



THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR-ELECT  
BUILDING A NEW PITTSBURGH

**SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT**

(Please use one report for each subcommittee recommendation)

Subcommittee Name	Public Safety- Fire
Subcommittee Chairperson(s)	Deborah Walker
Title of recommendation	Administrative/Management Improvements
Describe the recommendation	There is a need to improve management and efficiency within the bureau. In the past, the bureau has been managed by a chief and 3 assistant chiefs who handle the task such as operations, training, planning, risk management, safety and fleet operations. Currently the bureau has one chief and one assistant chief.
Is this an immediate or long term recommendation?	Immediate
How will this address our challenges or reach our goals?	With changes in administration, inefficiencies can be eliminated.
What are the obstacles to implementation?	Budgetary concerns
Who needs to be involved?	Mayor's administration, Public Safety Director and Fire Chief.
What city resources need to be invested?	A hiring effort for positions that are already budgeted.
What will be different if the recommendation is adopted?	The bureau will be managed more efficiently that may result in morale concerns.
Describe any background materials that you consulted	Personal experience and input from current officers and supervisors.
Have other cities implemented this recommendation?	Buffalo New York, Nashville Tennessee, St. Louis Missouri.
Are there any other considerations?	For the recommendations to be successfully implemented, the administration must do a complete overview of administrative responsibilities.

**SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT**  
(Please use one report for each subcommittee recommendation)

Subcommittee Name	Public Safety - FIRE
Subcommittee Chairperson(s)	Deborah L. Walker
Title of recommendation	Officer Training Program
Describe the recommendation	Develop an Officer Training program
Is this an immediate or long term recommendation?	Immediate goal with long term benefits
How will this address our challenges or reach our goals?	Officer training is critical to maintaining a high standard of performance from supervisors.
What are the obstacles to implementation?	May have resistance from unions.
Who needs to be involved?	Fire Union and Fire Training Academy.
What city resources need to be invested?	The resources are already in place. In the mid-1980s, Fire Chief John Leahy implemented an Officer Training Program. This program may need updated.
What will be different if the recommendation is adopted?	Officers will be receive training on responsibility and accountability thus improve leadership.
Describe any background materials that you consulted	IAFC (International Association of Fire Chiefs) Officer Development Handbook. Phoenix FD Professional Standards
Have other cities implemented this recommendation?	Phoenix, Traverse City, Texas and Illinois
Are there any other considerations?	There may be short term resistance. However, the long term will result in effective leadership within the bureau.



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**SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT**

(Please use one report for each subcommittee recommendation)

Subcommittee Name	Public Safety-Fire
Subcommittee Chairperson(s)	Deborah L. Walker
Title of recommendation	Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Consolidation
Describe the recommendation	Merge the Bureau of Fire and the EMS Bureau
Is this an immediate or long term recommendation?	Immediate
How will this address our challenges or reach our goals?	Will provide better Fire and EMS service for the residents of Pittsburgh. Also, contract parity such as wages, benefits and pensions. Improve Morale within both bureaus.
What are the obstacles to implementation?	Fire and EMS Unions. Budget concerns.
Who needs to be involved?	Fire and EMS union members and a moderator that has the best interest of the residents of Pittsburg as the primary goal.
What city resources need to be invested?	A budget line item to provide the resources for restructuring both bureaus.
What will be different if the recommendation is adopted?	Result in both bureaus becoming more efficient. Parity with wages, benefits and pensions. Benefit the residents of Pittsburgh.
Describe any background materials that you consulted	Websites of the New York, Chicago and Nashville Fire Departments.
Have other cities implemented this recommendation?	New York, Chicago, Nashville
Are there any other considerations?	There may be resistance among the current rank and file. However once adopted, in time, current and new recruits will see the advantage of having this system implemented.



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**SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT**

(Please use one report for each subcommittee recommendation)

Subcommittee Name	Public Safety- Fire
Subcommittee Chairperson(s)	Deborah Walker
Title of recommendation	Fire Fighter Wellness Program
Describe the recommendation	Establish a policy that makes mandatory, an annual health screening for all public safety employees that includes but is not limited to: Update on all required vaccinations, testing for communicable diseases, vision, hearing and flexibility tests. Fire department personnel would be required to perform an annual Fitness Performance Test to ensure that minimum physical ability is maintained to perform the duties required.
Is this an immediate or long term recommendation?	Long term. Once enacted, these annual screenings and physical test would remain in place to improve the health and wellness and to ensure personnel are fit for duty.
How will this address our challenges or reach our goals?	Annual screening would provide a healthier workforce. Reduce the number of injuries and illnesses and subsequently reduce personnel on injury or sick leave. The program would be beneficial to all facets of public safety, but would specifically ensure that fire department personnel are capable of performing their required duties.
What are the obstacles to implementation?	Cooperation from some public safety bureau personnel may prove difficult, specifically the senior members of the departments. While union cooperation would overall improve the health and wellness of their personnel, there may be some resistance to a program that has potential to remove personnel from operations. There would also be a need to establish a contract among the city and a third party occupational health service provider.
Who needs to be involved?	Command staff from all departments. Union representatives would need to establish a committee to develop and enact a comprehensive physical agility test that would benefit fire personnel while also acting as a gauge to ensure fitness for duty. The committee would need to reference NFPA 1583 regarding firefighter physical ability and requirements.  City administrators would also need to establish a contract with an occupational health service to provide the annual health screening. Personnel would be required to schedule their health screening at the beginning of each year, possibly during vacation selections.

<p>What city resources need to be invested?</p>	<p>City personnel would be needed for consultation and to approve the final product of the committees work. Aside from consultation, it may require efforts on behalf of the law department to establish an occupational health contract. The health screening would also need to be job specific and may require department leadership to provide input. Personnel may also need to be detailed out of their operational duties to perform their annual physical agility test. In a situation where one does not successfully complete the agility testing, additional resources may be needed to rehabilitate said person to a condition where they successfully complete the testing process.</p>
<p>What will be different if the recommendation is adopted?</p>	<p>Reduce the number of injuries thus reduce sick leave.</p>
<p>Describe any background materials that you consulted</p>	<p>NFPA 1583, <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q1ENt9TmnFM">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q1ENt9TmnFM</a>  <a href="http://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/tr_97am.pdf">http://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/tr_97am.pdf</a></p>
<p>Have other cities implemented this recommendation?</p>	<p>Currently, there are a large number of professional fire departments that require an annual performance physical agility test, in conjunction with annual health screening. Most of these programs work within the framework of the Heart and Lung Bill (<a href="http://iaff.org/politics/legislative/Fedpresumptivefactsheet112.htm">http://iaff.org/politics/legislative/Fedpresumptivefactsheet112.htm</a>).</p>
<p>Are there any other considerations?</p>	<p>Review program effectiveness and recommend changes to maintain and improve program status following 48 months of implementation.</p>

## I. Public Concerns-Diversity Recruitment

Currently, the Bureau of Fire does not have adequate representation among its personnel of women and minorities. The Bureau should research additional ways to increase the diversity of city's firefighters.

### Subcommittee Response

The bureau summarizes its recruitment activities in the "You can have it ALL" documents from 2012 and 2013. According to these documents, the bureau sought to deliver recruitment information to the public via dozens of radio, print, television, and electronic media, as well as through recruitment events, promotional sites, mailings, and bulletin board visibility. The outreach was to over 130 locations and organizations. If recruitment activities were indeed carried out in all mediums and locations as listed, then appropriate measures were taken to encourage a wide array of applicants.

Nevertheless, the subcommittee recognizes and validates the public's concern regarding a lack of diversity amongst the city's firefighters. The personnel of the Pittsburgh Fire Bureau do not adequately reflect the demographics of the city, and lags behind national fire service averages. Below are examples of the current minority representation:

**Firefighter Minority Representation**

	Female White	African-American	Hispanic
Pittsburgh Firefighters-2013	1.14%	8.1%	0.65%
National Firefighters 2013*	3.4%	7.7%	9.9%
Pittsburgh Census-2010	51.6%	26.1%	2.3%

\*Information from the National Fire Protection Association

The subcommittee at this time does not plan to pursue a policy recommendation regarding diversity within the Bureau due in part to the existence of a diversity and recruitment subcommittee that may be better equipped to address this issue. Furthermore, it is unclear from the data available how many applicants from each minority group applied versus succeeded in becoming a firefighter. The subcommittee cannot prescribe a solution without understanding whether the problem lies in the recruitment of candidates or in the selection of successful candidates. Furthermore, the study should be conducted if this issue is to be pursued by the subcommittee on diversity as to how to proceed.

## **II. Public Concerns. Reform the trial board, address discipline, and improve accountability during working hours**

### **Subcommittee Response**

The subcommittee at this time does not intend to recommend policy changes regarding the trial board nor discipline process. It is unclear to the committee as to the specific nature of the public's concerns whether there are specific grievances regarding the trial board or just a general sense of dissatisfaction with firefighter conduct. Several incidents of misconduct were referenced at the public meeting, although no specific details were given. Without this information, it is difficult to make recommendations.

The subcommittee does not view the trial board as ineffective in handling the cases that were presented. In the 22 cases of misconduct brought before the board over the past 5 years, all but 2 resulted in a guilty verdict and punishment rendered. Punishment ranged from a fine of one shift's pay to termination. The subcommittee therefore does not believe that favoritism or excessive leniency is a problem with the trial board.

The subcommittee does however, view the number of cases brought before the trial board as a potential area for concern. Over the past 5 years, only 22 cases of misconduct were presented to the board. By contrast, the disciplinary system of the Police Bureau has brought a greater volume of cases before the Bureau's Trial Board. With 900 officers, the police force is 1.46 times the size of the Fire Bureau (with 615 firefighters), yet the police trial board saw 60 cases in 2010, a full 15 times more than the fire board's 4 cases that year. The discrepancy leaves us with the suspicion that incidents of misconduct and inappropriate behavior has occurred that were not presented to the board.

The subcommittee has elected not to pursue a policy recommendation regarding the trial board and disciplinary process specifically. However, we believe that the best way to address disciplinary issues within the bureau is to establish a formal officers' training program as detailed amongst our recommendations. The training program should be designed such that it educates and empowers new officers to manage disciplinary issues before they escalate to the level of trial board.