



Tacoma Civil Service Board
Special Meeting Minutes

Date and Time: October 25, 2023, at 5:00 PM
Location: Council Chambers TMB
Chair: Eric Hansen
Coordinator: Wendy Hobson

Call to Order:

Chair Hansen called the meeting to order at 5:00PM.

Roll Call Taken: All present. Board Member Wick joined via Zoom. Deputy City Attorney Martha Lantz also present.

Amendments to the September 7, 2023, Minutes: Board Member Heller stated she wanted four amendments as follows: 1. Page one, add an "on" after the comma on her statement. (audio lost) 2. Bottom of the first page under Board Member Heller, line five, after the and delete "I felt that" and 3. Page six under Board Member Heller, second line it states " like we did in the past, " Or the rule of five. So, there needs to be an "Or" 4. Page nine, under Board Member Heller, the next to last line, it should be – instead of – not restricting it. -Delete by and capitalize the "G" for starting a new sentence- "Giving you..."

Approval of September 7, 2023, minutes: Board Member Sexton motioned to approve. Board member Klein second. Minutes were approved with corrections.

Actions on Matters Still Pending / New Business: Discussion and potential vote on residency preference point program, discussion and potential vote and residence requirement, and discussion on changes to Tacoma Municipal Code. Chair Hansen stated that the reason for this meeting is that he did not understand what Board Member Heller was trying to do at the last meeting and that he wanted to turn things over to her so that she might explain what she wants to do and the procedure to do that.

Board Member Heller: Handed out document with her proposal. Her motion is that the Board set the proposed rule change forward for the first reading for the regular November meeting as she submitted.

Chair Hansen: Asked for a second

Board Member Sexton: Second

Board Member Heller: Read from her handout. It is a change to 1.24.450 Residence. It adds a C section. In all competitive examinations, City of Tacoma residents shall be given a preference by adding two points to the total passing grade based upon a possible rating of 100 points as perfect.

1. To receive such credit, documentation should be presented to the HR director or designee either with application or prior to the appointment of the position, in the form of: a. driver's license or official WA ST ID card address b. a current utility bill (electricity, natural gas., water/sewer) c. a mortgage bill or current rental agreement

D. In competitive examinations, where two or more candidates have equal qualifications, including performance evaluations, interviews, and other testing, preference must be given to the City of Tacoma resident. She explained her intent was to create a residency preference system like the type of points veterans of our country earned. She sees it as a standalone regardless of the residency requirement. When there are open competitive positions that are being hired for, there can be an internal resident employee, an internal non-resident employee, an outside resident applicant, and an outside non-resident applicant. Currently with the blanket waiver that is in place until the end of the year there are four types of applicants. An internal employee that is a resident would not be required to submit documentation of residency. They could choose not to submit the documentation and forfeit the points.

Chair Hansen: Asked Board Member Heller if it could be a friendly amendment to the motion that had already passed.

Board Member Heller: Agreed that it could be if the maker of the motion would agree to it. She could not remember who the maker of the motion was.

City Attorney Martha Lantz: Reviewed her understanding of the last meeting and where the Board left things which was the residency requirement exists and it exists for two reasons (1) because it is in the City of Tacoma Charter and (2) the code mirrors that. So, the residency requirement at this point is a default and what the Board has control over is the waiver. The Board left the last meeting with no blanket waiver, potential waiver on a case-by-case basis but no blanket waiver starting January 1, 2024. So, if there was a motion already in place, adding what Board Member Heller wants would not work as an amendment.

Board Member Heller: Stated she would make it as a stand-alone motion that the Board set forward for a first reading.

Board Member Klein: Asked what the point of the preference program would be without the blanket waiver as only Tacoma residents could apply.

Board Member Heller: Answered that internal nonresident current employees could potentially apply for new vacancies. She further explained that her intent was not to

bump anyone out of a ranking with the preference point system. In that way, it would potentially allow a hiring manager access to more applicants.

Board Member Klein: Further probes into the motion about d. In competitive examinations, where two or more candidates have equal qualifications, including performance evaluations, interviews, and other testing, preference must be given to the City of Tacoma resident. He asks if after the two points are given and the candidates are equal, preference must be given to the City of Tacoma resident.

Board Member Heller: Stated C is all about points and D is about after the examination.

Board Member Klein: Stated his understanding is that D. dictates the hiring of a City of Tacoma resident.

Board Member Heller: Explained her intent is that after the examinations and interview processes, D would only dictate the hiring of a city resident if the hiring manager had two equal candidates and had to decide, the new rule change would say go with the resident.

Board Member Klein: Advised Board Member Heller that the way she wrote it from a legal standpoint is not what her intent is on section D. It talks about interviews and testing not in hiring decisions.

Board Member Wick: (echoes and not completely audible) Articulated her concerns regarding the motion, expressing that it veers away from the principles of inclusion by limiting hiring to Tacoma residents. Furthermore, she pointed out that the motion lacks proper vetting, with questions surrounding its process and procedures. She is troubled by the sudden convening of a special meeting for this purpose, which gives it a rushed feel. She emphasized that the Board has invested approximately a year and a half into this effort and finds it disconcerting that it is just now being expedited towards the end of the year.

Director Fritz: Stated that she does not see the value add if there is already a residency requirement in place. She sees it creating a more complex process for future candidates. Moreover, it would further burden specialists and analysts who are already grappling with heavy workloads as recruitment continues to expand each year. She suggested that it would pair well with a blanket waiver. A point system with a residency requirement would present a challenge.

Cheryl Bidleman: Pointed out that in item D, it references performance evaluations, but the city does not do performance evaluations, so there is not a rating that you could look at for an existing employee. She also agreed with Director Fritz that the point system coupled with the residency requirement would add to the complexity of the process.

Director Fritz: Added that she doesn't think a utility bill or mortgage agreement would be appropriate. However, she did agree that a driver license or passport would be acceptable.

Board Member Heller: Stated she is open to make changes to the motion. She agreed with Board Member Klein's suggestion to change competitive examination to hiring decision in D and that she hears the need to strike performance evaluation from the language. She addressed the concern expressed by Director Fritz regarding the issue of having the preference point system and a residency requirement after the first of the year and the problems it would create. She expressed that wasn't her issue, that it was an issue for another Board and that she just wanted to get her motion ready for the first reading in November.

City Attorney Martha Lantz: Asked clarifying questions on what it would mean post January 1, 2024 with or without a waiver. She went over how this would look with future Board decisions on waivers.

Chair Hansen: Stated that they have over a month to work on the motion and asked Ms. Lantz if she would like to take the lead on it. He also said that board members could take the initiative and contact City Attorney Lantz with suggestions and she and Board Member Heller could take those under consideration.

City Attorney Martha Lantz: Agreed if she and Board Member Heller work together. She also informed the Board that the meeting on that night could not be considered a first reading as first readings must be held during a regular meeting. The first meeting is more informational and there is no voting. During the second reading amendments are offered and it is the product from that which is submitted to the City Council.

Board Member Heller: Recalled that in the past, during first reading, the Board did open it up for ongoing discussion and comments from the public so they could take that into account and any amendments to the proposal going into the second reading. Her understanding was the first and second readings were to get feedback from stakeholders, so the best version of the proposal moves forward.

Chair Hansen: Asked Board Member Heller to restate her motion.

Board Member Heller: Motioned to set the proposal for first reading as amended over the course of time for the next regular meeting in November.

Chair Hansen: Said he believed the motion had already been seconded.

VOICE VOTE TAKEN: 3 AYES, 1 NAY, 1 ABS. THE MOTION CARRIED.

City Attorney Martha Lantz: Cautioned board members to reach out to her or Coordinator Hobson but not to talk to each other if there are more than two board

members involved. Email is included. She and Coordinator Hobson will take individual comments or suggestions and push them out to the rest of the Board.

Board Member Klein: Asks how meetings and agenda are posted for the public. Coordinator Hobson reviewed the distribution process.

Board Member Sexton: Motioned to adjourn.

Board Member Heller: Second

Meeting Adjourned.

ATTEST:



Eric Hansen, Chair

Wendy Hobson

Wendy Hobson, Coordinator