

Portland Custodians' Civil Service Board
Established 1937
April 12, 2023
Board Minutes Summary

The Official Minutes of the Portland Public Schools Custodian Civil Service Board are Sound Recordings of the Meetings. The following is a summary of the April 12, 2023, meeting.

A meeting of the Portland Public Schools Custodian Civil Service Board was held on April 12, 2023, via Google Meet. Mr. Frank Leavitt and Gracie LePietra hosted the meeting remotely from their offices in the Blanchard Education Service Center, 501 N Dixon Street, Portland, Oregon. CCSB Chair Brian Caufield, Board Member Laird Cusack, and Board Secretary Jo McClain attended via Google Meet. The presiding officer of the meeting was Brian Caufield. Stacey Murray, director of human resources, PPS.

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Approval of Proposed Minutes

The Minutes of the March 29, 2023 meeting were approved as read.

2. Approval of Hiring List

Frank Leavitt introduced Gracie La Pietra, saying her expertise in recruitment and hiring is one of the main reasons PPS has been filling more positions, and that her expertise has “sped up” the hiring process significantly. Stacey Murray is the Director of Recruitment for Human Resources and has also been a huge help with the hiring process.

Statistics provided by Mr. Leavitt for the 3-29 meeting included 35 applicants, 22 who took the test, 8 were interviewed, and 8 candidates are on the hiring list. The average test score was 98.2%, the average interview score was 60.7%, and the overall average was 79.5%.

Statistics provided by Mr. Leavitt for this meeting (4-12) 3-29 meeting included 11 applicants, 5 who took the test, 4 were interviewed, and 4 candidates are on the hiring list. The average test score was 98.2%, the average interview score was 66.5%, and the overall average was 82.4%.

Mr. Caufield confirmed that the Board's Rule and Regulations were followed, and the list was approved.

3. Discussion of 3227

Mr. Leavitt reported on the status of HB 3227. He said the Bill had been brought forward by Representative Nosse to update the board membership requirements, and to update the examination to an assessment, which PPS feels will update the process, and thus speed it up.

There were quite a few discussions back and forth about the necessity of this type of rule and revised statutes being on the state books rather than being addressed on a local level. Mr. Leavitt said he believes there has been some apprehension of some law makers, even those who proposed the bill, to push it any further. He said there has been push-back from SEIU. Mr. Leavitt testified in front of the committee, and a liaison from SEIU testified against it. He said the action has now come to the attention of other districts, whereas it had been a PPS issue because of the population requirement. He said there has been shock and confusion about why this law is on the books. Common questions have been "What is the population threshold", "what is the census of my district," and "why don't we just update the population requirement so remains a PPS problem," not one of other districts." PPS's said that approach is just "kicking the can down the road" and not addressing the real issue, which is removing barriers to employment for applications. Mr. Leavitt said he thinks there were some "backroom deals", and an amendment was made to the bill to raise the population threshold from 300K to 460K. He said he believes the bill is out of committee and on the floor to be voted on, and then go to the Senate. He said all of the committee members agree that the law should be dealt with locally, but feels they are afraid of "upsetting certain union groups."

Mr. Caufield asked what the opposition is trying to make it easier for people to get jobs. Mr. Leavitt said there was nothing yet from SEIU as to their reasoning. One of the big questions was whether other custodians throughout the state have to take a test (they do not), and why PPS requires a test. There was no answer as to why PPS is the only school district that requires custodians to take a test.

Mr. Caufield asked if there was any outlook of where this was going. Mr. Curtin said he has no information yet, but was scheduled to have a meeting April 13. Mr. Leavitt said PPS's legislative liaison has met with SEIU and they hope we can come to the table and have conversations about those things that can be addressed via collective bargaining. The chair of the house and labor committee said the district and the union should be using collective bargaining. Mr. Leavitt said PPS agrees, but whatever that result would be does not supersede the Oregon statutes.

Mr. Cusack said his understanding is the people want the law because of a fear of subcontracting work. Mr. Leavitt acknowledged that 20 years ago PPS wrongfully terminated custodians. He said PPS paid out a lot of money, and he doesn't think anyone wants to go down that road again. He feels provisions within the statute that prevent outsourcing of work can be addressed in collective bargaining. There is no point in PPS working on getting new language in the collective bargaining agreement if it is not going to be applicable if the law is still in place.

Mr. Leavitt told Mr. Curtin PPS would be happy to meet with SEIU and see how we can move forward so everyone can address this problem. Mr. Caufield summed up the status, saying CCSB needs to see what happens with the bill before the board can move forward with correcting the rule to make sure everyone is in compliance.

The next meeting was set in the two-week rotation, and the current meeting adjourned at 4:15.

Jo McClain
CCSB Secretary