

CIVIL SERVICE BOARD MEETING

JULY 28, 2021

A regular called meeting of the Clayton County Civil Service Board was held on Wednesday, July 28, 2021, in-person and virtually via Zoom Video Communications.

Members present: Larry Bartlett, Chairman
K. Terrance Smith, Member
Virginia Phillips-Hall, Member (via Zoom)
Troyce B. Lancaster, Vice-Chair
Dr. Cephus Jackson, Member

Members absent: None

Also present: Human Resources Director Pamela Ambles and staff; Civil Service Board Attorney Joe Harris (via Zoom); County Attorney Michelle Youngblood; Fire Chief Landry Merkison; Chief Financial Officer Ramona Bivins; Staff Attorney Alero Afejuku; Deputy Chief Financial Officer Dennis Johnson; Jared O’Jeda; Warden Dennis Nelson; various employees from County departments; and other individuals.

Chairman Bartlett called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

Chairman Bartlett called for a motion to adopt the agenda for July 28, 2021. Vice-Chair Lancaster made the motion to approve the agenda with the exception to add Item 11a – request for annual leave donation for Leilani Williams (Fire), second by Dr. Jackson. No further discussion on the motion made. Motion carried by unanimous vote (5-0).

Matter of Record: Chairman Bartlett, Vice-Chair Lancaster, Dr. Jackson and Mr. Smith attended this meeting in-person and Ms. Phillips-Hall, and Civil Service Board Attorney Joe Harris attended the meeting via Zoom Video Communication.

1. Considered for approval the Civil Service Board’s Minutes for June 23, 2021.
 - a. Chairman Bartlett called for a motion. Vice-Chair Lancaster made the motion to approve the Minutes, second by Dr. Jackson. No further discussion on the motion made. Motion carried by unanimous vote (5-0).
2. Considered for approval the Civil Service Board’s Executive Session Minutes regarding **Sean Cummings, Transportation & Development**, termination appeal heard June 23, 2021.

- a. Chairman Bartlett called for a motion. Dr. Jackson made the motion to approve the Minutes, second by Vice-Chair Lancaster. No further discussion on the motion made. Motion carried by unanimous vote (5-0).
3. Considered for approval the Civil Service Board's Decision regarding **Sean Cummings, Transportation & Development**, termination appeal heard June 23, 2021. Date Decision Reached: June 23, 2021. Date Decision Signed: June 23, 2021. Vote was unanimous (5-0).
 - a. Chairman Bartlett called for a motion. Dr. Jackson made the motion to approve the Decision, second by Vice-Chair Lancaster. No further discussion on the motion made. Motion carried by unanimous vote (5-0).
 4. Consider request from **Khalil Rajahn, Solicitor General**, to use sick leave reserve. (Civil Service Board was polled and approved July 9, 2021 by Bartlett, Jackson, Phillips-Hall, and Lancaster).
 - a. **For the Record:** Chairman Bartlett called for a motion. Dr. Jackson made the motion to approve the request, second by Vice-Chair Lancaster. No further discussion on the motion made. Motion carried by unanimous vote (5-0).
 5. Considered request from **Olivia McCornell, Corrections/Prison**, for annual leave donation. (Civil Service Board was polled and approved July 16, 2021 by Bartlett, Phillips-Hall, and Lancaster).
 - a. **For the Record:** Chairman Bartlett called for a motion to add other Board members vote. Dr. Jackson made the motion to approve the request, second by Vice-Chair Lancaster. No further discussion on the motion made. Motion carried by unanimous vote (5-0).
 6. Considered request from Senior Services Director Tori Strawter-Tanks, to extend the probationary period of **Kenneth Kirkland, Senior Services/Northeast Senior Center**, for an additional ninety (90) days.
 - a. Senior Service Director Tori Strawter-Tanks was present and presented the request to the Board in detail.
 - b. The Board questioned Director Strawter-Tanks. Director Strawter-Tanks responded in detail to all questions posed by the Board.
 - c. Vice-Chair Lancaster commended Director Strawter-Tanks on doing an outstanding job with detailing the issue.
 - d. Chairman Bartlett called for a motion. Dr. Jackson made the motion to approve the request, second by Vice-Chair Lancaster. No further discussion on the motion made. Motion carried by a vote (4-1), Mr. Smith (Nay).
 - e. Mr. Kirkland was present and had no questions for the Board. Mr. Kirkland thanked the Board and Director Strawter-Tanks to allow him to change his behavior and attendance on the job.

- f. The Board wished Mr. Kirkland well and good luck during the 90-day period.
7. Considered request from Warden Dennis Nelson to extend the probationary period of **Kameron Warfield, Corrections Department/Prison**, for an additional six (6) months.
- a. Warden Dennis Nelson presented the request to the Board in detail.
 - b. Chairman Bartlett asked if there were any questions for the Board. There were none.
 - c. Chairman Bartlett called for a motion. Ms. Phillips-Hall made the motion to approve the request, second by Dr. Jackson. No further discussion on the motion made. Motion carried by unanimous vote (5-0).
8. Considered request from Warden Dennis Nelson to extend the probationary period of **Javoris Goodman, Corrections Department/Prison**, for an additional six (6) months.
- a. Warden Dennis Nelson presented the request to the Board in detail.
 - b. Chairman Bartlett asked if there were any questions for the Board. There were none.
 - c. Chairman Bartlett called for a motion. Dr. Jackson made the motion to approve the request, second by Vice-Chair Lancaster. No further discussion on the motion made. Motion carried by unanimous vote (5-0).
9. Considered request from **Dionte Dinkins, Fire & Emergency Services**, to receive annual leave donations.
- a. Human Resources Director Pamela Ambles presented the request to the Board in detail.
 - b. The Board asked to hear from Fire Chief Landry Merkison. Fire Chief Merkison advised the Board a light duty position was offered, but Mr. Dinkins turned the offer down. Fire Chief Merkison advised the Board the Fire Department does not support this request.
 - c. The Board asked questions for Director Ambles and Fire Chief Merkison. Director Ambles and Fire Chief Merkison responded to all questions posed by the Board in detail.
 - d. Chairman Bartlett asked if Mr. Dinkins was present. He was not in attendance.
 - e. Chairman Bartlett called for a motion. Dr. Jackson made the motion to deny the request, second by Vice-Chair Lancaster. No further discussion on the motion made. Motion carried by unanimous vote (5-0).
10. Consider request from **Leilani Williams, Fire and Emergency Services**, for annual leave donations.
- a. Fire Chief Landry Merkison presented the request to the Board in detail.
 - b. Chairman Bartlett asked if the Board had any questions for Fire Chief Merkison. There were none.

- c. Chairman Bartlett called for a motion. Vice-Chair Lancaster made the motion to approve the request, second by Dr. Jackson. No further discussion on the motion made. Motion carried by unanimous vote (5-0).
11. Considered request from **Calvin Ross, Finance/Administration**, to use sick leave for the care of his mother.
- a. Chief Financial Officer Ramona Bivins presented the request to the Board in detail.
 - b. Chairman Bartlett asked if the Board had any questions for CFO Bivins. There were none.
 - c. Chairman Bartlett called for a motion. Dr. Jackson made the motion to approve the request, second by Vice-Chair Lancaster. No further discussion on the motion made. Motion carried by unanimous vote (5-0).

Chairman Bartlett Chairman Bartlett commented that he has been on the Civil Service Board for 14 years and was a 32-year employee with the County, and he wanted to express his gratitude to the Department Heads and Elected Officials. Chairman Bartlett indicated that the Department Heads and Elected Officials have progressed in regards to professionalism and documentation. He indicated that the documentation is far more finer and detailed, and it makes the Board more informed. He stated that he is very proud to see Clayton County in the position that it is currently in.

12. Discussion items.
- a. Confirmed meeting date(s) for August 2021.
 - i. Human Resources Director Ambles confirmed August 25, 2021 as the next Regular Called Meeting. Director Ambles stated that August, September and October would be Regular Called Meetings. Director Ambles informed the Board that in January 2022, the Board would resume meeting four (4) times a month.
 - ii. Human Resources Director Ambles stated that Chairman Turner is in support of meeting four (4) times a month to get the cases heard.
 - iii. Chairman Bartlett advised the upcoming cases for August would be discussed under "Other Business" section.

13. Calendar Call.
- a. **Robin Stinnett (Superior Court)** – Termination appeal filed October 21, 2019, regarding: "Please see attached – Termination of Employment". Attorney Keith Martin requested a continuance on July 15, 2021. The continuance request was granted on July 16, 2021.
 - i. Chairman Bartlett confirmed HR Director Pamela Ambles granted Robin Stinnett's continuance request on July 16, 2021.

- b. **Keon Hayward (Police Department)** – Termination appeal filed February 13, 2020, regarding: “Civil Service Rules: 9.206(b) Guilty immoral or criminal act; 9.206€ Guilty of conduct unbecoming an employee of Clayton County; 9.206(i) Guilty of an act of insubordination or disgraceful conduct; 9.206 (l) Careless or negligent in the care of property of the county”. My. Hayward requested a continuance on July 8, 2021. The continuance request was granted on July 16, 2021.
 - i. Chairman Bartlett confirmed HR Director Pamela Ambles granted Keon Hayward’s continuance request on July 16, 2021.
- c. **Jared O’Jeda (Fire/E.M.S.)** – 48-Hour Suspension appeal filed March 10, 2020, regarding: “Suspension for 48 hours w/o Pay. Termination track letter – 4 hours Leave w/o pay coded – October 19, 2019 & 5 hours LWOP – Oct 22, 2019”.
 - i. Chairman Bartlett asked if the County was ready to move forward. County Attorney Michelle Youngblood confirmed the County is ready to move forward.
 - ii. Chairman Bartlett asked Mr. O’Jeda if he is ready to move forward. Mr. O’Jeda confirmed he is ready to move forward.
 - iii. Chairman Bartlett stated this case would be the first to be heard after the calendar call.
- d. **Leonard Ekure (Police Department)** – Demotion appeal filed May 26, 2020, regarding: “The demotion from Sergeant to Master patrol Officer”. Master Police Officer Ekure requested a continuance on July 19, 2021. The continuance request was granted July 19, 2021.
 - i. Chairman Bartlett confirmed HR Director Pamela Ambles granted Leonard Ekure’s continuance request on July 19, 2021.

Chairman Bartlett called for a motion for a break. Vice-Chair Lancaster made the motion for a break, second by Dr. Jackson. No further discussion on the motion made. Motion carried by unanimous vote (5-0).

Chairman Bartlett called the meeting back in session at 10:43 a.m.

- 14. (Appeal) – **Jared O’Jeda (Fire/E.M.S.)** – 48-Hour Suspension appeal filed March 10, 2020, regarding: “Suspension for 48 hours w/o Pay. Termination track letter – 4 hours Leave w/o pay coded – October 19, 2019 & 5 hours LWOP – Oct 22, 2019”.
 - a. Chairman Bartlett questioned if County was ready to proceed. County Attorney Michelle Youngblood replied in the affirmative.
 - b. Chairman Bartlett questioned Appellant Jared O’Jeda if he was ready to proceed. Mr. O’Jeda replied in the affirmative. Greive

- c. Chairman Bartlett advised Mr. O'Jeda both of his leave without pay appeals are not appealable under the Civil Service Rules and Regulation, but they can be grievable. Therefore, today's appeal will only consist of the 48-Hour suspension and would not hear any testimonies regarding the two leave without pay issues.
- d. Chairman Bartlett asked if there were any questions reference Mr. O'Jeda's two leave without pay issues being dismissed from this appeal. County Attorney Youngblood and Mr. O'Jeda had none.
- e. Chairman Bartlett explained the hearing guidelines, time limits and order of sequestration to Mr. O'Jeda in detail.
- f. Chairman Bartlett asked County if there was an order of sequestration. County Attorney Youngblood had none.
- g. Chairman Bartlett asked Appellant if there were an order of sequestration. Mr. O'Jeda stated he had none. Mr. O'Jeda confirmed he would testify on his behalf.
- h. Civil Service Board Attorney Joe Harris swore in all witnesses present.
- i. County Attorney Youngblood roll-called all witnesses present: Landry Merkison, Laura Richardson, Lorenzo Wyatt, Lawrence Adams, Kenneth Turner, Ryan Shuman and Noi Souphanthavong.
- j. County Attorney Michelle Youngblood presented the County's opening statement to the Board.
- k. Jared O'Jeda presented the Appellant's opening statement to the Board.
- l. County Attorney Youngblood called witness Captain Lawrence Adams to the stand. He stated his name, position, and tenure. Attorney Youngblood began questioning Captain Adams. Captain Adams responded in detail to all questions posed by County Attorney Youngblood.
- m. Mr. O'Jeda began cross-examination of Captain Adams. Captain Adams responded in detail to all questions posed by Mr. O'Jeda. County Attorney Youngblood objected to Mr. O'Jeda stating speculations. Chairman Bartlett sustained the objection and asked Mr. O'Jeda to reword his question.
- n. Mr. O'Jeda continued the cross-examination of Captain Adams. Captain Adams responded in detail to all questions posed by Mr. O'Jeda. County Attorney Youngblood objected to Mr. O'Jeda is testifying. Chairman Bartlett sustained the objection and stated Mr. O'Jeda will have an opportunity to testify.

- o. The Board began questioning Captain Adams. He responded in detail to all questions posed by the Board. Chairman Bartlett asked the Board if there were any other questions for Captain Adams. There were none.
- p. Mr. O'Jeda asked Captain Adams a follow-up question. County Attorney Youngblood objected to the question being irrelevant. Mr. O'Jeda explained the relevancy of the question. Chairman Bartlett polled the Board. Lancaster (Yes), Jackson (Yes), Phillips-Hall (Yes), and Smith (Yes). County Attorney Youngblood objected to poll the Board; explained Mr. O'Jeda's Father is not an employee calling out. Chairman Bartlett overruled the objection.
- q. [TIME CHECKED] The Board advised Appellant had used 14 minutes and 57 seconds and County had used 10 minutes and 12 seconds.
- r. Chairman Bartlett dismissed Captain Adams from the witness stand. Captain Adams would be subject for a recall.
- s. County Attorney Youngblood called witness Fire Chief Landry Merkison to the stand. He stated his name, position, and tenure. Attorney Youngblood began questioning Fire Chief Merkison. Fire Chief Merkison responded in detail to all questions posed by County Attorney Youngblood. Fire Chief Merkison stated he concurred with the recommendations regarding Mr. O'Jeda. County Attorney Youngblood mentioned County Exhibits C-4, C-5, C-6, C-7-p3, C-8, C-9, C-11, C11-p2, C-12, C-12-p2, C-13, and C-17.
- t. Mr. O'Jeda began cross-examination of Fire Chief Merkison. Fire Chief Merkison responded in detail to all questions posed by Mr. O'Jeda. County Attorney Youngblood objected to Mr. O'Jeda stating speculation. Chairman Bartlett overruled the objection.
- u. The Board began questioning Fire Chief Merkison. He responded in detail to all questions posed by the Board. Chairman Bartlett asked the Board if there were any other questions for Fire Chief Merkison. There were none. Chairman Bartlett dismissed Fire Chief Merkison from the witness stand.
- v. [TIME CHECKED] The Board advised Appellant had used 22 minutes and 33 seconds and 32 tenths and County had used 26 minutes and 45 seconds.

Chairman Bartlett called for a motion for a break. Dr. Jackson made the motion for a break, second by Vice-Chair Lancaster. No further discussion on the motion made. Motion carried by unanimous vote (5-0).

Chairman Bartlett called the meeting back in session at 12:49 p.m.

- w. County Attorney Youngblood rested the County's case, subject to rebuttal.

- x. County Attorney Youngblood tendered County Exhibits C-4, C-5, C-6, C-7, C-8, C9, C-11, C-12, C-13, and C-17. Mr. O’Jeda objected County Exhibit C-12, as CSR 9.206 is not relevant. Chairman Bartlett overruled the objection.
- y. Chairman Bartlett asked Mr. O’Jeda if he wanted to testify. Mr. O’Jeda replied in the affirmative.
- z. County Attorney Youngblood asked if Mr. O’Jeda would sit at the witness stand. He preceded to the witness stand.
- aa. [TIME CHECKED] The Board advised Appellant had roughly 7 minutes remaining.
- bb. Mr. O’Jeda presented his testimony to the Board in detail.
- cc. County Attorney Youngblood began cross-examination of Appellant Mr. O’Jeda. Mr. O’Jeda responded in detail to all questions posed by County Attorney Youngblood.
- dd. The Board began questioning Mr. O’Jeda. He responded in detail to all questions posed by the Board. Chairman Bartlett dismissed Mr. O’Jeda from the witness stand.
- ee. Mr. O’Jeda rested his case.
- ff. County Attorney Youngblood called rebuttal witness Fire Chief Merkison to the witness stand. Fire Chief Merkison responded in detail to all questions posed by County Attorney Youngblood.
- gg. Mr. O’Jeda began cross-examination of Fire Chief Merkison. Fire Chief Merkison responded in detail to all questions posed by Mr. O’Jeda.
- hh. The Board began questioning of Fire Chief Merkison. Fire Chief Merkison responded in detail to all questions posed by the Board. The Board dismissed Fire Chief Merkison from the witness stand.
- ii. County Attorney Youngblood had no additional rebuttal witnesses.
- jj. Matter of Record: The Appellant had used 3 seconds over time and the County had used 28 minutes, 20 seconds.
- kk. The Board had given Appellant two (2) minutes for closing remarks. The County would be given additional two (2) minutes as well.
- ll. Chairman Bartlett mentioned the County reserve the right to close last.

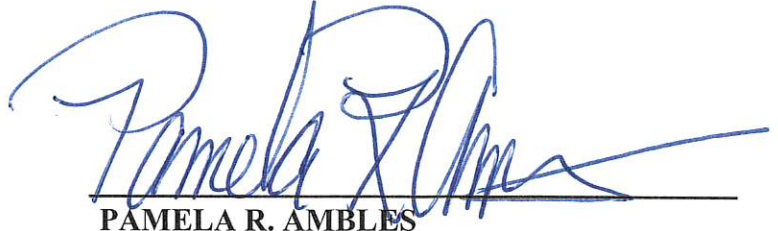
- mm. Mr. O’Jeda presented his closing arguments to the Board.
 - nn. County Attorney Youngblood presented the County’s closing arguments to the Board.
 - oo. Chairman Bartlett called for a motion to adjourn into Executive Session to discuss *Jared O’Jeda (Fire/E.M.S)* – 48-Hour Suspension appeal filed March 10, 2020, regarding: “Suspension for 48 hours w/o Pay. Termination track letter – 4 hours Leave w/o pay coded – October 19, 2019 & 5 hours LWOP – Oct 22, 2019”. Dr. Jackson made the motion to adjourn into Executive Session, second by Vice-Chair Lancaster. No further discussion on the motion made. Motion carried by unanimous vote (5-0).
 - pp. Chairman Bartlett called the meeting back in session at 2:37 p.m.
 - qq. Chairman Bartlett called for a motion regarding *Jared O’Jeda (Fire/E.M.S)* – 48-Hour Suspension appeal filed March 10, 2020, regarding: “Suspension for 48 hours w/o Pay. Termination track letter – 4 hours Leave w/o pay coded – October 19, 2019 & 5 hours LWOP – Oct 22, 2019”. Dr. Jackson made the motion to overturn the County’s decision for 48-Hour Suspension, second by Vice-Chair Lancaster. No further discussion on the motion made. Motion carried by unanimous vote (5-0).
15. Other business.
- a. Upcoming Cases.
 - i. Human Resources Director Ambles stated Robin Stinnett, Keon Hayward, Jokeria Jones, and Leonard Ekure will be back on the agenda.
 - ii. Donnail Demens case is still pending. The County is trying to reach an agreement.
16. Executive Session.
- a. Human Resources Director Ambles requested an Executive Session for Item 16c – Civil Service Administrative Procedures.
 - b. Chairman Bartlett called for a motion. Dr. Jackson made the motion to adjourn into Executive Session, second by Vice-Chair Lancaster. No further discussion on the motion made. Motion carried by unanimous vote (5-0).
 - c. Chairman Bartlett called the meeting back in session at 3:38 p.m.

Chairman Bartlett stated that all matters have been concluded and called for a motion to adjourn this meeting. Dr. Jackson made the motion to adjourn, second by Vice-Chair Lancaster. No further discussion on the motion made. Motion carried by unanimous vote (5-0).

Meeting adjourned.



LARRY BARTLETT
CHAIRMAN



PAMELA R. AMBLES
HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR