REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

September 3, 2025
7:00 P.M.

Call to Order & Roll Call

The regular meeting of the Civil Service Commission was called to order at 7:00 P.M. in Mike Balkman Council Chambers at Culver City Hall.

Present: Chair Chi Ming Gong
Vice Chair Michele Van Gelderen
Commissioner Rachelle Jackson
Commissioner Sal LaPardo
Commissioner Peter Stern

o0o

Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Gong led the Pledge of Allegiance.

o0o

Public Comment – Items NOT On the Agenda

Chair Gong invited public comment.

Selamawit Abrha, Human Resources Technician, indicated that no requests to speak had been received.

o0o

Receipt of Correspondence

Selamawit Abrha, Human Resources Technician, indicated that no correspondence had been received.

o0o

Consent Calendar

Item C-1

Approval of Minutes for the Regular Meeting of July 2, 2025

MOVED BY CHAIR GONG, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER STERN AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF JULY 2, 2025.

o0o

Order of the Agenda

No changes were made.

o0o

Action Items

Item A-1

Consideration of a Request for a Closed Hearing Appeal of a Grievance Decision

Amy Webber, Human Resources Analyst, provided a summary of the material of record; indicated that one public comment card had been received for the item; and she stated that the term Grievant should be used in order to protect the privacy of the employee's name.

Chair Gong invited public comment.

The following member of the public addressed the Commission:

Anissa Di Vincente, Culver City Employees' Association President, thanked Commissioners for their service; expressed hope that after review of information provided the Commissioners would grant a hearing for the grievance appeal; felt that a good argument had been made; and she stated CCEA wanted the opportunity to present evidence and have a discussion.

Chair Gong proposed a brief recess to allow Commissioners to review the record.

Amy Webber, Human Resources Analyst, provided copies of the record to Commissioners.

o0o

Recess/Reconvene

Chair Gong called a brief recess at 7:08 P.M. and the meeting reconvened at 7:33 P.M. with all Commissioners present.

o0o

Item A-1
(Continued)

Consideration of a Request for a Closed Hearing Appeal of a Grievance Decision

Chair Gong indicated that Commission had completed its review and asked staff if there was anything they wanted to add to the initial verbal report.

Monica Kilaita, Deputy City Attorney III, clarified that if they choose to adjudicate the grievance based on the record, a decision would not be made on the grievance appeal at the current meeting, instead staff would schedule closed session deliberations and the Commission would receive the same record received tonight and deliberate in closed session before issuing a decision.

Amy Webber, Human Resources Analyst, noted that Jessica Morrow, Legal Counsel for the Grievant, and Kelsey Ridenhour, Legal Counsel for the Transportation Department, were present to provide brief information about expected length of the case and number of anticipated witnesses; she discussed the ability of the Commission to ask questions of the parties and then discuss whether to hear the grievance, adjudicate the matter, or send the matter to a hearing officer; she noted that should the Commission choose to hear the appeal, staff recommended scheduling hearing dates; and she noted the Commission's legal counsel was present to assist.

Chair Gong requested that each party state their name, indicate estimated duration of the case, and anticipated number of witnesses, and he reminded the parties to refrain from using the name of the grievant.

Kelsey Ridenhour, Transportation Department Legal Counsel, anticipated that the matter would take three hours for presentation of the case with room for rebuttal to the grievance presentation of witnesses, and he anticipated 2-3 witnesses on behalf of the department.

Jessica Morrow, Labor Relations Legal Counsel for the Grievant, noted that the record was missing one exhibit that they would be presenting; requested a closed evidentiary hearing due to the incomplete and contested administrative record; she indicated that they would likely have 2-3 witnesses and their case would take 2-3 hours, leaving time for rebuttal; and she hoped to streamline the case.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding allowing the Grievant to be heard; the serious issue; the missing exhibit; concern about how much more would be discovered in a hearing given the seemingly comprehensive documentation already provided; efficiency; vetting already done; contested findings; clear disagreement in the documentation provided; and the need to develop findings based on the evidence presented in closed session.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding the need for internal discussion with counsel about what records have not been included; staff determination about inclusion of the missing exhibit in the official administrative record for the grievance; clarification that additional information would be included if the Commission decides to adjudicate based on the record or in the actual hearing process; and ensuring that the complete record is provided according to City staff.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding support for allowing the parties to present their cases; Commission discretion to accept any evidence to be included as part of the grievance matter; whether to hear the matter as a Commission or refer the matter to a hearing officer; and review of evidence as a Commission without an actual hearing.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER JACKSON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LAPARDO AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION: DETERMINE TO CONDUCT A CLOSED HEARING TO CONSIDER THE APPEAL OF A GRIEVANCE DECISION, AND SCHEDULE GRIEVANCE HEARING DATE(S), PURSUANT TO CIVIL SERVICE RULES, RULE 12.5

B (4) III A.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding the need for staff to collect the materials at the conclusion on the meeting; receipt of information back at the commencement of the hearing as part of the grievance procedures; a request was voiced to make the items bigger; staff agreement to designate materials to each Commissioner to accommodate note taking; and consideration of Commissioner availability for hearing dates.

Further discussion ensued between Mr. Ridenhour, Ms. Morrow, staff, and Commissioners regarding availability of legal counsel and staff; hearing location; agreement of all parties involved to meet on October 20, 21, and 22; and staff agreement to provide locations to all parties once they are confirmed.

MOVED BY CHAIR GONG, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER STERN AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION: SCHEDULE A CLOSED HEARING BEGINNING OCTOBER 20, 2025 AT 9:00 A.M. THROUGH OCTOBER 22, 2025.

o0o

Item A-2

Adoption of a Motion to Select the Chair and Vice Chair for the Civil Service Commission

Amy Webber, Human Resources Analyst, introduced the item.

Monica Kilaita, Deputy City Attorney III, discussed new policy established City-wide that the roles of Chair and Vice Chair should rotate, meaning the same person cannot serve as either Chair or Vice Chair if they are currently in those seats.

Discussion ensued between staff and Commissioners regarding the ability of the Chair to guide the Commission in a certain direction; clarification that the Vice Chair is allowed to serve as Chair, and the Chair could be moved to Vice Chair if the vote allows; typical rotation patterns; the intention of the new policy to allow leadership opportunities to all members of the Commission; willingness to serve; thoughts on the new policy; and benefits of the new policy.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER LAPARDO, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER STERN AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION: APPOINT MICHELE VAN GELDEREN TO SERVE AS CHAIR AND CHI MING GONG TO SERVE AS VICE CHAIR OF THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026.

Amy Webber, Human Resources Analyst, congratulated the new appointees.

Vice Chair Gong proposed foregoing the recess offered for Commissioners to change their seats and congratulated Chair Van Gelderen on her new position.

o0o

Public Comment – Items NOT on the Agenda (Continued)

Chair Van Gelderen invited public comment.

Amy Webber, Human Resources Analyst, indicated that no requests to speak for Items NOT on the Agenda had been received.

o0o

Items from Staff

Amy Webber, Human Resources Analyst, congratulated Chair Van Gelderen on being appointed Chair.

o0o

Items from Civil Service Commissioners

Vice Chair Gong thanked the staff for their vacancy report noting an increase in vacancies.

o0o

Adjournment

There being no further business, at 8:08 P.M., the Civil Service Commission adjourned to a regular meeting to be held at 7:00 P.M. on Wednesday, October 1 , 2025.

o0o

_____

Dana Anderson
Human Resources Director, Culver City, California
SECRETARY TO THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
Culver City, California

APPROVED _____

Michele Van Gelderen
CHAIR of the Civil Service Commission
Culver City, California

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that, on the date below written, these minutes were filed in the Office of the City Clerk, Culver City, California and constitute the Official Minutes of said meeting.

_____ _____

Jeremy Bocchino Date
CITY CLERK