

**Minutes of Regular Meeting of the
Alexandria Civil Service Commission
May 20, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Lindsey Torbett at 4:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. In attendance were Commissioners: Mr. Lindsey Torbett, Ms. Connie Baker, Mr. Michael Brewer, Mr. Charles Harvey and Dr. Henry Robertson. A quorum was present. Staff members present were: Ms. Candice Saucier, Assistant Director of Civil Service, and Ms. Mildred Price, Examination Analyst. Also present were: Ms. Monza Williams, Director of Human Resources, Leisa Lawson, and Ms. Deirdre Fuller, Counsel for the Commission.

Chair Torbett read a statement regarding rights of the public to comment on matters on the agenda prior to action being taken on them, as required by the Louisiana Revised Statutes.

Mr. Torbett requested a motion to go into Executive Session to **conduct interviews with finalists for Director, Civil Service**, as noticed 24 hours in advance. Ms. Baker moved to go into Executive Session and Mr. Harvey seconded the motion. Mr. Torbett called for a roll call vote: Mr. Brewer "Yea", Ms. Baker "Yea", Mr. Torbett "Yea", Mr. Harvey "Yea", and Dr. Robertson "Yea". Motion approved unanimously and the Commission entered Executive Session at 4:35 pm.

Mr. Torbett called for a motion to return to Open Session. Mr. Brewer so moved and Ms. Baker seconded. Roll call vote: Mr. Brewer "Yea", Ms. Baker "Yea", Mr. Torbett "Yea", Mr. Harvey "Yea", and Dr. Robertson "Yea". Motion approved unanimously and the Commission returned to Open Session at 5:30 pm.

Ms. Baker, Vice-Chair, addressed agenda item **Appoint the Director, Civil Service**. She thanked both finalists for their patience in the interview process. She noted it was not an easy task with two qualified candidates to consider, but the Commission must move forward. Ms. Baker moved to accept Leisa Lawson as Director Civil Service, and Dr. Robertson seconded the motion. Ms. Baker called for a roll call vote: Mr. Brewer "Yea", Ms. Baker "Yea", Mr. Torbett "Yea", Mr. Harvey "Yea", and Dr. Robertson "Yea". Motion carried unanimously. Ms. Baker congratulated Ms. Lawson on her appointment as Director and stated the Board looked forward to working with her. She thanked Ms. Mildred Price and stated the Board looked forward to continuing to work with her.

Mr. Torbett presented the **minutes of the previous special meeting held April 1, 2020** by teleconference for approval. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Brewer. On vote, the motion carried.

Ms. Saucier and Ms. Monza Williams, Director of Human Resources, reported on **filling vacant positions in the classified civil service**. Ms. Saucier stated the two reports covered the months of March and April, and postings of job announcements were suspended

3/20/2020 due to COVID-19. She reported for March the Civil Service Department was processing 36 personnel requisitions and provided 32 certified lists to Human Resources, with an average turnaround of 14.57 days. One additional certification had been requested, and seven personnel requisitions were closed. She reported there was one class spec revised in February and three revised in March. Ms. Saucier reported for April the Department was processing 41 personnel requisitions and provided 35 certified lists to Human Resources. Due to suspension of the recruitment process, there was no average turnaround to report. No additional certifications had been requested, and no personnel requisitions were closed. She reported there was one new class allocated and 16 abolished in April. Ms. Williams reported seven candidates were selected by the Mayor in March, which included six new hires and one promotion. No candidates declined employment offers. She reported one candidate was selected as a new hire by the Mayor in April and no candidates declined employment offers. Ms. Williams stated HR had recently begun working with promotional requisitions and filling those with current employees. She stated they were considering training personnel in conducting Skype or Zoom interviews to move forward with recruitment process.

Mr. Torbett addressed agenda item **Request to Extend Three Classified Employee's Special Assignments**. Ms. Saucier asked the Commission to extend for 90 days three special assignments set to expire early in June. Mr. Harvey made a motion to extend the three employees' special assignments 90 days and motion was seconded by Ms. Baker. On vote, the motion carried.

Mr. Torbett addressed agenda item **Request per Rules Sub-Committee to Introduce Amendments to the Civil Service Rules**. He noted this was for introduction only of proposed amendments and approval would be considered at the next meeting after public notice. Ms. Saucier stated the Rules Sub-Committee had met and considered several rule revisions, and had two to bring to the Commission at this time.

Ms. Saucier stated the Rules Sub-Committee and Ms. Deirdre Fuller recommended revisions to **Rule III § 1.5 Duties of the Director** to replace "chief executive officer" with "chief administrative officer" and add "executive head of the Civil Service Department" to clarify the Director's responsibilities. She noted the additional proposed revisions were to allow for gender-neutral language. Motion to introduce the proposed amendments to Rule III was made by Ms. Baker; seconded by Mr. Harvey. On vote, the motion carried.

Ms. Saucier stated the Rules Sub-Committee and Ms. Fuller recommended revisions to **Rule VII § 4.4A Examinations and Employment Lists Preferences: Veterans'** to comply with Louisiana laws governing awarding 10 veterans' preference points to disabled veterans and spouses/parents of disabled or deceased veterans. Mr. Harvey asked if veterans' points were given one time. Ms. Saucier stated that was correct, that veterans' points were awarded for original appointments only, which was clarified in the amendment. Motion to introduce the proposed amendments to Rule VII § 4.4A was made by Mr. Harvey and seconded by Ms. Baker. On vote, the motion carried.

Mr. Torbett addressed agenda item **Update on COVID-19 Procedures and Precautions Implemented for Employees' Safety**. Ms. Williams stated the precautions included taking

employees' temperatures upon arrival, filling out a one-time COVID-19 questionnaire, and requiring masks on entering the building and whenever within three feet of a co-worker or customer. She stated the Customer Service Building was opened to the public May 18th with restrictions. She stated sanitizer and disinfectant spray and wipes were provided to employees so they could sanitize their work areas and equipment daily. Ms. Williams stated that if an employee exhibited symptoms they were referred to the City Nurse. She also noted that Mr. Charles Jones was training employees doing the temperature screenings. Ms. Baker commented her company informed employees if they were sick not to come to work. Ms. Williams stated email communications to employees notified them not to report to work if they felt ill, and supervisors' had briefings with their employees to inform them also. If an employee was sick, he was to report that to his supervisor who would provide further direction.

Mr. Torbett addressed agenda item **Establish COVID-19 Protocol for Future Meetings**. Ms. Fuller stated she and Ms. Saucier discussed the Louisiana Supreme Court's notice that lifted restrictions on in-person court proceedings and allowed for up to 25% occupancy. She stated that Governor Edwards' proclamation #59 provided for attendance at essential governmental meetings by teleconferencing and video conferencing. Ms. Fuller stated Governor Edwards' proclamation was applicable to the Board's appeal hearings, which were administrative proceedings. Mr. Torbett asked if the Commission could choose to hold in-person appeal hearings, if it desired to do so. Ms. Fuller replied there were no prohibitions against doing so. Mr. Torbett stated his preference was to have appeal hearings in person. Mr. Brewer stated his concern that the Commission should hear an appellant's appeal, especially one out of work, as soon as possible to provide a timely hearing.

Ms. Saucier presented the **Director's Report**. She asked the Commission about scheduling Larry Franklin III's appeal. Mr. Torbett requested she check with the attorneys for their availability for the July meeting date.

Ms. Saucier reported the Compression Market Adjustment was implemented May 1, 2020. She provided an overview to all classified employees and specific communication to employees receiving a compression adjustment. There were numerous questions from both those who did and those who did not receive an increase. There was no across-the-board increase for all employees this budget year. Ms. Saucier stated Civil Service received a complaint from the Electric Distribution department concerning the compression increase. The complaint stated they were long term employees and should have received an increase. She stated there was confusion as to the purpose and effect of the compression increase. She would meet with the department to provide additional information and answer any questions. If the complaint was not withdrawn, she would bring it to the Board. Ms. Williams stated many of these employees were at or very close to the maximum of their range and did not understand they were not eligible for an increase. Mr. Harvey commented that some employees in the department did receive an increase, and he explained to employees that compression would be reviewed again in the following years.

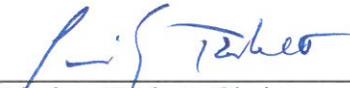
Ms. Saucier noted Mr. Torbett's and Dr. Robertson's terms would expire August 15, 2020. She stated letters requesting nominations would be sent to the nominating authorities within the next

month. There was discussion and encouragement from Counsel and other Board members for them to consider accepting re-appointment. Ms. Baker stated during these challenging times the Board needed consistency.

There were no items discussed under the **New Business (No action will be taken)** agenda item. Mr. Torbett adjourned at 6:00 p.m., following a motion to do so by Ms. Baker and a second by Mr. Brewer; on vote, the motion carried.



Ms. Candice Saucier
Civil Service Assistant Director



Mr. Lindsey Torbett, Chair