

**MUNICIPAL FIRE AND POLICE CIVIL SERVICE
LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA
300 N. DUGAS RD
LAFAYETTE, LA 70507
(337) 291-8762**

A meeting of the Lafayette Municipal Fire and Police Civil Service Board was held on August 9, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. in the Lafayette Consolidated Government Civil service testing room, 705 West University Avenue, Lafayette, Louisiana. Audio recording of this meeting will become part of the Board's permanent records.

Present at the meeting were Chairman Micky L. Broussard, Vice Chairman L. Wayne Prejean, Christina Olivier, Dwight Prudhomme, SGT. Ron Clark, Board Attorney Candice Hattan, Chief Judith Estorge, Michael Corry, Allyson Melancon, Candy Leger, Corporal Jarrell Moss, Major Michael Brown, Major Monte Potier, SGT. Tommy Marceaux, SGT. Cutis Oakes, SGT. Robin Green, SGT. Jack Martin, Major Dewitt Sheridan, Major Blair Dore, Lieutenant Rob Olivero, SGT Covey Menard, Board Secretary Mary Francis, Human Resource Director Rick Zeno, Shekeitha Poullard, Katie Gagliano.

Meeting called to order at 9:00 a.m. and opening statement read by Chairman Micky Broussard.

1. Board authorization to approve minutes of July 26, 2023 board meeting

Approval of July 26, 2023 meeting minutes are postponed per Chairman Micky L. Broussard

2. Board authorization to approve posting notice for Police Corporal, Deputy Fire Chief, Fire Communications Chief, Fire Communications Officer, and Fire Records Clerk exam

Motion was made to approve posting notice by Christina Olivier

Motion seconded by L. Wayne Prejean

Public comment: None

Opposition: None

Motion carried unanimously

4. Withdrawal of Appeal: Former Police Officer Jacob Desormeaux vs. Lafayette Consolidated Government (Police Department) Appeal of Termination

Chairman Micky L. Broussard noted that Mr. Desormeaux provided a motion and order to dismiss the appeal for the record.

5. Public Hearing: Board to consider revisions of the classification plan for Police Corporal

Police Chief Judith Estorge provided details regarding the request to revise the Police Corporal classification plan, allowing Police with a 1-year confirmation status to apply for the Corporal exam.

The board discussed the length of the process with the Office of State Examiner and the benefits of revising the classification plan. Chairman Micky L. Broussard provided his intentions of working with the Chief's office and others to initiate the process of revising the plan. Chief Estorge thanked the Board.

Motion was made to approve consideration of revisions to the classification plan by Christina Olivier

Motion seconded by L. Wayne Prejean

Public comment: None

Roll was called with SGT. Ron Clark, L. Wayne Prejean, Christina Olivier, Micky Broussard, and Dwight Prudhomme all voting yes.

Motion carried unanimously

3. Board authorization to accept motion for reconsideration of appeal dismissal by Former Police Officer Alex Ritter

A request to revisited this matter was made by Attorney Allyson Melancon for Alex Ritter. Ms. Melancon noted that her and Attorney Michael Corry agreed to both submit their briefs for the board's decision. Chairman Micky Broussard specified that this matter is only to decide if a secondary hearing is necessary regarding the confirmation status of Mr. Ritter.

Mr. Corry noted that an agreement was previously made regarding the matter of employment status. Ms. Melancon submitted a motion up for reconsideration, noting that the Board had not addressed the issue of confirmation — the Board had not ruled on this issue.

Additional discussion was held regarding the details of placing the motion for reconsideration on the agenda for hearing. Mr. Micky Broussard requested counsel from Ms. Hattan on if the board should address the matter now or during the next meeting. Ms. Hattan advised that the board is

currently only being ask to place the motion on the agenda. She noted that she needed to review the full transcript to determine if the Board had previously ruled on the information of Mr. Ritter's eligibility to come before the Board.

Motion to approve reconsideration of appeal dismissal by SGT. Ron Clark

Motion seconded by Christina Olivier

Public comment: None

Roll was called with SGT. Ron Clark and Christina Olivier voting yes; L. Wayne Prejean, Micky Broussard, and Dwight Prudhomme all voting no.

Motion did not carry unanimously

6. Public Hearing: Jarrell Moss vs. Lafayette Consolidated Government (Police Dept.) Appeal of Suspension

Senior Corporal Jarrell Moss was represented by Allyson Melancon while Lafayette Consolidated Government was represented by Michael Corry with Chief Judith Estroge also in attendance. Ms. Candy Leger was the assigned Court Reporter transcribing this hearing. Witnesses were sworn in by Board Attorney Candice Hattan. Board Attorney Candice Hattan advised all witness of the rules of sequestration. Testimony was given by the following witnesses: Major Michael Brown, Major Monte Potier, and Corporal Jarrell Moss.

Mr. Corry and Ms. Melancon stipulated the use of streamlining witness testimony while using internal office statements before the Board.

Board Member Christina Olivier made a motion to go into executive session to discuss professional conduct and competence of the employee

Motion seconded by Dwight Prudhomme

Public comment: None

Roll was called with Christina Olivier, L. Wayne Prejean, SGT. Ron Clark, Micky Broussard, and Dwight Prudhomme voting yes.

Motion carried unanimously

Board went into Executive session at 11:13 am.

Board Member L. Wayne Prejean made a motion to come out of executive session at 11:44 am.

Motion seconded by Dwight Prudhomme

Public comment: None

Roll was called with Christina Olivier, L. Wayne Prejean, SGT. Ron Clark, Dwight Prudhomme, and Micky Broussard voting yes.

Motion carried unanimously

Board Member L. Wayne Prejean made a motion to up hold appointing authority ruling

Motion seconded by Dwight Prudhomme

Public comment: None

Roll was called with Christina Olivier, L. Wayne Prejean, SGT. Ron Clark, and Micky Broussard voting yes.

Motion carried unanimously.

Board member Dwight Prudhomme praised Sr. Corporal Moss for his outstanding service. He also explained his reasonings for believing the 1-day suspension was made in good faith. Board Members Christina Olivier and SGT. Ron Clark shared their reasonings of agreement.

Chairman Micky L. Broussard acknowledged Sr. Corporal Moss's concerns and recommended that all parties work together to find a solution to his concerns with the employee assistance program (EAP).

Concluding, the Board agreed to uphold the appointing authorities ruling and the employee's 1-day suspension.

7. General Board business, if any

Chairman Micky L. Broussard announced his resignation as Chairman to the board but will continue as a Board member. Mrs. Olivier gave Chairman Broussard her well wishes and informed him of her appreciation for his service as Board Chairman. Chairman Broussard has offered to assist the future Chair during the transition.

8. Report of Counsel or legal updates, if any

Ms. Candice Hattan provided an update regarding the lawsuit against the Board. She also shared that Jeremy Roberts effective resignation was on July 14, 2023. Ms. Hattan informed the Board about the city's amending supplemental petition and mentioned that she has prepared an opposition brief. Later, Ms. Hattan learned that the lawsuit was dropped due to Mr. Roberts' resignation but was unsure of the exact reason. Mrs. Olivier and Ms. Hattan discussed the amount of preparation and time devoted

to the lawsuit. Ms. Hattan expressed her disapproval of lawsuits against the Board, as they are a public body doing their best to serve the community without compensation.

Ms. Hattan informed the Board about a clerk of court bill she received due to a lawsuit. She stated that she opposes the Board being responsible for the charges and will dispute them. During the discussion of the Jeremy Roberts District Court appeal, Ms. Hattan provided more details. She received another bill related to the case, which she disputed, and suggested that the involved parties be responsible for payment. Ms. Melancon stated that she would not pay the bill as the appeal and dismissal were not hers. Ms. Hattan did not object to this.

Ms. Melancon shared her thoughts on why the Jeremy Roberts's matter escalated to his resignation. Ms. Hattan emphasized the importance of the Board in preventing employee mistreatment. Ms. Melancon noted that despite winning the case three times, Mr. Roberts never fully returned to work; causing his health and family to suffer.

Additional discussion was held between Ms. Hattan and Ms. Melancon regarding the allocation of court costs due to the accumulated filing fees. Ms. Hattan mentioned that several dismissals are being held up. She suggested that the Board ask the city to cover the court bills due to lack of funding in the budget. Ms. Hattan confirmed that she had requested payment for court costs and attorney fees. While disputing the accuracy of the lawsuit allegation, she alleged that the lawsuit allegation was untrue, irresponsible, and lacking foundation.

Ms. Hattan provided an update regarding Bernard Anderson and Alex Ritter. She and Ms. Melancon confirmed that Mr. Anderson's case has been reset for Monday, August 14th. Ms. Hattan provided more insight regarding the decision on Alex Ritter's eligibility status. She noted that during the hearing she spontaneously asked the parties if they agreed with the timeline; causing both sides to agree without allowing them to argue their case. The City is now arguing that Ms. Melancon agreed on the record that Mr. Ritter did not have civil service protection at the time of termination. If the parties had not agreed, Ms. Hattan would've advised the Board to give both parties 30 days to allow them to address the disagreement without a hearing. Ms. Hattan concluded by noting that Mr. Ritter was informed of his ability to request a hearing on his termination documents from the City.

As a reminder, Ms. Hattan informed the board on matters of procedure and insight regarding informal forms. She requested more clarity from the transcript; stating that she wasn't provided the pages after page 195. She pointed out that if the Board did not provide a ruling; it may cause a conundrum by not providing both parties the opportunity to only argue the eligibility matter. She affirmed that she will retrieve the additional pages in the transcript from the Board Secretary.

On behalf of Mr. Ritter, Ms. Melancon requested to revisit the issue. She stated that she did not agree with the other party and that no conclusion was made. She assured the Board that briefs would be short. Ms. Hattan advised that even though both parties agreed on the issue; she does not agree with the procedures used during the matter of eligibility.

Ms. Hattan noted that the Glover matter hasn't reset to her knowledge.

9. Public Comment- None

Motion to adjourn by Dwight Prudhomme

Motion seconded by L. Wayne Prejean

Public comment: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 12:17 pm



Ron R. Clark
Chairman