

Civil Service Commission Minutes

On October 30, 2024, 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	Yes	83	79
Lilia Escajeda, Chairperson	Yes	25	20
Bill Harris, Vice Chairperson	Yes	24	24

Also, in attendance were the following:

Mitchell Normand, Director of Human Resources

Brandon Ester, Assistant Director of Human Resources

Brian Williams, City Attorney

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

ITEM 2: Lilia Escajeda opened with the public address. There were no comments from the public on agenda items.

ITEM 3.A.: Lilia Harris considered approval of the Minutes for the meeting held on September 18, 2024. Motion made by Bill Harris to approve. Seconded by Lawrence Walker. All in favor, motion passed.

ITEM 3.B.: Lilia Escajeda presented the approval of the list of new employees, step increases, transfers, promotions, demotions, bypasses, temporary assignments, and disciplinary actions. Motion made by Lawrence Walker to approve. Seconded by Bill Harris. All in favor, motion passed.

ITEM 3.C.: Lilia Escajeda presented to review and consider the appeals submitted for the Police Captain promotional written examination given on October 10, 2024. Mitchell Normand notified the audience that a copy of all appeals submitted by Police personnel for this examination were located in a binder at the podium.

Lieutenant Walter 'Aric' Howard of the Amarillo Police Department took the podium and presented his appeal for Question #72 of this examination. He stated that he believed that in addition to the marked correct answer 'C, Division Commander', the answer choice 'B, Assistant Chief of Police' should be considered correct as well. He referenced APD General Orders 3.08, III and the HE-176 which denotes the Division Commander must sign off on a request for purchase or repair and forwarded to the Assistance Chief of Police for staff operations for approval. He argued that signatures from both levels of Police leadership, as noted, are needed for full approval of a repair or purchase request. Lt. Howard provided the commission with a copy of this form for reference and rested his case.

Lieutenant Kevin Korinek of the Amarillo Police Department took the podium and presented his opposition to the appeal to Question #72. He stated that he believed that Question #72 and its singularly marked correct answer were valid 'as is'. He referenced Texas Local Government Code, Chapter 143.032 and stated that an examination of this nature should reflect the wording of the study material. He continued to explain that, according to the study material, a request for purchase or repair must be signed by a Division Commander before being considered for approval from the Assistance Chief of Police for Staff Operations. Bill Harris asked Lt. Korinek how the Assistant Chief usually approves such a request. Lt. Korinek stated that the Assistant Chief usually signed the request to approve it. He also stated that he believed that the question was testing their knowledge of who should sign the request form first before advancement. Lt. Korinek then departed from the podium.

Lieutenant Walter 'Aric' Howard took the podium again to rebut the argument presented by Lieutenant Korinek. He stated that if the question was in fact testing their knowledge of who should sign the request form first before advancement that the questions itself would need to be reworded in a way that specifically asks what signature is required before it is advanced to the Assistant Chief. Again, he stated his position that both answer choices 'B, Assistant Chief of Police' and 'C, Division Commander' should be considered as correct.

Lieutenant Michael 'Clay' Rolan of the Amarillo Police Department took the podium and presented his support of the appeal submitted for Question #72. He stated that in his experience with the department a request for purchase or repair must be signed by the Assistant Chief of Police for final approval and that in some instances these requests could be submitted directly to the Assistant Chief without a signature from a Division Commander. Lt. Rolan then rested his case and departed from the podium.

Lilia Escajeda asked for any further questions or comments from the Commission and then the audience regarding the appeal to Question #72. There were none.

Lieutenant Michael 'Clay' Rolan took the podium and presented his appeal to Question #79. He stated that he believed that in addition to the marked correct answer of 'C, Service Division Commander' that answer choice 'B, Assistant Chief of Staff Operations' should also be considered as correct. He continued to explain that the Police department has not had a Service Division Commander for over 5 years and the APD policy that this question was in reference to was a 'bad policy'. He referenced APD Rules and Regulations, Emergency Operations 4.05, V. A., that specifies that the Service Division Commander will be notified by the Assistant Chief of Police for Staff Operations and prepare for mass in instances where mass arrests are made. He clarified that of the 4 answer choices listed, he believed that 'B, Assistant Chief of Staff Operations' was the most appropriate answer. Lt. Rolan then rested his case and departed from the podium.

Lieutenant Kevin Korinek took the podium and presented his opposition to the appeal to Question #79. He stated that he believed that Question #79 and its singularly marked corrected answer were valid 'as is'. He explained that the question and the answer were directly based and corresponded to the study material assigned to the examination. He continued to explain that although the Service Division Commander title was no longer in use, the duties of this title had been reassigned to a civilian position within the Police department. He then stated that all policies in the Police department are reviewed every year, and that policy would have been amended if needed and that it was not a 'bad policy' as Lt. Rolan had referred to it. Lawrence Walker asked what the position title of the civilian that has assumed the duties of the Service Division Commander to which Lt. Korinek replied that he did not know. Again, Lt. Korinek reinforced his belief that Questions #79 was valid as presented, directly correlated to the study material, and needed no adjustment to the outcome. He then rested his objection and departed from the podium.

Lieutenant Clay Rolan took the podium again to rebut the argument presented by Lieutenant Korinek. He clarified that the civilian position in question was titled Records Manager and did not carry the same responsibilities as the Service Division Commander. He then departed the podium.

Lilia Escajeda asked for any further questions or comments from the Commission and then the audience regarding the appeal to Question #79. There were none.

At 9:00 am, the commission elected to go into an executive session and were read in by Brian McWilliams.

At 9:13 am, the commission returned from executive session and resumed the meeting.

Motion made by Lawrence Walker to deny the appeal to Question #72. Seconded by Bill Harris. All in favor, motion passed.

Motion made by Bill Harris throw out Question #79. Seconded by Lawrence Walker. All in favor, motion passed.

Mitchell Normand asked the Commission for a short recess to allow City personnel to gather the eligibility register for the Police Captain promotional written examination with adjustments made from the commission's decision.

As City Personnel made the appropriate adjustment to the eligibility register for the Police Captain promotional written examination. Mitchell Normand suggested to the Commission that item 3.D. be tabled until all appeals for both Police promotional written examinations were presented and continue to item 3.E.

ITEM 3.E.: Lilia Escajeda presented to review and consider the appeals submitted for the Police Lieutenant promotional written examination given on October 10, 2024.

Sergeant Caleb Sanderson of the Amarillo Police Department took the podium and presented his appeal to Question #12. He stated that he believed that in addition to the marked correct answer 'C, reducing fears and anxieties', answer choice 'B, resolving grievances' should be considered correct as well. He referred to Supervision of Police Personnel and stated that the question was not specifically quoted from the study material and that there were multiple sections (Pg. 137 & 148) that spoke to Catharsis. Bill Harris asked if the study material directly quoted 'resolving grievances' when speaking to Catharsis to which Sgt. Sanderson responded no, but the section did refer to the overall grievance process. Sgt. Sanderson then rested his case and departed from the podium.

Sergeant Rafael Quiles II of the Amarillo Police Department took the podium to present his opposition to the appeal to Question #12. He stated that he believed that Question #12 and its singularly marked correct answer were valid 'as is'. He referred to Supervision of Police Personnel as well and explained that answer choice 'C, reducing fear and anxieties' is the most appropriate answer for Question #12. He then departed the podium.

Sergeant Caleb Sanderson took the podium again to further present his appeal to Question #12. He explained to the Commission that the grievance process is not dealing with grief, but regarding employees who feel they have been disciplined wrongly and therefore have a grievance. He then departed the podium.

Lilia Escajeda asked for any further questions or concerns from the Commission then the audience regarding the appeal to Question #12. There were none.

Sergeant Rafael Quiles II took the podium and presented his appeal to Question #24. He stated that in addition to the marked correct answer 'C, four', answer choice 'A, two' should be considered correct as well. He referred to Supervision of Police Personnel, that specifies that 4 individuals should be assigned as a search team and that 2 individuals should search each side of a street, if necessary. He clarified that he believes this question is contradictory to the information from the study material and that there are multiple correct answers. He then rested his case and departed from the podium.

Sergeant Caleb Sanderson took the podium and presented his opposition to the appeal to Question #24. He stated that he believed that Question #24 and its singularly marked correct answer were valid 'as is'. He explained that although in a case where members of a search team are assigned to either side of a street, they are still considered a collective group and therefore 4 is the only appropriate answer to this question.

Sergeant Rafael Quiles II took the podium again to rebut Sgt. Sanderson's opposition to his appeal. He stated that he believed that the study material referenced each scenario as a separate team and therefore he believed that both answer choices 'C, four' and 'A, two' should be accepted as correct selections.

Lilia Escajeda asked for any further questions or concerns from the Commission then the audience regarding the appeal to Question #24. There were none.

Sergeant Rafael Quiles II took the podium and presented his appeal to Question #86. He noted that this question was also appealed from the Police Captain's promotional written examination and that he believed in addition to the marked correct answer choice of 'C, Division Commander', answer choice 'B, Assistant Chief of Police' should be considered correct as well. He explained the form to request purchases or repair required a signature by both the Division Commander and the Assistant Chief before it is fully approved. He continued to explain that without the signature of the Assistant Chief, no request of this nature would be considered approved by the department. He then rested his case.

Sergeant Rafael Quiles II remained at the podium and presented his appeal to Question #96. He stated that he believed in addition to the marked corrected answer choice 'C, Incident Command System' that answer choice 'B, National Incident Management System' should be considered correct as well. He explained that the Incident Command System is simply a part of the National Incident Management System and therefore both answer choices should be rendered as correct. He further contended that answer choice 'B, National Incident Management System' is a more encompassing and therefore he believed has actually the better answer choice. He then rested his case and departed from the podium.

Lilia Escajeda asked for any further questions or concerns from the Commission then the audience regarding the appeal to Question #96

At 9:40 am, the commission elected to resume their executive session and were read in by Brian McWilliams.

At 9:57 am, the commission returned from executive session and resumed the meeting.

Motion made by Bill Harris to deny the appeal of Question #12, eliminate Question #24, deny the appeal of Question #86, and deny the appeal of Question #96. Seconded by Lawrence Walker. All in favor, motion passed.

Mitchell Normand asked the Commission for a short recess to allow City personnel to gather the eligibility register for the Police Lieutenant promotional written examination with adjustments made from the commission's decision. He also noted that item 3.D. could be revisited with the adjusted eligibility register when the meeting resumed.

ITEM 3.D.: Lilia Escajeda presented the approval of the eligibility register for the Police Captain promotional written examination given on October 10, 2024. Motion made Lawrence Walker to approve. Seconded by Bill Harris. All in favor, motion passed.

ITEM 3.F.: Lilia Escajeda presented the approval of the eligibility register for the Police Lieutenant promotional written examination given on October 30, 2024. Motion made by Lawrence Walker to approve. Seconded by Bill Harris. All in favor, motion passed.

There were no other items or discussions. Lilia Escajeda moved to adjourn at 10:09 am.



Mitchell Normand, Civil Service Director



Lilia Escajeda, Chairperson