (1) had to finish the Academy?
- Diverse group of applicants

Jeff thanked the Department and the EDOS for reviewing all the files and making final selections.

### **Spring 2017 Academy (Tentatively scheduled for April)**

Jeff stated that there are enough applicants available on the current list to fill an academy. If additional applicants need to be invited, CSC can pull them off the larger Examination List.

### **ISSUES #3: Applicant Selection & Non-Selection**

Earl reported on the meeting held the previous day (October 11, 2016) with Background Investigators, dignitaries from DFD & DPD and EDOS, and CSC vendors & staff. He added that awards were presented to a few long-term investigators.

Earl reiterated several steps in the application process that apply to both DFD & DPD, including:

- Behavioral Questionnaire of (80) questions—proprietary screening tool—one of the ways the CSC asks the applicant the same questions multiple times to determine honesty/integrity

Earl noted that when the DFD raised the minimum age to 21, CSC changed questions regarding juvenile behavior from age 14, to age 17. He expressed concern that there was a misconception about the weight given to juvenile behavior during the background investigation and Commissioner review processes. He assured everyone that when reviewing applicant files, the Commissioners do not give very much weight to juvenile behavior, unless it persists into adulthood. Earl added that this applies to individuals applying for entry into the Cadet program, as well.

Earl mentioned another concern raised at the October 11 meeting, focused on the concept of "Suitability;" there has been a misunderstanding about the difference between a Suitability Interview and a Psychological Evaluation. He stated that (16) years ago, when he came to the CSC, the Suitability Interview was almost entirely based on the results of the CPI written exam, which contained a medical component. Psychologists didn't have a Behavioral Questionnaire or other screening tools to review. He added, that unfortunately many applicants (including a disproportionate number of minorities) failed Suitability based on that old CPI test. Subsequently, the medical component has been eliminated from the CPI exam, and Suitability assessments are based on viewing the total person and all screening/testing information available.

Earl reported on a recent development among applicants who are determined to be "unsuitable." Upon notification of the outcome of their assessments, they become argumentative, sometimes verbally abusive, with polygraph examiners & psychologists; they display a sense of entitlement. He added: "we don't fail that many at Suitability;" most failures occur after Deliberative Review. Commissioner Flores and Commissioner Trujillo explained, that the Commissioners often give applicants the benefit of the doubt and pass them on for final review by the department and EDOS.

Earl addressed the issue of instituting an appeal process for applicants disqualified at Suitability, Background Investigation, or Commissioners Deliberative Review phases. He reported that in the past, such appeals never resulted in a different/reversed decision.

Earl reminded everyone that the City Charter provided for a Civil Service Commission specifically to be impartial in the testing and screening of applicants for consideration for entry into the Fire Department and Police Department, and promotion; preventing nepotism, cronyism, and favoritism.

Commissioner Flores complimented CSC staff for all they do.

Earl mentioned a couple of firefighters currently in the Academy were struggling.

#### **ISSUE #4: Diversity & Recruitment**

Capt. Pixley reported on the success of the 2016 Orientation Program, that yielded the top 70 applicants who tested.

He announced that Lt. Nunn will be joining the recruitment team; Capt. Pixley will be doing more coordination of programs.

Lt. Nunn expressed his excitement about actively participating in recruitment. He added how enjoyable and beneficial it was to serve on the recent Department Interview panel. He shared some of his background, including his wrestling coaching experience in schools, and being a pastor in his community.

Commissioner Flores stated that she was pleased that Lt. Nunn will be joining the DFD recruitment team, and shared her concern that DFD hasn't hired enough African Americans, especially females.

Lt. Nunn added that he's been researching success rates and processes of other departments nationwide, in anticipation of recruiting new applicants.

stated that the success of the Orientation & Recruitment Programs are due to the collaborative efforts of the DFD, employee groups, F.I.R.E., CSC, and Commissioners. He shared the following statistics: of the top (100) who scored the highest on the test, (45) attended Orientation.

Engineer, Wendi Smith, discussed the Engineer's Written Test, and use of Go-Pro cameras during the Practical/Driving Exam. She was grateful to be able to review the video of an applicant, who was appealing his score; she was able to determine that his score was accurate and correct.. She added that she had received feedback that there were too many written instructions/not enough verbal instructions for the Practical Test.

Antoinette asked if the DFD had a date for the next Academy. Capt. Pixley answered that no decision has been made as of yet.

Commissioner Trujillo added that the concept of instituting an appeal process of applicants should be added to the Agenda of a future Commission Meeting.

#### **ISSUE #5: Set Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting will be January 19, 2017 at 9:30 AM in Conference Room 761, on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor of the Denver Post Building.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25am.

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If there are questions regarding issues discussed in this FEDRC meeting or in any other FEDRC meeting, please feel free to contact CSC Executive Director Earl Peterson or any of the HR Professionals at (720) 913-3371.

\*FEDRC provides an open forum for discussion that addresses diversity, recruitment, entry level and promotional exams for the Denver Fire Department. Interested parties are encouraged to attend and provide constructive feedback to the Civil Service Commission who facilitates these discussions.