



CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

FIRE AND POLICE DEPARTMENTS

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March 8, 1989

MEMORANDUM

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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ADMINISTRATIVE ANALYST
Susanne Halsell, M.S.

TO: Denver City Council

FROM: Deborah Wagner, President *Deborah Wagner*
Denver Civil Service Commission

SUBJECT: Rationale for Suggested Charter Language Changes

The Civil Service Commission, the Manager of Safety, the Chiefs of the Police and Fire Departments and members of various police and fire employee organizations have been meeting over the past several months in an effort to reach a consensus over the proposed changes to the City Charter. Consensus has been reached on the proposed Charter changes concerning the Public Safety Cadet Program, Reemployment and the three year time frame for the hiring of hearing officers. Accord has not been reached, however, on the issue of termination for refusal to make statements in investigations. Therefore, this issue is offered separately.

A brief summary of the rationale for each of the proposed changes is presented below.

I. PUBLIC SAFETY CADET PROGRAM

The current system for the fire and police cadet program is set up such that after successful completion of the program, cadets are required to take the regular entry level tests through the Civil Service Commission in order to try to obtain employment as a firefighter or police officer. It is estimated that \$20,000 to \$30,000 is invested in each cadet while they are in the program. However, because they have to take the entry level tests and compete against hundreds of other applicants, and may have to wait for up to two years for a test to be administered, many cadets opt to go to other local departments (i.e., Englewood, Boulder, etc.) instead of waiting for the chance to be employed in Denver. This is resulting in the loss of the training dollars invested in the cadets by the City.

In order to recoup some of this investment, the proposed Charter amendment allows cadets who successfully complete the cadet program and pass the required tests to be placed on a separate eligibility list (apart from regular entry level applicants) and be given some preference in hiring. Of course, the hiring of cadets under the proposed program would be carried out in accord with any existing court orders or consent decrees.

II. REEMPLOYMENT

The City Attorney has advised the Civil Service Commission that since the City Charter does not include a provision for reemployment of police or fire personnel, the Civil Service Commission does not have the authority to reemploy former members of the Police or Fire departments. The Civil Service Commission, the Manager of Safety and the Chiefs of both Departments want to have the authority to re-hire former police officers and firefighters who have resigned in good standing, if they are qualified. This will result in a cost savings to the City since training costs will be less for a former employee than for a completely new employee.

Conditions are included in the proposed language since all of the affected parties believe that the approval of the Chief, the Manager of Safety and the Commission must be obtained in order for a person to be reemployed. These conditions were also included in former Civil Service Commission rule XI, Section 5 that allowed reinstatement (this Rule XI was repealed, based on the City Attorney's advice). A person must also pass any testing required by the Department, the Commission or meet any statutory requirements to ensure that persons being reemployed meet current law enforcement standards and pass background investigations.

III. HEARING OFFICER SELECTION

The Commission believes that the current requirement that hearing officers be hired every year presents an unnecessary administrative burden for the Commission and its staff, and increases costs in the Commission budget. In addition, if one or more hearing officers resigns unexpectedly, the Commission needs to have the authority to hire hearing officers more frequently in order to replace them. The Commission would like to have the ability to hire hearing officers at least once every three years, which will result in a more efficient use of