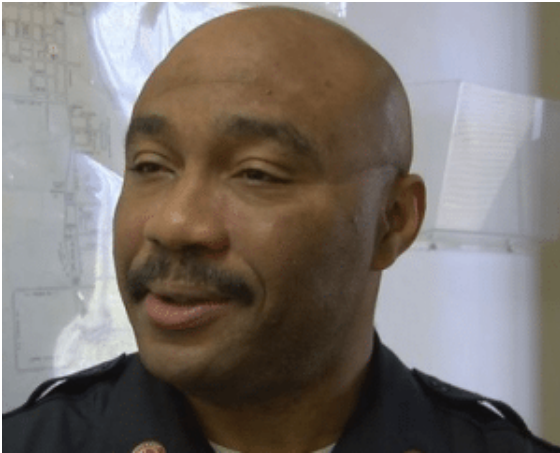


Training documents reveal Assistant Chief Eddie Wilson doesn't meet basic academic requirements to be an officer



Assistant Fire Chief Eddie Wilson does not have the educational requirements to even be the lowest officer rank of Engineer.

Documents obtained exclusively by the Hattiesburg Patriot reveal that newly promoted Assistant Fire Chief, Eddie Wilson, not only lacked the certifications to take the exam for his previous Lieutenant's position; but he wasn't even qualified to take the Engineer's exam (a position below Lieutenant); this according to the department's own academic requirements.

Wilson leapfrogged over several more qualified people by three pay grades, (Captain and Battalion Commander), to land in the Assistant Chief's job on February 15th.

Qualified HFD officers, who were denied equal treatment under HFD Chief Paul Presley and the Civil Service Commission, were both black and white. The Hattiesburg Patriot has determined

this isn't race related, but it is pure cronyism in its basic form; friends helping friends at the expense of the honest, hardworking, more deserving, and the qualified.

Poor, unethical leadership decisions like these by the Chief, and unethical behavior by the civil service commission, serve to destroy morale in the entire department. But what should one expect with a Chief who lacks certifications himself? More on that in the next article.

According to HFD Chief Paul Presley, new firemen must serve four years before being eligible to take the Engineer's exam, from there the

II. Academic Requirements

- A. Once a fire fighter has served four years of uninterrupted service within the Hattiesburg Fire Department, he/she will become eligible to take the engineers exam. The fire fighter will be required to have (Pump operator, Firefighter Intervention Rescue Survival Techniques (First), and 1041 Instructor).
- B. Engineers are required to serve in their positions for four years or more within the Hattiesburg Fire Department to be eligible to take the Lieutenants exam. Prior to taking the Lieutenants exam, engineers will be required to have (1041 Instructor, and Engine Company Operations, and Fire ground Leadership).
- C. Lieutenants are required to serve in the positions for four years more within the Hattiesburg Fire Department, to be eligible to take the Captains exam. Prior to taking the Captains exam, each Lieutenant will be required to have (1021 company officer, 1041 Instructor, and Fire Ground Leadership).

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path upward is Lieutenant, Captain, Battalion Commander, Assistant Chief, and Chief. A number of certifications and classes are required for each promotion. Wilson only has two of the three of the basic requirements to sit for the Engineer's exam. Those certifications are Pump Operator(Driver Operator) and Firefighter 1.

Wilson has never passed his basic Instructor certification (Instructor 1041), has no Officer's training courses (1021 Company Officer 1&2) and no Fireground Leadership (MSFA003) certifications; nor does he have the required Hazmat certification.

Training documents also reveal that four other applicants, who were passed over for the promotion, were all more qualified. (See documents embedded below.) Lieutenant Eddie Wilson was actually the least qualified according to the Chief Presley's

own requirements to be Assistant Chief; but that's what friends are for, right?

Fire Chief Paul Presley was asked by WDAM why Wilson was the most qualified. He said,

He is one of those guys I think he has the right mentality, definitely has the right attitude. To be the assistant chief, you've got to be able to work with people, and I think he has the right attitude and right personality for that position."

Assistant Chief Wilson told WDAM,

It's one of those jobs that there is a learning curve to it and I hope to overcome it and try to do the best I can," Wilson said.

Below are the training certifications requirements with Chief Presley's requirements for the various Officer levels, Assistant Chief Wilson's certifications, and the certifications of four other individuals who were actually qualified for the job.

[hfd](#)