

City of Tacoma Civil Service Board MINUTES

Date and Time: January 2, 2014 at 5:00 p.m.
Location: Tacoma Municipal Building Council Chambers
Chair: Beckie Summers
Coordinator: Wendy Hobson

Call to Order:

The Civil Service Board meeting was called to order in the City Council Chambers of the Tacoma Municipal Building. Board Members Summers, Sexton, Latch, Heller and Kielian were present.

Approval of Minutes:

BOARD MEMBER SEXTON MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 5, 2013 MEETING MINUTES. BOARD MEMBER LATCH SECONDED THE MOTION.

A VOICE VOTE WAS TAKEN: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABS. THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 5, 2013 MEETING MINUTES PASSED.

Action on Matters Still Pending/New Business: Discussion of Conclusions of Law and Findings of Fact in the Termination Appeal of Myung Hee Muller.

BOARD MEMBER SEXTON MOTIONED TO ADOPT CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND FINDINGS OF FACT. BOARD MEMBER HELLER SECONDED THE MOTION.

Board Member Kielian asked members of the Board why they were reinstating this employee given the 2 ½ years of performance issues and performance improvement plans when there is clearly a competency issue. Board Member Sexton responded stating that Ms. Muller was an outstanding employee for three years and never had any issues until a new Supervisor was assigned at which time she began receiving performance improvement plans.

Board Member Latch added that the City failed to exercise progressive discipline and said the City should have taken steps to continue the performance improvement plans and follow up with discipline as part of the process.

Board Member Heller stated that key findings for her were the lack of progressive discipline and follow through with performance improvement plans. She also added that the bullet points in the document they had in front of them this evening pointed out the facts that they used to make their decision.

Board Member Kielian added that we consistently confuse discipline with competency. She suggested maybe this was a systemic structural issue but that the City should be able to release or terminate an individual for competency issues after 2 ½ years of performance improvement plans without going through a progressive discipline process. She also said that having an employee on a performance improvement plan for 2 ½ years without making any forward progress puts the City and the employee in a position where the City can never terminate an individual for competency adding that you can have an employee that is a great employee but is not able to perform the duties of the position for which they were hired. She felt reinstating the employee without a last chance clause would be setting up the City and the employee for a relationship that will continue to be oil and water in the future.

Chair Summers added that the City did not meet the two prong bit of evidence but that she appreciated her comments.

A VOICE VOTE WAS TAKEN: 4 AYES, 1 NAY, 0 ABS.

THE MOTION TO ADOPT THE CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND FINDINGS OF FACT IN THE MYUNG HEE MULLER TERMINATION APPEAL WAS PASSED.

Chair Summers then thanked departing Board Member Heller for her service as a temporary appointment to the Board. Board Member's Sexton, Latch and Kielian added their thanks and gratitude for her service.

Chair Summers then announced new Board members to swear in. City Clerk, Doris Sorum completed the swearing in of Eric Hansen who is now serving in Position 1, Elected and is new to the Board as well as Dan Sexton who will continue to serve in Position 2, Elected.

Communication for Information/Action:

Coordinator, Wendy Hobson shared that Human Resources Director Joy St. Germain was on vacation this week and that Mary McDougal would normally be here in her absence but went home ill this afternoon. There was no Director's report information to be shared.

Civil Service Board Coordinator Report: None

Human Resources Director Report and Requests: None

Consideration of Matters Set for Public Hearing: None

Comments by Board Members:

Board Member Latch announced her resignation from her position on the Board stating she was moving out of the City. A formal letter of resignation will follow.

BOARD MEMBER SEXTON MOTIONED TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF BOARD MEMBER LATCH. BOARD MEMBER KIELIAN SECONDED THE MOTION.

A VOICE VOTE WAS TAKEN: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABS.

THE RESIGNATION OF BOARD MEMBER LATCH WAS ACCEPTED.

All Board Members shared their thanks and gratitude to Board Member Latch and wished her well.

BOARD MEMBER SEXTON MOVED TO APPOINT AMY HELLER TO THE POSITION BEING VACATED BY BOARD MEMBER LATCH.

Chair Summers said that the Board will meet and discuss the process to fill the vacancy. Board Member Sexton added that the City Council can and will do something to fill the vacancy if they do not move quickly. Board Member Hansen agreed that this was something the Board was going to have to act on quickly and asked if the

Board would like to discuss the process to fill the vacancy this evening. He asked if the Board wanted to reconsider the motion to appoint Amy Heller. Board Member Kielian said it was premature to put a motion on the floor when we haven't solicited others or having had a conversation with Ms. Heller to ask her to serve unless in fact there have been other conversations with her. Chair Summers indicated there have been other conversations and Ms. Heller has expressed her willingness to serve. Chair Summers also said she had hesitations about soliciting others when they already had someone in mind.

BOARD MEMBER KIELIAN MOTIONED THAT THE BOARD REAPPOINT AMY HELLER TO SERVE OUT THE REMAINDER OF BOARD MEMBER LATCH'S TERM. BOARD MEMBER SEXTON SECONDED THE MOTION.

Board Member Hansen asked for clarification on the length of term they were asking Ms. Heller to serve. It was concluded that Ms. Heller would serve out the remainder of Board Member Latch's term.

A VOICE VOTE WAS TAKEN: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABS.

MOTION TO APPOINT AMY HELLER WAS PASSED.

Adjournment:

BOARD MEMBER KIELIAN MOTIONED TO ADJOURN. THE MOTION TO ADJOURN WAS SECONDED BY BOARD MEMBER HANSEN. NO VOTE WAS TAKEN.

ATTEST:


Beckie Summers
Civil Service Board Chair


Wendy Hobson
Civil Service Coordinator

