

Civil Service Commission Minutes

On January 11, 2023, 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
Lawrence Walker, Chairman	Yes	62	61
Lilia Escajeda, Vice Chair	Yes	4	3
Bill Harris	Yes	3	3

Also, in attendance were the following:

Mitchell Normand, HR Director
Erin Palacio, HR Manager
Bryan McWilliams, City Attorney
Brandon Ester, HR Generalist
Todd Peden, Fire Lt.

Call to order. Lawrence Walker established a quorum and called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Civil Service commission to order at 8:30am.

ITEM 1: Lawrence Walker opened with the public address- Todd Peden, Amarillo Fire Department and President of the Amarillo Fire Fighters Association, announced that he wanted to address Item #6 on the agenda. Mr. Peden addressed that in the current hiring process there is a very short window. For the 143.022 to come into play is when an applicant is denied for unfit for duty or whatever the physician may find. After which, there is a very short window to get the applications done, the interviews done before the academy begins. One of the questions he had was, is it possible to have the panel of three physicians pre-determined, to where this window of opportunity is much more narrow for these people to try and get hired. This has come into play with our current group of people, the window has kind of shrunk and has gone away. Wanted to address that to see if it was a possibility, to maybe have a panel of doctors on call or vetted a couple of doctors that may be able to be called in on a more timely fashion.

Bryan McWilliams, City Attorney addressed Chairman Lawrence Walker, stating that he will work with HR to see if that is even possible.

Chairman Walker stated that he has more questions to address once the commission gets to that item.

ITEM 2: Election of chairman and vice chairman of the Civil Service Commission. Bill Harris made a motion to elect Lawrence Walker as chairman of the commission. Motion was seconded by Lilia Escajeda. All in favor, motion passed.

Bill Harris made a motion to nominate Lilia Escajeda as vice chairman of the commission. Motion was seconded by Lawrence Walker. All in favor, motion passed.

ITEM 3: Lawrence Walker considered approval of the Minutes for the meeting held on November 21, 2022. Motion made by Lilia Escajeda to approve. Seconded by Bill Harris. All in favor, motion passed.

ITEM 4: Lawrence Walker presented the approval of the list of new employees, step increases, transfers, promotions, demotions, bypasses, temporary assignments, and disciplinary actions.

Lilia Escajeda asked if this is a higher number of changes or are we on a normal level. Mitchell Normand, responded, stating that he would have to go back and research that but it appears to be a higher rate.

Mr. Normand also stated that while we do experience a higher rate of turnover in the entry level positions like utility worker, again he would need to research it but it does appear to be higher.

Lawrence Walker asked if there was a way to get a condensed list. He stated that the report that they

receive is hard to understand, and asked that the commission get an easier report to read. Lilia Escajeda motioned to approve. Seconded by Bill Harris. All in favor, motion passed.

ITEM 5: Lawrence Walker considered approval of the eligibility register for the position of Police Recruit, exam given on December 3, 2022.

Motion made by Bill Harris to approve. Seconded by Lilia Escajeda. All in favor, motion passed.

ITEM 6: Lawrence Walker considered appointment of three physicians under Texas Local Government Code 143.022(c).

Lawrence Walker addressed that the commission has been provided a list of physicians but it doesn't say whether they are physicians or psychiatrists, also stating that in all his time he has never done this.

Mitchell Normand responded by giving the commission some background on this item. Mr. Normand stated that for the hiring process for fire fighter they do have to go through a pre hire physical, under 143 there is an option for applicants that were disqualified whether it be psychological or physical examination. Mr. Normand stated that the list of providers are occupational medicine providers in the area that were populated from a general Google search to identify specific specialist in that area. Mr. Normand stated that 143 provides that for a candidate that was disqualified due to a physical disqualification to elect a board of three physicians, appointed by the commission for reexamination ultimately going through another exam. Mr. Normand stated that he doesn't know what that will look like but the commission has to appoint the board of three. Mr. Normand stated that we don't have physicians outside of our standard physicians so list was provided to identify physicians in occupational medicine to consider but you are not limited to this list.

Lawrence Walker asked, the three that are appointed, is that a permanent thing.

Mr. Normand responded that the commission will appoint three physicians for the purpose of this exercise.

Bill Harris asked that the three that are appointed would be available for anyone that wants to appeal in the future.

Mr. Normand responded stating that is something he would have to explore with the City Attorney, he is not sure about a permanent list. Mr. Normand stated that this selection would be just for this current list of hiring.

Bill Harris asked, during this recruitment cycle, have we had any requests for reexamination.

Mr. Normand stated that we do, and that is why this list was provided.

Bryan McWilliams stated that the statute requires it because the applicant pays for the examination.

Mr. Normand and Mr. McWilliams both confirmed that there have been requests for reexamination.

Lawrence Walker asked if the commission is supposed to pull any three names?

Mr. Normand responded stating that the commission as a board can deliberate and if there is any other direction needed from HR he would respond, but this is just a suggested list of occupational providers but outside of that he does not have any additional information he can present at this time.

Lilia Escajeda asked if the physicians on the list have all agreed to this.

Mr. Normand responded stating that no physicians have been contacted. Mr. Normand stated that it will be incumbent of the applicant to engage the physicians for the reexamination process.

Bryan McWilliams addressed the commission and suggested that the commission might want to choose three physicians and then choose three alternates in case someone is not available.

Bill Harris asked that if an applicant wanted to choose a different physician, or are they only allowed to choose from what is approved by the commission.

Bryan McWilliams stated that is correct, that the commission will determine the list of physicians, applicants will not have a choice in that matter.

Lawrence Walker asked if it is possible to approve the whole list of physicians and the applicants can choose from the list.

Bryan McWilliams responded by stating that he does not feel that is what the statute envisioned. That the statute envisioned that the commission select three, stating that if you approve the entire list, we still don't know what three are selected. Mr. McWilliams stated that he feels the commission must give HR some direction on which three are selected.

Bill Harris asked, without making a formal motion, would it be reasonable to select the top three from the list and then the next three as alternates.

Bryan McWilliams responded stating that would be reasonable.

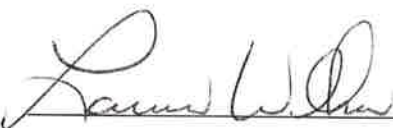
Bill Harris made a motion to appoint Doctors Jordan, Honaker and Kelly as the physicians and as alternates, appoint Doctors Paul, Taylor and Morton.

Seconded by Lilia Escajeda. All in favor, motion passed.

There were no other items or discussions. Lawrence Walker moved to adjourn at 8:46am.



Mitchell Normand, Civil Service Director



Lawrence Walker, Chairman