

**MINUTES
CIVIL SERVICE MERIT BOARD MEETING
BY ELECTRONIC OR OTHER MEANS
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14, 2021, 1:30 P.M.**

A meeting of the Civil Service Merit Board (hereinafter referred to as the Board) was held on Wednesday April 14, 2021, at approximately 1:37 p.m. via Zoom video. Jamie Ballinger called this meeting to order. Vicki Hatfield, Executive Secretary, and Michael Winchester, Board Attorney, were also present. George Shields, City Law Department, was not on the Zoom call at the start of the meeting.

Board members present:

Jamie Ballinger
Amanda Busby
Stephanie Taylor
Bill Lyons

Debbie Helsley was unable to attend. Jamie Ballinger welcomed our newest Board member, Dr. Stephanie Taylor to the Civil Service Merit Board.

Roll Call/Quorum Present (confirm quorum and that each Board Member can hear and speak to others simultaneously and identify if other persons present with each Member, if any.) All members were confirmed present. All members could hear and see other members. All members were alone.

Jamie Ballinger read the statement of facts and circumstances that support the reasons for meeting electronically and called for a roll call vote determination by the board that a necessity existed for meeting by electronic means pursuant to Open Meetings Act Sections 8-44-108(a) and (b) (Refer to CSMB Attorney followed by Roll Call Vote). All Board Members present agreed that there was a necessity to hold a Board meeting via electronic means.

Jamie Ballinger called for approval of the Minutes of the previous business meeting held on Wednesday March 10, 2021. Bill Lyons made a motion to approve. Amanda Busby seconded the motion. Ms. Ballinger proceeded with a roll call vote. All Board Members present voted to approve the March 10, 2021 minutes.

Michael Winchester, Board Attorney, advised the Board that he had nothing to report. Jamie Ballinger asked if Alyson Dyer, of the Law Department, who joined the call, if she had been able to contact George Shields. Ms. Dyer stated that the Law Department was in the process of reaching out to Mr. Shields. It was presumed that Mr. Shields was busy with another call, thus the meeting continued.

Dr. Hatfield updated the Board that she continues to meet with Dr. Drummond each week. Dr. Hatfield invited Dr. Taylor to introduce herself to those listening in to the meeting. Dr. Taylor stated that she serves as the Administrator for Knox County Schools, and has so for the last 20 years. Dr. Taylor stated that she has a passion for mentoring and helping students. Dr. Taylor also stated that she was happy to serve on the Board. Dr. Hatfield stated that she and Dr. Taylor had a great orientation meeting and ensured that she had the latest information regarding the Board and what is expected from a board member. Dr. Hatfield sent Dr. Taylor some board information and the Civil Service Merit Board Rules and encouraged her to read them.

Dr. Hatfield updated the Board on the budget. Dr. Hatfield stated that she had her budget hearing with the Mayor. Dr. Hatfield stated that she submitted 2 additional funding requests, one was for Chromebooks and the other request was for an online testing platform to begin transforming the testing process. Dr. Hatfield stated that she will have a budget hearing with City Council on Friday May 14th. Dr. Hatfield stated that she is reviewing a draft of an RFP for the online testing platform and should have something in place by this summer if funding is approved.

Dr. Hatfield updated the Board that Fire Recruit testing will be completed at the beginning of April and the referral documentation will be ready to send to the Fire Department. Dr. Hatfield stated that there are 188 eligible recruits. Dr. Hatfield stated that a good number of applicants had high scores and that it looks promising. Dr. Hatfield stated that we posted Police Recruit at the beginning of April and to-date, we have about 60 new applicants that have been screened and about 40 applicants to be processed. Dr. Hatfield stated that we will be administering the new written exam for the first time. Dr. Hatfield stated that Kent Johnson will start the Police testing at the end of April, and it will continue through mid-May. Dr. Hatfield stated that she will keep the Board updated regarding police testing.

Dr. Hatfield stated that she and the departments have been looking at ways to ensure that written exams are not barriers for jobs that are technical or manual in nature. Dr. Hatfield explained that some written exams present a barrier to some individuals who don't have a high level of reading comprehension. Dr. Hatfield went on to explain that an individual may know how to repair a vehicle, they are just not able to understand the question being asked. Dr. Hatfield stated that she and Nick Bradshaw, the Fleet Director will try to create a practical oral exam for Equipment Technician. Dr. Hatfield stated she hopes that this will help with that testing process. Dr. Hatfield stated that if this process works, it will serve as a model in the future for similar jobs. Dr. Hatfield stated that she will keep the Board updated on how the process is going.

Jamie Ballinger updated that Board on whether to continue with the biweekly meeting of the HR Transition Committee. Ms. Ballinger stated that she and Dr. Hatfield discussed the issue and agreed that great progress had been made. Ms. Ballinger presented it to the Transition Team and it was decided to discontinue the meetings. Ms. Ballinger stated that if there is a need to re-institute the biweekly call she will do so.

George Shields of the Law Department later joined the meeting in progress and advised the Board that the Law Department had nothing to report.

There being no unfinished business, the first item under new business was the election of Chairman for 2021/2022. Ms. Ballinger stated that before she hands over the meeting to Vice Chairman, Amanda Busby, that she has enjoyed working with Dr. Hatfield and serving as Chairman for the Board, but requested that she not be considered as Chairman. Ms. Ballinger stated that her law practice has become very intense this year and will require more of her presence. Ms. Ballinger, the current Chairman turned the meeting over to Vice Chairman, Amanda Busby. Ms. Busby called for nominations Chairman. Dr. Lyons made a motion that Amanda Busby serve as Chairman. Jamie Ballinger seconded the motion. The motion was approved and Amanda Busby stated that she accepted the nomination to serve as Chairman of the Board. Amanda Busby proceeded with a roll call vote. All Board members present voted to approve Amanda Busby to serve as Chairman of the Board for the 2021/2022 year.

The second item of new business was the election of Vice-Chairman for 2021/2022. Jamie Ballinger called for nominations. Amanda Busby made a motion to nominate Jamie Ballinger as Vice Chairman. Jamie Ballinger stated that she accepted the nomination to serve as Vice Chairman of the Board. Dr. Lyons seconded the motion. The motion was approved. Jamie Ballinger proceeded with a roll call vote. All Board members present voted to approved Jamie Ballinger to serve as Vice Chairman of the Board for the 2021/2022 year.

Ms. Busby called for a motion to adjourn. Dr. Lyons made a motion to adjourn. Jamie Ballinger seconded the motion. Amanda Busby proceeded with a roll call vote. All Board members present voted yes to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55pm.

Vicki Hatfield
Executive Secretary/Director

Presiding Chair