

Civil Service Commission Minutes

On March 24, 2021, the Civil Service Commission of the City of Amarillo met at 8:30 am at City Hall, 601 S Buchanan, Amarillo, TX, 79101, in the City Council Chambers for a Regular Meeting.

	Present	No. Meetings Held Since Appointment	No. of Meetings Attended
Sally Jennings, Vice Chairman	Yes	26	25
Lawrence Walker	Yes	49	49

Also, in attendance were the following:

Mitch Norman, HR Director

Viola Frausto, Sr HR Generalist

Marita Wellage-Reiley, Transit Manager

Scot Crimmins, Transit Operations Supervisor

Bryan McWilliams, City Attorney

Courtney White, Attorney 1

Nathan Thomas, Transit

Call to order. Sally Jennings established a quorum and called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Civil Service commission to order at 8:34 am.

ITEM 1: Public address- no comments from the public on agenda items.

ITEM 2: Motion made to approve minutes from March 3, 2021. There were no comments or questions asked regarding the minutes. Lawrence Walker presented the motion to approve, seconded by Sally Jennings. Motion passes.

ITEM 3: Sally Jennings opened with the election of vice chairman and chairman. Lawrence Walker made a motion to nominate himself as chairman effective next meeting. Sally Jennings seconded. Motion is passed.

ITEM 4: Review and consider the approval the list of new employees, step increases, transfers, promotions, demotions, bypasses, temporary assignments, and disciplinary actions. Lawrence Walker presented the motion to approve, Sally Jennings seconded. Motion passes.

ITEM 5: Sally Jennings called on Courtney White, Attorney1 to discuss the disciplinary appeal for Nathan Thomas. Courtney White stood up and asked if she could have a minute to confirm with Mr. White if he still wanted to continue with his appeal. He stated that he did want to continue with his appeal.

Bryan McWilliams, City Attorney asked that all who are testifying to stand and be sworn in. All were sworn in.

Courtney White began with the City's testimony. She informed the board Nathan Thomas position, dates of employment and work history. She stated that during his employment, he has been trained properly and continued having safety infractions and was not able to follow proper procedures. The department decided to demote him instead of terminating him. She stated he was a team player and had skills to still be part of the department. With his continued safety infractions, he was not able to be a Bus Driver.

Nathan Thomas began his testimony. He confessed to making serious mistakes and felt with the 90 days given to improve that he had improved and was working on correcting his mistakes. He stated he has maintained a good attitude during that time and felt he had corrected his mistakes. He said he has done what was asked of him. He went to see a psychologist and the evaluation given found that he was a competent person. He stated that he was told during his 90 days that there would be random ride alongs and that never took place with him.

He said he did not find out till February that they had termed his 90-day probation period and was not told earlier. He said the department was leading him on. He found out that he was going to be demoted.

instead. He said their decision to demote him was wrong and feels he is competent to drive a bus. He said he had regular customers that rode the bus and he said they stated to him that he was a great driver, and he was their favorite bus driver.

He stated he could not accept a cut in pay at this time and does have a tentative new job that is to start the first of next month, but still wanted to come in and appeal decision in hopes of being reinstated as a bus driver. Feels decision was totally wrong and had been working on correcting his mistakes.

Courtney White asked him if he has any other comments and he said, no.

Courtney White call Scot Crimmins to the stand. He was asked to state his name, title, address, and job duties for the department. Ms. White also asked him to describe what training and experience he has at his current and past jobs. She began questioning him about Nathan Thomas' safety infractions. She presented 26 Exhibits to the board. She did verify with Nathan Thomas and Scot Crimmins that each exhibit was a true document and had not be altered.

Scot Crimmins then moved to another area in the room where he could show the board videos taken that showed the unsafe driving performed by Nathan Thomas. Scot Crimmins explained what had happened in each of the videos. There were no further questions for Scot Crimmins, and he stepped down.

Courtney White called Marita Wellage-Reiley to the stand. She was asked to state her name, title, address and what her job duties were for the Transit Dept. She was asked about what training requirements are necessary for being a bus driver and described the safety programs required for the department. She was asked why they decided to demote him, and she stated it was due to his safety infractions and she also stated that Nathan Thomas was a good employee, just not a good bus driver. She said he was a good team player with a good attitude.

(paused meeting to change recording disk)

Nathan Thomas asked to speak and stated that he heard enough and wanted to withdraw his appeal and be excused.

Bryan McWilliams, City Attorney, just to be clear of what he was asking, verified with Nathan Thomas that he did want to withdraw his appeal of demotion. Nathan Thomas said he did want to withdraw his appeal of demotion and stated again that he had a new job that would start on April 1st.

Marita Wellage-Reiley stepped down at that point. Bryan McWilliams stated to the board, that for the record they needed to affirm this decision from Nathan Thomas.

Lawrence Walker moved to uphold the demotion of Nathan Thomas from Bus Driver to Utility Worker. Sally Jennings seconded it. Motion passed.

ITEM 3: No other items or discussions. Sally Jennings moved to adjourn and was seconded by Lawrence Walker at 9:52 am.



Mitchell Normand, Civil Service Director



Sally Jennings, Vice Chairman