

City of Tacoma Civil Service Board MEETING MINUTES

Date and Time: February 6, 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 special meeting was called to order in the City Council Chambers of the Tacoma Municipal Building. Board Members Summers, Sexton, Hansen, Kielian, and Heller were present.

CHAIR SUMMERS ADVISED THAT BOARD MEMBERS KIELIAN AND HELLER WERE SWORN IN AT NOON TODAY AGENDA ITEM TO ADMINISTER OATH OF OFFICE HAS BEEN REMOVED.

Approval of Minutes:

BOARD MEMBER KIELIAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR DECEMBER 19, 2013 AND JANUARY 2, 2014. BOARD MEMBER SEXTON SECONDED THE MOTION.

A VOICE VOTE WAS TAKEN: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABS, MINUTES WERE APPROVED AS WRITTEN.

Board Member Heller questioned whether or not she should vote as she was only present for half of the January meeting. Chair Summers confirmed she was present although not sworn in for a short period and with confirmation from Jennifer Taylor the risk to include her vote was minimal if at all.

Communication for Information: None

Action on Matters Still Pending / New Business: None

Consideration of Matters set for Public Hearing: None

Civil Service Coordinator Report: None

Human Resources Director Report / Requests:

Human Resource Director Joy St. Germain advised the Board that the Human Resources Department has met and has come up with a few proposed changes to the personnel rules that they would like to bring forward for a discussion in a study session at the March meeting next month. With no objections by the Board, this item will be scheduled next month. Ms. St. Germain also advised that she would be inviting the Joint Labor group to attend the study session as well.

The second item Director St. Germain shared was that the Charter Review Committee has met and she was asked to attend their meeting last evening and was asked to bring information on the Residency requirement which needs to be addressed by the Charter Review Committee. She also shared that the Charter Review Committee will also be forming several sub-committees one of which they are considering is a sub-committee on Civil Service. Chair Summers asked if the Board could be placed on their contact list to receive notifications of future meetings to Board members could attend if they are available. Board Member Heller requested that Board Members be copied on any agendas and/or

meeting materials. Board Member Hansen added that it is important for the Board to get together and review the facts and information so it can be presented to the City Council before they make a decision. Board Member Sexton asked if information on the Charter Review Committee meetings could be found on line. Director St. Germain confirmed that the information is available on the City website. Board Member Sexton also asked if the Charter Review Committee meetings would be televised. Director St. Germain advised no, the meetings will not be televised.

Director St. Germain then reported approval of two list abolishments, one for Collections Systems Worker and one for Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator. She also approved two list extensions, one for Administrative Assistant and the other for Line Equipment Operator. Board Member Sexton requested that all future list abolishments include consistent information including number of residents. He indicated that not all of these appeared to have the same format and/or information.

Director St. Germain then introduced HR Analyst, Bob Paz to present the request for a second extension for Line Equipment Operators Caleb Verduin and Adam Oswald. Bob then introduced Interim Division Manager, Hugh Messer.

BOARD MEMBER SEXTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE SECOND EXTENSION OF TEMPORARY LINE EQUIPMENT OPERATORS CALEB VERDUIN AND ADAM OSWALD. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY BOARD MEMBER HELLER.

Board Member Kielian asked if there was an expected response from the union. HR Analyst Bob Paz advised that the decision is expected in March. Board Member Hansen questioned the jurisdictional issue in this case. Mr. Messer explained that the positions were crossing over from one union to another and the process involved to create the operator in training program. Director St. Germain also added that a letter of agreement with the applicable union would have to be finalized and brought before the City Council before the process can be completed.

A VOICE VOTE WAS TAKEN: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABS. THE REQUEST FOR EXTENSION WAS APPROVED.

Comments by Board Members:

Board Member Kielian explained that she has been troubled by the two hearings that the Board has heard and would like to get together with the Board and Human Resources to discuss lessons learned and to use it as an opportunity to learn. Board Member Hansen agreed it would be beneficial for the City and the Board to get together to discuss what a termination case would look like from perspective of both sides. Board Member Heller added that it would be helpful to have training related to principles that are applied such as just cause and progressive discipline. Jennifer Taylor advised the Board to be careful and mindful that there may be behind the scenes negotiations going on (not saying there is but that there may be) with these cases and that perhaps a discussion or study session covering a more broad scope of material would be better. Director St. Germain stated she could put together material on just cause and progressive discipline. Chair Summers added that she would like to invite the Joint Labor group to attend the study session as well.

Board Member Sexton stated that it was unfortunate that Board Member Kielian was not present during the second portion of the Muller hearing and was not present during the Board's deliberation but that he felt to revisit the decision was not in the best interest of the Board's time. Board Member Kielian responded stating it was not her intent to rehash the Board's decision but instead to meet and discuss what the Board would be looking for in a future hearing with regard to incompetency, discipline and just in general what the Board would be looking for from both sides in a future termination appeal hearing – it's not a looking back but looking forward for future hearings.

Board Member Hansen advised that he had met with the Joint Labor Council and they had some issues that he would like to bring forward. These issues included union bumping rights / procedure, complaints versus appeals and confusion over one being binding and the other not, what criteria is being used in creating new positions to determine if the

over one being binding and the other not, what criteria is being used in creating new positions to determine if the position will be classified or unclassified, Union being party to appeal same as an employee, personnel policies versus personnel rules and benefit of adding the policies into the rules and ensuring employees who testify or file a complaint or appeal are free of retribution and are protected. He would like to have a study session on these issues then move from there to a public hearing just as our Legislature does so that all stakeholders are heard before the Board makes their decisions.

Board Member Sexton suggested that the Board could cover all of Board Member Hansen's in one study session combined with the session currently being scheduled for March. Chair Summers added that it would be appreciated if the material being put together on proposed changes to the personnel rules would also include information on the issues brought up tonight by Board Member Hansen. Jennifer Taylor also added that she would like to point out that the Board's meetings are public and that the personnel rules are vetted in a public setting which might help alleviate some of the concerns stated earlier about providing Joint Labor the opportunity to weigh in. Board Member Heller added that as part of the Open Public Meetings Act that all of the Civil Service Board's agendas go out to several groups including Joint Labor as well as many other groups and organizations.

Board Member Sexton asked for clarification on when the study session would be held which will cover the personnel rules. Chair Summers confirmed this session will be held in April. Jennifer Taylor will work to get materials ready for the March session and whatever is left over will be covered in April.


Board Member Sexton further stated having a public meeting may be a little premature at this point. Board Member Hansen extended invite to City Human Resources Department to attend the study session and bring forward any concerns they might have.

Director St. Germain provided comment regarding the work plan that the Civil Service Board had wanted to put in place and that she had committed to reviewing the personnel rules with some identified recommendations and that's what we will be bringing forward. She will be communicating these to Joint Labor as well. She stated we are currently bargaining at the table with the unions. Director St. Germain also recommended that we not roll all the policies into the rules as we bring these to Joint Labor and receive feedback from them and there is a process in place to bring these items forward for discussion.

CHAIR SUMMERS ASKED FOR MOTION TO ADJOURN. BOARD MEMBER SEXTON MOVED TO ADJOURN AND BOTH BOARD MEMBERS KIELIAN AND HELLER SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING WAS ADJOURNED.

ATTEST:


Beckie Summers
Civil Service Board Chair


Wendy Hobson
Civil Service Coordinator