

**NOBLESVILLE FIREFIGHTER MERIT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 19, 2022
4:00 P.M.**

Commissioner Sarah Russell Goddard called the January 19, 2022 Noblesville Fire Merit Commission Meeting to order.

Commissioners present were:

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Commissioner Sarah Russell Goddard
Commissioner Mark Glodowski
Commissioner Dale Martz
Commissioner Chris Renner

Chief Matt Mitchell and Assistant Chief Adam Biddle (representing the Noblesville Fire Department); Tony Murray (representing Hamilton County Professional Firefighters Association Local 4416); Captain Uriah Eddingfield; and attorney Mark Wohlford were all present for the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Renner motioned to approve the minutes from the November 17, 2021 Merit Commission Meeting.

Commissioner Martz seconded the motion.

VOTE TO APPROVE MINUTES

Commissioner Goddard	Aye
Commissioner Glodowski	Aye
Commissioner Martz	Aye
Commissioner Renner	Aye

The motion was passed.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Martz motioned to approve the agenda.

Commissioner Glodowski seconded the motion.

VOTE TO APPROVE AGENDA

Commissioner Goddard	Aye
Commissioner Glodowski	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 David Burkhalter from the 2021 Hiring List (Chief Matt Mitchell)

Chief Mitchell said David Burkhalter has been approved by Public Safety Medical and INPRS, so the last approval is here. He will join two other recruits who have already been approved by Merit Commission and INPRS. All three will start on February 7, 2022. Three recruits were hired in November 2021 and these six will begin recruit academy on February 7, 2022.

Commissioner Goddard asked if we are going down the Hiring List and Chief Mitchell said yes. Chief Mitchell added that David is already an EMT.

Commissioner Renner made a motion to approve the hiring of David Burkhalter as requested by Chief Mitchell.

Commissioner Martz seconded the motion.

VOTE TO APPROVE THE HIRING OF DAVID BURKHALTER AS REQUESTED BY CHIEF MITCHELL

Commissioner Goddard	Aye
Commissioner Glodowski	Aye
Commissioner Martz	Aye
Commissioner Renner	Aye

The motion passed.

Agenda Item 2: Merit Commission to consider the approval of education requirements for the Battalion Chief Promotion Process (Captain Uriah Eddingfield)

Chief Mitchell asked Merit Commission members to turn to page 2 of the document he provided to each of them which was a copy of the Merit Commission rules – Section IV – Promotional Process. He said C. (4) lists the requirements for the Battalion Chief promotion process. He said Merit Commission has approved edits to this section a few times in the past and it is difficult to identify what specifically needs to be in there to meet this requirement. A candidate must have a management and a leadership class. The Merit Commission rules prescribes a specific class that is presented by the United States Fire Administration (USFA) which is given at USFA's National Fire Academy. However, when there are classes other than the USAF class that meet the management and leadership requirement, Merit Commission rules state that the Merit Commission must approve those other classes. Chief Mitchell said Captain Uriah Eddingfield was going to discuss a management and leadership course he completed.

Captain Eddingfield said he completed the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department's (IMPD) Leadership Academy which is a national known leadership academy. The class has instructors come in from across the

country who teach on all aspects of leadership including the philosophy, the art, the science, the management of people based on personality tests, problem solving, and in person scenario-based skill sessions. This class exceeds the Merit Commission requirement of 80 hours—it was 160 hours.

Chief Mitchell said his recommendation to Merit Commission is to approve this request. In his opinion, this course far exceeds the requirement stated in the Merit Commission rules. He said additional Noblesville Fire Department members will be attending this course in the future, so he is requesting that the Merit Commission’s approval of this course would apply not only to Captain Eddingfield, but also to all NFD members who complete this IMPD leadership class in the future. Chief Mitchell said that Captain Eddingfield was the only firefighter who attended this class—the others were all police officers. This is a class that IMPD has held for 22 years. Noblesville Public Safety Director Chad Knecht and NPD Chief John Mann have both completed this class.

Commissioner Glodowski asked if the recommendation is to approve this class as meeting the stated Merit Commission requirement for Management and Leadership for Captain Eddingfield and for all NFD members who will complete this course in the future, or if the recommendation is to revise the wording in the Merit Commission rule regarding this requirement. Chief Mitchell said revising the rule might be something to contemplate to do in the future, but he said the rule has been rewritten one or two times in the past and it’s very difficult to include everything we are looking for in the leadership and management course. The IMPD Leadership Academy is an established course and his recommendation today is for Merit Commission to approve that the completion of this class would meet the requirement of the leadership and management course for the Battalion Chief process—both for Captain Eddingfield and for all NFD members who complete this class in the future.

Commissioner Glodowski asked if the IMPD class is similar to the USAF’s National Fire Academy and Chief Mitchell said yes. Captain Eddingfield added that this IMPD class is a graduate level class—equivalent to a master’s degree class. There were several research projects that class participants were required to complete. He described to Merit Commission members about the various other required coursework and projects from the class.

Commissioner Glodowski made a motion to designate the IMPD Leadership Academy class as an approved class for the Merit Commission’s requirement for a management and leadership course for the Battalion Chief promotion process for Captain Uriah Eddingfield and for any other Noblesville Fire Department member who completes this class in the future.

Commissioner Renner seconded the motion.

VOTE TO APPROVE COMMISSIONER GLODOWSKI’S MOTION (AS STATED ABOVE)

Commissioner Goddard	Aye
Commissioner Glodowski	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 Glodowski	Aye
Commissioner Martz	Aye
Commissioner Renner	Aye

The meeting was adjourned.