



Tacoma Civil Service Board Meeting Minutes

Date and Time: October 6, 2022, at 5:00 PM
Location: By Zoom teleconference
Chair: Eric Hansen
Coordinator: Wendy Hobson

Call to Order:

Chair Hansen called the meeting to order at 5:00PM. Board Members Sexton, Wick and Klein were present. Board Member Heller was excused. Also present was Deputy City Attorney Martha Lantz.

Approval of August 4, 2022 Minutes:

Chair Hansen noted that the transcriptionist referred to Board Member Sexton as the court; no correction to minutes needed. Board Member Klein motioned to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Wick.

VOICE VOTE: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABS. THE AUGUST 4, 2022 MINUTES WERE APPROVED AS WRITTEN.

Communication for Information:

The Proclamation of Emergency Rule is terminated effective October 10, 2022. Our next meeting will be in person.

Action on Matters Still Pending / New Business:

Deputy City Attorney Martha Lantz provided updates on new requirements for in person meetings. The in-person meeting requirement can be satisfied with a room, or a physical location being made available to members of the public. Members of the Board may appear in person, virtually, or by telephone as they wish. The Mayor and City Council urge that a hybrid option is made available, so members of the public are more able to attend and participate. Staff will need to be on site to open the room and set up technology.

Chair Hansen invited discussion on locations for future meetings and study sessions. Options considered included remaining in Council Chambers for the meeting and study session, hold the meeting in Council Chambers, then move to a conference room for the study session, or hold both the meeting and study session in a conference room that is equipped with technology that allows for a hybrid option.

Board Member Klein suggested the board go with what is the most conducive and welcoming for the public, has the technology we need, and is secure so that we can get help if needed.

Ms. Lantz added that anytime the building is open for meetings after hours, building security is there and the Tacoma Police Department (TPD) can be summoned right away if needed. If there is anything controversial on the agenda, extra security is always an option.

Board Member Klein offered that we could start in Council Chambers and if there are problems with that space for the study session, we make a change at that time; rather than guess at what problems we think we're going to experience and guess what room might solve the problems.

Vice Chair Wick stated it is important for this board to set their space, so the public knows on a regular and reoccurring basis where we're going to be meeting. Council Chambers is too large; conference rooms that Ms. Lantz mentioned are sufficient and set up with technology. We can formalize to say that when we do have hearings, they will be held in Council Chambers.

Board Member Sexton's shared that Council Chambers is a wonderful room, great for the public, perfect for hearings, and there isn't another room that matches this. It is not too big and when we have public in there, it is nice to have those seats.

Vice Chair Wick motioned to meet regularly in one of the larger conference rooms equipped with technology. The motion was seconded by Board Member Klein.

A VOICE VOTE WAS TAKEN: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABS. THE MOTION TO HOLD MEETINGS IN ONE OF THE LARGER CONFERENCE ROOMS PASSED.

Chair Hansen provided history on the residency requirement for the newer board members. The City Charter provides that with certain statutory exceptions, that all applicants for employment be residents of Tacoma. In the past, there was a blanket waiver of the residency requirement enacted. Several months ago, the board lifted that blanket waiver and reinstated the residency requirement. The residency requirement was then lifted by Mayor Woodards in conjunction with the COVID Proclamation of Emergency. That order is being terminated effective October 10, 2022, and the residency requirement will be reinstated.

We will revisit the topic of residency at our November 3, 2022, study session to decide if we're going to continue with the requirement, instate another blanket waiver, or implement some type of preference for residency.

Director Fritz shared that the City Council has granted a permanent blanket residency waiver for our non-classified staff. We go through a lengthy hiring process to identify the best candidate. If that candidate doesn't reside within city limits and we want to hire them, we have to either ask them to move or bring forward a case to the Civil Service Board for a waiver of the residency requirement. The Board currently meets once a

month and the market for people is very hyper competitive. We are trying to move as quickly as we can to fill vacancies and bring the best people to the City of Tacoma. My ask of this board is to grant us a temporary blanket residency waiver for all of our classified positions until we as a group can sort out what we want to do next in terms of looking at a residency preference program or whatever it might look like in the future.

Chair Hansen suggested another alternative would be to hold more board meetings or to expedite the process be able to approve the waivers by email. Ms. Lantz advised that the board could hold additional meetings by phone or in person, but not by email. We would still need to set up a room even if board members were on the phone to allow the public the ability to participate in that decision making process. Director Fritz added we would likely need to meet weekly due to the number of hires we are processing.

Vice Chair Wick didn't see a reason not to continue with the blanket waiver until such time as we have a study session to discuss it. Also is not a fan of the residency requirement as it flies in the face of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). It is a huge burden on staff to have to come before the board to make that ask each and every time.

Director Fritz added that the Workforce Equity Study found the residency requirement to be problematic recommending a waiver of some sort. Also of interest, the report identified that the recruitment pool is not just Tacoma. Rather, it is Pierce County as a whole due to several Tacoma Public Utilities locations being located outside city limits.

Chair Hansen put forth three options. Instate a blanket waiver, hold more meetings, or have just one monthly meeting. Director Fritz has concerns with holding one monthly meeting as it would be too long for the candidates to wait.

Board Member Klein moved to put a blanket waiver in place until such time as the Board has had adequate time to study this and has a long-term solution. Vice Chair Wick seconded the motion. Board Member Sexton expressed concern of putting a waiver in place without an end date stating the blanket waiver was never meant to be permanent.

Board Member Klein amended the motion to institute a blanket waiver for a period of six months, or until such time as the Board makes a decision on this issue. Vice Chair Wick seconded the motion as long residency will be a priority for discussion at our first study session. Chair Hansen confirmed this will be a topic for monthly study sessions until the issue is resolved.

A VOICE VOTE WAS TAKEN: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABS. THE MOTION TO INSTATE A TEMPORARY BLANKET WAIVER FOR A PERIOD OF SIX MONTHS PASSED.

Chair Hansen communicated that agenda packets will now be distributed in electronic format unless a hard copy is specifically requested no later than one week prior to the scheduled meeting.

Board members discussed format of meeting minutes, verbatim versus summary. The decision was made to move forward with summary minutes.

Direction Fritz presented a summary of the Workforce Equity Study previously sent to board members.

Consideration of Matter Set for Public Hearing:

In the Matter of Joseph Harris, no response was received to the email communication sent to him last week. A follow up letter will be sent to Mr. Harris allowing 30 days to respond. If no response is received, the matter will be considered closed.

Human Resources Director Report:

Director Fritz provided an update on the City's Class and Comp Study. The results of the study are expected to be implemented in January 2023.

Employee Satisfaction Survey was launched on September 26th. This survey is used to make improvements to areas highlighted by employees.

There were no public comments.

Vice Chair Wick motioned to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Board Member Klein.

Meeting adjourned at 6:28PM

ATTEST:



Eric Hansen, Chair



Wendy Hobson, Coordinator