

**CIVIL SERVICE BOARD
REGULAR MEETING**

**Tuesday, September 17, 2013
4:30 p.m.**

Present:

Roy Forrester, Chair
John Fitschen, Vice Chair
Carole Tolomeo
Norman Grad
Anthony G. Romano

Also Present:

Cindy Lavish, Human Resources
Jacqueline Wehmeyer, Human Resources
Jerry A. Blough, City Manager

The regular meeting of the Civil Service Board was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Chair Roy Forrester in the Commission Chambers, Margate City Hall. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and attendance was noted by the roll call.

1) WELCOMING NEW CIVIL SERVICE BOARD MEMBERS.

2) MOTION - APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 16, 2013, REGULAR CIVIL SERVICE BOARD MEETING.

The following motion was made by Ms. Tolomeo, seconded by Vice Chair Fitschen:

MOTION: TO APPROVE THE APRIL 16, 2013, MINUTES.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Romano, Yes; Mr. Grad, Yes; Ms. Tolomeo, Yes; Vice Chair Fitschen, Yes; Chair Forrester, Yes. The motion passed 5-0.

3) PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Jackie Wehmeyer, Human Resource Director, explained that the second reading of the changes to Section 16 ¼ would be heard at the upcoming City Commission meeting. She noted that the changes segmented the hiring process for new employees and the promotional process for current employees. She said that the City wanted to streamline the hiring process by not requiring a written examination for every position, especially for positions when a written examination was not necessary and could prolong the hiring process. She stated that the changes still provided oversight and control over the promotional process to the Civil Service Board.

Jerry A. Blough, City Manager, spoke about the hiring process being out dated. He explained that the procedures related to the recruitment and hiring of employees was a process that needed to be fixed.

He noted that around the Country, the Civil Service Board was not typically involved in the initial hiring of employees any longer. He said that the changes to Section 16 ¼ would take the Civil Service Board out of the initial hiring process and put the responsibility back in the Human Resource Department where it belonged. He added that the Civil Service Board would continue to oversee and represent the employees for any appeals and grievances. He said that the Civil Service Board should be present to as an independent body to review personnel actions that employees bring forth. He stated that the intent was to have the Civil Service Board be responsible to ensure that everything was done fair and equitable and that all employees were treated the same way through the promotional process. The City Manager noted that the changes had passed the first reading and he anticipated it would pass the second reading, as it was the right way to proceed and was a long overdue change. He mentioned problems with entry level employee exams being outdated and not testing skills and abilities. He added that there was trouble getting Chief Examiners to be able to perform the exams.

Norman Grad noted that he was a Civil Service Board member for the City of Hialeah for 20 years. He agreed with the City Manager and explained that he wanted to be on the board to be able to deal with employee grievances, whether Police, Fire or general employees. He was not interested in doing testing for hiring.

City Manager Blough said that there were four bargaining units; Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), Police Benevolent Association (PBA), International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) and the Federation of Public Employees (FOPE), as well as the Non-Bargaining. He stated that if the changes passed, a large majority of what the Civil Service Board was doing to date would change with regard to the initial hiring. He reiterated that the Civil Service Board would be involved with promotional process and would be available to oversee and ensure that employees taking tests were treated fairly. He said that with regard to evaluating discrepancies, grievances or appeals, employees had other recourses. He stated that because the Civil Service Board was not a binding decision, most employees took their issues up with the Department Heads or the City Manager rather than with the Civil Service Board. He did clarify that 95 percent of the role of the Civil Service Board going forward would be the promotional process.

Mrs. Wehmeyer asked Mr. Grad what the function of the Civil Service Board was in Hialeah, and Mr. Grad did not remember. Mrs. Wehmeyer noted that the Civil Service Board did have different functions in different organizations; however, the organizations in this area reserved their efforts towards resolving employee issues. Further conversation ensued between Mr. Grad and Mrs. Wehmeyer regarding the new responsibility of the Civil Service Board.

City Manager Blough reiterated that the Civil Service Board would typically not be rating a candidate, but was to make certain the process was being performed fairly.

Mr. Grad questioned the September calendar.

Carole Tolomeo explained that the calendar was set up to assist the Civil Service Board with knowing what events were taking place, such as Chair Roy Forrester currently sitting in on a written exam. She added that the future job responsibility would include the new members shadowing the old members.

Mrs. Wehmeyer stated that once the changes passed, the Code Compliance written exam would not be something that was necessary for the Civil Service Board to attend; however, promotional exams would require their presence.

Ms. Tolomeo clarified that the Civil Service Board would oversee the taking of exams to make certain there was no cheating or talking, and on time to avoid being eliminated from the test. She then asked whether the new Civil Service Board members were available to come in during the day for promotional exams.

Mr. Grad mentioned having volunteers, and Mrs. Wehmeyer explained that when proctoring exams it was necessary and important to have someone who was familiar with the testing process.

City Manager Blough noted that the Civil Service Board members were supposed to be individuals who think independently and would render a decision that was fair, accurate and in the best interest of the person, as well as the City, and based upon fact.

Anthony G. Romano felt that there was a huge difference between using the Civil Service Board member rather than a volunteer.

City Manager Blough stated that previously there was difficulty in getting the Civil Service Board members to come out and participate. He hoped that everyone appointed to the Civil Service Board recognized the commitment the City asked of them, though they were not paid. He asked that anyone having reservations about the commitment allow someone else to fill that position who could dedicate their time and commitment.

Mr. Grad mentioned having some reservations; however, he would look into everything and let the Civil Service Board know his decision.

John Fitschen, Vice Chair, referred to Section 16 ¼ 39.2, Procedure, and questioned the retention period for holding the application on file. Mrs. Wehmeyer said that the retention period was five years in accordance with the Florida Statute for Public Records. She clarified that the application was inactive, but was still a public record to be maintained.

Roy Forrester, Chair, mentioned a circumstance when a test was challenged, and he noted that the employee looked toward the Civil Service Board for guidance.

Mrs. Wehmeyer reminded the new board members about the Sunshine Law.

4) GENERAL DISCUSSION

Carole Tolomeo thanked the City Manager for his input.

Jackie Wehmeyer noted that the next meeting was scheduled for October 15, 2013.

There being no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Prepared by: Theresa Jones

Roy Forrester, Chair

cc: City Commission, City Attorney, City Clerk, Human Resources Director, Department Heads, Civil Service Board Board, PIO, PBA Representative, FOP Representative, IAFF Representative, FPE Business Representative