

June 25, 2015

A meeting of the Testing and Recruiting Committee of the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners was held on the above date, commencing at 1:29 P.M.

PRESENT: Commissioners: Kathryn A. Hein, Chair
Steven DeVougas

ABSENT: Commissioner: Marisabel Cabrera (Excused)

ALSO PRESENT: Kristin Urban, Human Resources Compliance Officer (DER)
Katrina Warren, Community Relations Manager (FPC)
Toni Vanderboom, Human Resources Representative (FPC)
Jason Stenglein, Human Resources Representative (FPC)
Carl Nagy, Human Resources Manager (DER)
Lindsey O'Connor, Human Resources Representative (DER)
Jeffrey Harvey, Human Resources Representative (DER)
Gerard Washington, Assistant Chief (MFD)
Joshua Parish, Captain (MFD)
Dr. Rick Bauman
LaKeisha Butler, Assistant City Attorney

Presentation of Pre-employment Psychological Testing by Dr. Rick Bauman

Dr. Bauman, psychologist for Humber, Mundie and McClary, LLP, began with a brief summary of his education and experience. Dr. Bauman has been in the industrial and business psychology industry for over thirty years. He has evaluated every City of Milwaukee Chief of Police since 1989. He began evaluating candidates for the City of Milwaukee's Police and Fire Departments, on behalf of the Fire and Police Commission, in 2012.

Dr. Bauman explained that the psychological evaluation process is predicated on validity and reliability, which is required by the American Psychological Association (APA) and other governmental and professional bodies that provide direction and regulations related to employment testing. He uses job documentation provided by the City to define what is being sought out in candidates. From the job documentation and the departmental expectations, benchmark competencies are created. The competencies are tested for using the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) and a follow-up, face-to-face interview.

The Chair asked if the testing process is the same for police and fire candidates. Dr. Bauman responded that police and fire candidates are both given the MMPI, but the expected competencies, traits and qualities are different based upon the department and the job classification for which the candidate is being considered.

Prior to the psychological evaluation, Dr. Bauman explains the nature of the psychological evaluation process to each candidate. The Chair asked if the psychological interview is the last step in the testing process. Ms. Vanderboom responded that it is part of the post-offer screening which is conducted after all the tests are completed.

Dr. Bauman stated that the evaluation is specific to fit with Milwaukee, as different departments have different cultures established by the chiefs. The Chair asked if the majority of candidates are from the City of Milwaukee. Ms. Kuether responded that, though she does not have an exact figure, she would estimate that approximately seventy percent of candidates are from the City of Milwaukee.

Dr. Bauman explained that he stays current on acceptable procedures through the APA and International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) recommendations. He will be evaluating data collected since 2012 with the intention of better predicting success on the job.

The Chair asked how many candidates do not pass the psychological evaluation. Dr. Bauman responded that approximately three percent of the total number of candidates he tests do not pass the psychological evaluation. The Chair asked whether a candidate's failure of the psychological evaluation carries on with the candidate for future employment. Ms. Kuether responded that a failure to pass a psychological is not a permanent employment bar, and candidates can reapply for different positions and are tested anew. Dr. Bauman replied that he tells candidates not to discuss their results with others in order to maintain their right to confidentiality, and that the evaluation is to check the candidate's fit within the current department and the current position at that point in time; it is not a mental health evaluation.

The Chair explained that the reason the committee is looking into the psychological testing process is because one of the aldermen expressed a concern that there is not an appeal process for a failure on the psychological exam. Dr. Bauman stated that there is already a double check because he frequently consults with his partners when making an evaluation. He further stated that he is concerned a candidate may become labeled in a process that includes an appeal. Dr. Baumann mentioned that an appeal or re-test would add considerable expense to the process. Dr. Baumann cautioned that there should be a comparison of apples to apples, because a clinical psychologist will give a different evaluation than will a business psychologist, by virtue of their training. No value judgments are made during a business psychological evaluation, which is different from that performed by a clinical psychologist. The Chair asked if, under an appeal system, the entire process would have to be repeated or would it just be a review of Dr. Bauman's findings. Dr. Bauman stated that the process would have to be repeated to prevent bias based upon the first recommendation.

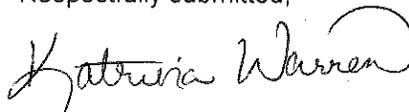
The Chair asked Assistant Chief Washington if he has seen an increase in candidates not being successful once on the job. Chief Washington responded that he has not seen such an increase; he added that some young adults want the job because of family pressure, and they eventually leave the fire cadet or firefighter training because it is not what they want. Chief Washington asked if it is possible to fake an answer or give a desired response. Dr. Bauman said it cannot be prevented, but lying can be detected.

Commissioner DeVougas asked how the test is designed. Dr. Bauman explained the MMPI is a written test and then he conducts a follow-up, in-person interview. Commissioner DeVougas asked how often the questions are updated. Dr. Bauman responded that the norms, rather than the questions, are updated every five years. Commissioner DeVougas asked how the questions are formulated. Dr. Bauman responded that they're formulated by psychologists who specialize in writing test questions. Commissioner DeVougas asked how the assessment is chosen. Dr. Bauman responded that assessments vary by jurisdiction. Commissioner DeVougas asked if Dr. Bauman recommends any changes. Dr. Bauman referred to a conversation he had with Molly Kuether regarding not giving the MMPI a second time to the Fire Cadets and Police Aides being promoted to Firefighter and Police Officer.

Ms. Urban asked what kinds of anomalies are looked for to indicate a candidate would fail the psychological evaluation. Dr. Bauman stated it is usually clear cut--when a candidate fails, most of the anomalies stand out and he consults with his partners regarding those candidates. Ms. Urban asked if more than one interview is ever conducted. Dr. Bauman responded yes, but that was in 1987.

The meeting concluded at 2:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Katrina Warren
Community Relations Manager