

ILLINOIS LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING AND STANDARDS BOARD
4500 South 6th Street Road, Room 173, Springfield, IL 62703-6617

MEETING OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL MATTERS
ILETSB Office, Springfield IL

(Meeting was conducted via WebEx Video Conferencing due to COVID-19)

Thursday, March 18, 2021

I. ROLL CALL – ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

The March 18, 2021 meeting of the Special Personnel Committee was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairman Sean Smoot. Roll was called by Ellen Petty, and a quorum of members was established.

Members in Attendance:

Sean Smoot (via WebEx)

John Idleburg (via WebEx)

Brendan Kelly (via WebEx)

Ghida Neukirch (via WebEx)

Members Absent:

Anthony Cobb

Staff in Attendance:

Brent Fischer

Andrew Oldfield (via WebEx)

John Keigher

Eric Pingolt

Ellen Petty

Guests in Attendance:

Mitchell R. Davis III (via WebEx)

Sarah Kerley (via WebEx)

Due to WebEx format, there is no available listing of all guests listening in on the meeting.

II. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Chairman Smoot welcomed Sarah Kerley, CMS Senior Policy Advisor, who will be the Board's CMS liaison with regard to the expansion under P.A. 101-652.

III. DISCUSSION OF TWO PENDING POSITIONS

Chairman Smoot asked Ellen Petty, as HR Director, to briefly tell the committee what the status of the two pending positions is currently and what action the committee needs to take to move forward with filling them. Petty gave an overview of the process to date of attempts to fill the positions, as well as what remains to be done with regard to finalizing the appointments. Director Fischer gave a brief description of the candidates selected, and why he selected them for the appointments.

Motion was made by Neukirch, seconded by Idleburg, and carried by all members present via roll call vote to authorize and approve the Director to move forward with processing the appointments of Michelle Mlinar and Jeffrey Chapman.

IV. REVIEW OF CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

No discussion until next meeting.

V. REVIEW OF CURRENT MAP AND PROPOSED SERVICE AREA MAPS

No discussion until next meeting.

VI. QUESTIONS REGARDING EXISTING 104 DOCUMENTS

No discussion until next meeting.

VII. NEXT STEPS

Chairman Smoot handed the floor over to Sarah Kerley to tell the committee about the CMS function and what the role of the committee can be moving forward as we expand the scope of our employees at the Board.

Kerley introduced herself and shared her goals with regard to informing and advising the committee and working with the Board to help accomplish its hiring goals. She indicated that we can't accomplish everything today, but we can go over a few high-level topics to get started.

The vast majority of positions in state government, including those at the Board, are job protected positions, because they're in the union. The Board is in an unusual spot because it is not directly responsible to the Governor under some statues, meaning it has an interesting kind of structural authority and transferring authority. There are only a very small percentage of positions in government where you can just pluck humans and put them in jobs – those jobs are referred to as exempt positions. The jobs the committee moved on today are examples of this type of position. Under the Personnel Code, every agency is entitled to at least 3 exempt positions, including a private secretary for the Director in Sangamon and Cook counties, as well as a confidential assistant. With ILETSB being so small, most employees wear many hats, which is not necessarily the case with bigger agencies. Over the last 6 months, she has worked with Ellen to clean up a few things to make those positions work more effectively. She will continue working with her on the positions in the org chart to determine appropriate union status. She briefly touched on reaching applicants via contractual rights. She shared that she learned, shortly before the pandemic, that the two hardest positions to fill are nurses and IT professionals. She anticipates we will get some individuals wanting to move into some of our IT positions, but they may not have the skills that we're looking for if we're using cutting edge technology, as DoIT is usually working with

older technology in a much narrower scope than what we will be looking for. This means we will need to be very mindful of how we develop those job descriptions to ensure we are identifying the specialized skills we need to be able to reach highly qualified applicants. She also touched on the concepts involved with development of a hiring plan, which she will be happy to work with us on, within the constraints of the Personnel Code, Personnel Rules, and relevant collective bargaining contracts. She touched on the new online application process implemented earlier this year, and that bargaining unit positions are still to be transitioned over into that process. Most of the positions under our proposed org chart would be AFSCME positions. She shared the information that every newly created position in state government, unless it has distinctly regional work, must be established in Sangamon county. To fully realize our strategies for diversity when our positions are posted in a county that is 80% white, can be challenging. She will reach out to some other agencies who have current positions that would be similar in the scope of work as the new positions we are creating, so that we can use those as a guide and talk through how that will work. She shared some thoughts on the use of personal services contracts in place of job protected full time staff with regard specifically to the impartiality for administrative hearings. She warned against development of option 2 positions, as typing tests slow down the hiring process by as much as 2 months, and the chance of people in 2021 not being able to type is rare and would likely result in people not being successful in their jobs. She explained the difference between how hiring under collective bargaining agreements under state government differs greatly from how hiring works in the rest of the world, in that we do job offers, rather than an interview for those positions.

The State of Illinois hiring process is what it is, but even in the competitive selection process, we are very tentative of having too many fingers in the sequence from the point of where we know who the candidate pool is. We should only be sharing that list with a very small number of people with information redacted. We don't make that available when we're vetting and blinding applications to be seen due to identifying potential conflicts. Also, for anyone involved in the hiring process, you're disclosing your relationships with all applicants, no matter how insignificant those relationships might be. Because of that, it is important to be mindful of this requirement so there aren't 25 relationship disclosures and conflict of interest certifications for each hiring sequence, because that's just inviting trouble.

Where the committee can be most helpful is on the paperwork side of things, such as being thoughtful about the organizational structure and having rock solid job descriptions that are objective and measurable and tell the community and prospective applicants what we're really looking for. Additionally, the committee's assistance with recruiting and getting the word out once the jobs are posted will be very important. As for whether non-state employees can serve as interviewers, the answer is yes, but they will have to take the CMS online interviewer training on OneNet if they would want to participate as an interviewer responsible for scoring candidates. Additionally, if you're an interviewer, you must be an interviewer for the entire hiring sequence, so acting as an interviewer would also depend upon your willingness to clear out large parts of your schedule for a couple of weeks for each hiring sequence.

What cannot happen is that once the top competitor at the end of the competitive selection process is determined, the committee looking at it and saying that person does not meet our demographic needs. If the top competitor is going to be bypassed for

another candidate, it will need to be due to a valid reason such as misconduct, or pending discipline. These are all policies that have been put in place for anti-patronage and to ensure hiring is not done for political factors or non-merit factors. Any background checks required need to be determined at the beginning of the hiring sequence, not depending upon who applies for the position. This should depend upon the role, not the individual.

With regard to contracting with outside vendors to do work necessary under the expansion when we need it done, that would require working with procurement, putting out an RFI if there isn't a master contract, which can be even slower than the hiring process, so that can make that option rather difficult.

The State does not currently have a remote work policy. We are currently working from home based on the disaster declaration – this is not a permanent change. However, such a policy is being discussed with the union, so that is always subject to change.

She asked to be invited to future meetings and said she will do everything she can to be successful and get us what we need in the least painful, most efficient way that is lawfully allowed without engaging in unfair labor practices or violating people's constitutional rights.

When asked about a timeline for the hiring required, she indicated being done by the end of the fiscal year is unlikely, but being done by the end of the calendar year should be doable.

VIII. NEXT MEETING

Next meeting was already scheduled for March 26, 2021.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Kelly, seconded by Idleburg, and carried by all members present to adjourn the meeting at 11:01 a.m.

