



Formal Protest Report: March 13 , 2025

Discussion Item:

- Entry Level Firefighter Candidate Derek Shorey submitted a Formal Protest Letter (Pages 3-4) challenging his score, citing the merits of his responses during his Speed Interview, which is an initial step in the recruitment process.

Background:

- In our Entry Level Firefighter recruitment process, one of the initial steps is to pass a speed interview with a score of 70% or higher. Candidate Shorey received a final score of 68.40%. Following this, Candidate Shorey filed a formal protest of his score in accordance with Civil Service Rule 8.14. This agenda item presents the resulting report as per Rule 8.15.

8.14 PROTESTS AGAINST RATINGS TO THE SECRETARY/CHIEF

EXAMINER. If the applicant believes that an error has been made, they may, during the final five-day period referred to in the preceding rule, make a protest in writing, stating specifically where they believe the error has been made. Each protest shall be in writing and shall give specific facts and reasons to support the protest. No protest may be made after the five-day period. Upon receipt of a written protest or request for re-rating, a review of the protest shall be made by the Secretary/Chief Examiner, who shall pass on all such protests or requests and make necessary corrections in grades or rating.

8.15 REPORT ON EXAMINATION. After the expiration of the five-day period and after the Secretary/Chief Examiner has passed on all protests and has corrected any errors, they shall submit a complete report on each examination to the Commission, including a report on all protests in connection with the examination and the disposition of such protests, and shall rank the applicants according to their relative scores.

Feedback from Panelists:

1. Tell us your personal story and outline what assets you can bring to a fire and emergency medical services team. **Score: 7 - Minimally Qualified** The candidate mentioned that he enjoys being in front of people, has experience as a BLS instructor, and has a desire to help his community. However, he did not demonstrate an intrinsic interest in fire and emergency services, noting that his interest stemmed from a suggestion. Additionally, the candidate did not provide any previous experience or certifications in fire services, nor did he specify any steps he has taken to prepare for a career in this field.
2. Tell us about a time when you helped someone. **Score: 7 - Minimally Qualified** The candidate mentioned that he has taught many people in Basic Life Support (BLS). He shared a story about intervening when a child was being bullied, expressing that he enjoyed helping and that it was a pivotal moment for him. However, the candidate did not demonstrate a service mentality, as his example was from his childhood and did not relate to his professional experiences.
3. Tell us about a recent experience that demonstrates your ability to work with a variety of people, especially people that may be different than you. **Score 6.5 - Nearly Qualified** The candidate mentioned having experience with people with disabilities and children. However, he did not connect this experience to the workplace or demonstrate an understanding of the value of diversity in a professional setting. He also did not show awareness of how communication styles and approaches may need to be adapted based on individual and cultural differences. Additionally, the candidate did not demonstrate that he proactively seeks information from individuals with different backgrounds

Chief Examiner Findings and Conclusion:

- Overall, the interview panel found the candidate to be nearly qualified for the position. However, his primary weakness was the inability to effectively demonstrate strength or experience in working with people from diverse backgrounds. Given that this role heavily involves interacting with a diverse public, the candidate failed to demonstrate the necessary competency in this area and was rated as nearly qualified. Additionally, in other categories, the candidate did not provide sufficient relevant background, training, certifications, or experience to be rated higher than minimally qualified for a position in emergency services. In conclusion, I uphold the panelists' ratings and do not advocate for any changes to this candidate's score.

Formal Protest Letter:

Darrik Shorey

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Date: 2/18/25

Tumwater Fire Department

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To the Chief Examiner,

I am writing to formally protest the interview score I received for the firefighter position at Tumwater Fire Department. After reviewing my performance and qualifications, I believe the score does not accurately reflect my knowledge, experience, and the responses I provided during the interview.

During the interview, I demonstrated a strong understanding of firefighting principles, as well as the importance of teamwork and cohesion. I specifically referenced Tumwater's 2024 Strategic Plan (Goal #4, Objective #4, Line #4), emphasizing how my tenure as a BLS instructor at Fire District 5 reinforced my belief that educating the community uplifts the community. Additionally, my extensive experience in the private sector as a business development manager has provided me with valuable skills in public engagement and relationship-building—qualities essential to the role of a firefighter.

The nature of this protest underscores that my motivations and alignment with Tumwater Fire Department's values may have been misrepresented. I have studied the Tumwater 2024 Strategic Plan extensively, researched the department's history and development, and even followed its recent public outreach efforts. My commitment to this role extends beyond the position itself; it is rooted in a deep desire to serve. As I stated in the final minutes of my interview:

"Like everyone here, it is my dream to become a firefighter. That said, I can't help but feel as though these types of interviews force me to put myself on a pedestal and be disingenuous. Regardless of my pedigree or my passion, I want you to know that it isn't just about the position for me—it's about being a servant to the people. And regardless of what happens with my candidacy, I will be out in the world helping anyone I can because that is what I was put on this earth to do."

I respectfully request a review of my evaluation and a reconsideration of my candidacy based on the merits of my responses. I would appreciate the opportunity to address any concerns or clarify any specific areas where my score did not reflect my qualifications.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I remain fully committed to pursuing this career and would greatly appreciate the opportunity to further discuss my qualifications.

Sincerely,
Darrik T. Shorey