

Meeting of the Civil Service Board

Present: Vice-Chair Pat Parrish, F. Ray Hill, Marvin M. Lane, Jr.  
Absent: James M. Meyer, Steve Sanderfer

Attendees:

Carl Bobbit, Rehire Applicant  
Mike Buehler, President, Dallas Fire Fighters Association  
David Etheridge, Human Resources Director  
Eddie Goldsmith, 911/311 Manager  
Tomas Gonzalez, Assistant City Manager  
Jason McClain, Assistant City Attorney  
Kenneth Moore, 911/311 Manager  
Johnnie Ortiz, 911/311 Manager  
Tom Taylor, Grievance Chair, Dallas Fire Fighters Association  
Marvin Wilson, Rehire Applicant

Civil Service Department Staff:

Michelle Hanchard, Assistant Director  
Patricia Marsolais, Secretary to the Civil Service Board  
Martha Santos, Management Assistant

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m.

The minutes of the November 7, 2005 regular meeting were unanimously approved.

The Board heard the rehire appeal of former Water Utilities employee Marvin Wilson. After much discussion with Mr. Wilson about his previous employment with the City and consideration of the material that had been provided by him and the City, the Board voted unanimously to approve his request to reapply for jobs with the City.

The Board heard the rehire appeal of former Public Works and Transportation Department employee Carl Bobbit. After much discussion with Mr. Bobbit about his previous employment with the City and consideration of the material that had been provided by him and the City, the Board voted unanimously to approve Mr. Bobbit's request to reapply for jobs with the City.

Kenneth Moore, Johnnie Ortiz, and Eddie Goldsmith appeared on behalf of the Fire and Rescue Department to ask the Board to approve an extension of the probation period for 911/311 call taker trainees from 10 ½ to 12 months under current Civil Service Rules. According to Mr. Moore, the 10 ½ month period was approved several years ago.

Mr. Moore, Ms. Ortiz and Mr. Goldsmith described the training program for 911/311 call taker trainees in detail. The program includes classroom instruction and on-the-floor training with an experienced call taker. The call takers must become proficient at fielding calls about 911, 311 and Water Utilities' issues. Coupled with the problem of losing 47 percent of new hires in the first six months, the Police and Fire Departments have requested trainees spend more time actually observing and taking calls in between the three components of classroom instructions. Mr. Goldsmith said that in the three other call centers he's worked, the probationary period for new trainees was 12 months.

Mr. Hill expressed his support of the requested extension with the caveat that it didn't affect other policies, etc. He reiterated an earlier point about possible flaws in the recruitment process that could be causing the high turnover rate and asked that the matter be looked into in order to address the overall staffing and retention issue. Ms. Ortiz said that the implementation of a new computer system in 2007 is expected to resolve many existing problems.

After considering all of the information presented, the Board voted unanimously to approve the requested probationary extension period to 12 months with the added proviso that other relevant issues be looked into also. Vice-Chair Parrish emphasized

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that she would like to have an advance briefing on matters like this in the future. This will provide the Board with sufficient understanding of the matter being presented. Mr. Lane asked the presenters to send the Board a short memorandum on August 1, 2006 advising what the turnover rate is at that time compared to today.

Due to the illness of Senior Assistant City Attorney Janice Moss, the Vice-Chair announced that the attorney briefing listed as number five on the agenda would not take place.

Mr. Lane provided an overview of the steps he had taken since the last meeting on the special civil service committee project he is spearheading. Mr. Lane said he met with Police Chief Kunkle and Assistant Police Chief David Brown and the Acting Chief of Fire Louie Bright. He also talked with Dr. George Thornton, the City's assessment center consultant. Yesterday, he presented his preliminary recommendations to people he had received inputs from during the process. He gave each Board member a copy of the recommendations. He outlined the plan as follows:

1. Feedback from the meeting yesterday is to be submitted within the next two weeks.
2. Recommendations will be presented to the Board at the January 9, 2006 Civil Service Board meeting with a suggestion that they be voted on at the February 6, 2006 Civil Service Board meeting.

Vice-Chair Parrish and Mr. Hill thanked Mr. Lane for his hard work and dedication to this important project.

In department news, the Secretary and Assistant Director reported that the written examination for Police sergeant had been given. The assessment portion of the Police lieutenant's test process begins tomorrow.

The Board entered into closed executive session from 9:07 to 9:49 a.m. pursuant to Section 551.074 of the Texas Open Meetings Act to conduct the evaluation of the Secretary to the Board for the period of April 1, 2005 through September 30, 2005. After concluding the evaluation and there being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned.

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APPROVED

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ATTESTED