

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

**FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
OF THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**

In the Matter of Louis Skierski,
Fire Lieutenant (PM1093V),
Union Township

Examination Appeal

CSC Docket No. 2019-2239

ISSUED: NOVEMBER 6, 2020 (SLK)

Louis Skierski appeals his score for the oral portion of the promotional examination for Fire Lieutenant (PM1093V), Union Township. It is noted that the appellant passed the subject examination with a final score of 84.740 and his name appears as the 12st ranked eligible on the subject list.

It is noted for the record that this two-part examination consisted of a written multiple-choice portion and an oral portion. Candidates were required to pass the written portion of the examination, and then were ranked on their performance on both portions of the examination. The test was worth 80 percent of the final score and seniority was worth the remaining 20 percent. Of the test weights, 31.35% of the score was the written multiple-choice portion, 22.49% was the technical score for the evolving exercise, 7.53% was the supervision score for the evolving exercise, 4.28% was the oral communication score for the evolving exercise, 19.23% was the technical score for the arriving exercise, 7.53% was the supervision score for the arriving exercise, and 7.59% was the oral communication score for the arriving exercise.

The oral portion of the Fire Lieutenant examination consisted of two scenarios: a salvage and overhaul scene simulation with questions designed to measure knowledge of how to conduct salvage and overhaul operations, supervision of fire fighters and the ability to assess building conditions and hazards in an evolving incident on the fireground (evolving); and a multi-vehicle collision scene simulation designed to measure the knowledge of safe rescue tactics and procedures to safeguard citizens, supervision of firefighters and the ability to plan strategies and tactics based upon the accident scene (arriving). Knowledge of supervision was measured by questions in both scenarios, and was scored for each. For the evolving scenario, candidates were provided with a 15-minute preparation period, and candidates had

10 minutes to respond. For the arriving scenario, a five minute preparation period was given and candidates had 10 minutes to respond.

The candidates' responses were scored on technical knowledge and oral communication ability. Prior to the administration of the exam, a panel of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) determined the scoring criteria, using generally approved fire command practices, firefighting practices, and reference materials. Scoring decisions were based on SME-approved possible courses of action (PCAs) including those actions that must be taken to resolve the situation as presented. For a performance to be acceptable, a candidate needed to present the mandatory courses of action for that scenario. Only those oral responses that depicted relevant behaviors that were observable and could be quantified were assessed in the scoring process.

Candidates were rated on a five-point scale, with 5 as the optimal response, 4 as a more than acceptable passing response, 3 as a minimally acceptable passing response, 2 as a less than acceptable response, and 1 as a much less than acceptable response. For each of the scenes, and for oral communication, the requirements for each score were defined.

For the evolving scenario, the appellant scored a 2 for the technical component, a 5 for the supervision component, and a 3 for the oral communication component. For the arriving scenario, the appellant scored a 3 for the technical component, a 5 for the supervision component, and a 5 for the oral communication component. The appellant challenges his score for the oral component of the evolving scenario. As a result, the appellant's test material, video, and a listing of PCAs for the scenarios were reviewed.

The evolving scenario involves the handling of salvage and overhaul in a three-floor mixed occupancy with a beauty salon on the first floor and apartments on the second and third floors, after the fire was knocked down. For the oral component, the assessor assigned a score of 3, and noted that the candidate actions were too general, and he failed to demonstrate and/or convey those actions that are carried out. For example, the assessor noted that the appellant stated he would overhaul operations, but he did not give a detailed description of the techniques in completing the tasks assigned. On appeal, the appellant states that the assessor did not provide any comments indicating what was missing or what flaws were present. The appellant requests that he receive more information so that he can work on his flaws for future examinations. He also questions his score as he states that he did not have any stuttering or ticks.

In reply, concerning appellant's comments that he did not receive sufficient criticism to enable him to improve his technique, it is noted that the goal of the examination is to test the appellant's suitability for the subject title and not to instruct the appellant. Regardless, as stated above, the assessor did indicate that the

appellant was not specific in his responses and provided an example, which the appellant had the opportunity to review. Moreover, a review of the file indicates confirms the assessor's comments as many of the appellant's responses were brief and lacked specificity. Additionally, a further review of the file indicates that the appellant's responses indicated a weakness in his Inflection/Rate/Volume as there were times where he had long pauses in his speaking. Specifically, the appellant did not speak from around the 7:56 minute mark to the 8:38 minute mark as well as from around the 8:45 minute mark to the 9:16 minute mark. Therefore, the appellant's score of 3 for this component is correct.

CONCLUSION

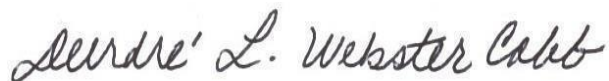
A thorough review of the appellant's submissions and the test materials indicates that the decision below is amply supported by the record, and the appellant has failed to meet his burden of proof in this matter.

ORDER

Therefore, it is ordered that this appeal be denied.

This is the final administrative determination in this matter. Any further review should be pursued in a judicial forum.

DECISION RENDERED BY THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION ON
THE 4TH DAY OF NOVEMBER 2020



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