

**MUNICIPAL FIRE AND POLICE CIVIL SERVICE
LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA
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LAFAYETTE, LA 70507
(337) 291-8762**

A meeting of the Lafayette Municipal Fire and Police Civil Service Board was held on November 12, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. in the Lafayette Consolidated Government Civil Service Testing Room, 705 West University Avenue, Lafayette, Louisiana. Audio recording of this meeting will become part of the Board's permanent records.

Present at the meeting were Chairman Ron Clark, Vice-chairman L. Wayne Prejean, Charley Whipp III, Dwight Prudhomme, Lane T. Cortez, Board Attorney Candice Hattan, CAO Rachel Godeaux, Interim Fire Chief John Bourgeois, Chester Bergeron, Sandra Bergeron, Attorney Daniel Landry, Jason Boudreaux, Alton Trahan, David Fontenot, Mike Brown, Chief Antoinette Gerald, Jason Johnson, Mia Terry, Latreasha Davis Bryan Champagne, Human Resource Manager Rick Zeno, Paula Broussard, Terry Castille, Chief Troy Gauthier, David Fontenot, Jason Benoit, Clebe Stutes, Captain Shawn Terro and Board Secretary Mary Francis

Meeting called to order at 9:03 a.m., and opening statement read by Chairman Ron Clark.

1. Board authorization to approve minutes of October 8, 2025 board meeting

Motion was made to approve minutes by Dwight Prudhomme

Motion seconded by L. Wayne Prejean

Public comment: None

Opposition: None

Motion carried unanimously

2. Reconsideration of Fire Chief application process addressed at October 23, 2025, meeting to consider procedure issue in approval process

Board member Charley Whipp III presented the applications under consideration to the Board. Vice Chairman L. Wayne Prejean offered his interpretation of the qualification requirements, specifying that candidates should possess educational and management skills as well as knowledge of civil service, union negotiation, firefighting, and financial competencies. Following this, Chief Troy Gauthier requested that all degrees be thoroughly reviewed to assess their appropriateness and emphasized that the Board should not accept applications that do not align with the classification plan. Subsequently, Mr. Terry Castille reported that during his review of the Fire Chief applications, he noticed that some did not meet the stated requirements. He then clarified his position on the significance of the selection process for the next Fire Chief, asserting that approving candidates whose primary experience is as a volunteer would be counterproductive.

CAO Rachel Godeaux stated for the record that the administration values the position they have been put in and doesn't take it lightly; they also understand the importance of providing the best qualified candidate for the position. She requested clarity from the Board regarding the next step and if the OSE has the final decision on who takes the exam. Chairman Clark cited Chapter 22 from the Louisiana State Civil Service, noting that ultimately the OSE can reject an application for positions even if approved by the local municipal Board. Ms. Godeaux affirmed that the administration desires to continue with the decisions made today, noting that the intent is to ensure the process remains fair and objective, in accordance with civil service processes, and not prolong the absence of a permanent fire chief. She shared her concerns about the difficulties if the process is delayed, such as re-advertising and seeking additional candidates. She finalized the interest in evaluating all candidates that come through a competitive and fair process for the administration's decision, once the process is concluded.

Chairman Clark also cited revised statutes pertaining to the authority of the OSE, specifically referencing R.S. 33:2492, subsection 4, and R.S. 33:2552, subsection 4. Chief Forrest Chaisson informed the Board about the relevance of the January 1, 1992, clause, explaining that the qualification requirements for the position were amended after that date. According to Mr. Chaisson, this amendment means that qualifications prior to 1992 differ from those currently in effect. The Board clarified that there were no applicants who had been hired before 1992. Mr. Gauthier stated that, according to information he received from the OSE, the OSE does not receive applications directly; consequently, if an individual is not a civil service employee, the OSE cannot vet that applicant due to the absence of an employment record. Chairman Clark then acknowledged his earlier misstatement regarding the submission of physical applications to the OSE, and elaborated on the actual scope of the OSE's review process.

Michael Brown requested clarification from the Board regarding the decision to re-vet applications after confirmation of the Board's approval. Chairman Clark stated that, due to receiving several opposition phone calls after the approval, he decided to hear the opposition, noting that he agrees with Major Brown, who stated that everyone in opposition should have spoken at the last meeting.

Mr. Brown expressed his concerns, emphasizing that if the process had been previously discussed at the previous meeting, then this would add to the chaos. He noted that if someone didn't like the initial process but didn't speak up, it would open the door for someone having nefarious reasons. Stating that let the processes go forward to let the administration and civil service do what needs to be done for the chips to fall where they fall. Chairman Clark noted that he agreed with Mr. Brown and that this is a learning process for us all since the exam hasn't taken place in 30 plus years but he wanted to make sure that all bases were covered.

In closing, Mr. Brown noted that the Board had already done its due diligence for the administration to choose the better candidate, but didn't understand why others were being catered to in the decision. Board member Prejean highlighted the concerns of some in the department, noting that the new Fire Chief appointed will be their supervisor. Board member Prudhomme agreed with Mr. Brown but pointed out that the issue may have lain with the number of candidates being approved to take the exam, but emphasized that the Board will not be appointing the new Fire Chief, and if a mistake was made, the process would take care of it.

Mr. Castille noted that the applications were not vetted appropriately, but the Board disagreed. Chairman Clark and others agreed that applications were reviewed live during the meeting, but acknowledged that the Board is here to hear everyone's concerns and to review the applications again to make sure.

Board attorney Hattan noted that the question arose as to whether a special meeting should have been called due to the time constraint, so it was handled as a special meeting with shorter notice, and that the OSE was consulted to determine the fairness to everyone, for a reevaluation of the special meeting was called to allow more time for public information requests. She noted that the applications for Police Chief and Fire Chief are available to anyone who asks in a proper way, but also added that there are time limits due to the necessary redactions.

David Fontenot inquired about the difference between administrative and supervisory responsibilities. Mr. Prejean noted that it was not spelled out on the class plan. Board member Whipp stated that the responsibilities are up to interpretation.

The names of the Fire Chief applicants whose applications were not in dispute were read aloud.

Fire Chief

Qualified applicants:

Bordelon, Adam M.
Borden, Earl P.
Boudreaux, Jason P
Denais, Loyd B.
Domingue, Chris J.
Finfrock, Brandon J.
Gauthier, Troy D.
Glaude, Corey J.
Glenn, Clarence E.
Harper, Marynell
Meullion, Quentin L.
Newton, Gerald F.
Perry Jr., Byron L.
Toranto Jr, Rodolphe W.
Trahan, Alton J.
Wade, Anthony R.

Motion to approve applications read by Dwight Prudhomme

Motion seconded by Charley Whipp III

Public comment: None

Opposition: None

Roll was called with L. Wayne Prejean, Charley Whipp III, Lane T. Cortez, Dwight Prudhomme, and Chairman Ron Clark voting yes

Motion carried unanimously

Board member Dwight Prudhomme expressed that he personally would rather include more applicants in the process due to the appointing authority making the final decision, and noted that the applicant has the experience, but Mr. Whipp noted that the applicant did not have a degree in applied science.

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2a. Motion to reject Justin Denise application due to degree made by Charley Whipp III

Motion seconded by Dwight Prudhomme

Public comment: None

Opposition: None

Roll was called with L. Wayne Prejean, Charley Whipp III, Lane T. Cortez, Dwight Prudhomme, and Chairman Ron Clark voting yes

Motion carried unanimously

Board member Whipp III clarified that Mr. Johnson is a full time Fire Fighter with part time supervisory knowledge.

2b. Motion to approve the application of Jonathan Johnson by Dwight Prudhomme

Motion seconded by Lane T. Cortez

Public comment: None

Opposition: None

Roll was called with Charley Whipp III voting no and L. Wayne Prejean, Lane T. Cortez, Dwight Prudhomme, and Chairman Ron Clark voting yes

Motion carried unanimously

Board member Whipp III noted that every department is different, but inquired about the validity of Mr. Thoroughman's supervisory knowledge to meet the requirements as an engineer, due to the engineers of the Lafayette Fire Dept not being in a supervisory position. He inquired about the validity that could be vetted, but Board attorney Hattan advised that this part of the process is preliminary, a very base level, and assured that the checks and balances are there.

2c. Motion to approve the application of Justin Thoroughman by Dwight Prudhomme

Motion seconded by Charley Whipp III

Public comment: None

Opposition: None

Roll was called with Charley Whipp III, L. Wayne Prejean, Lane T. Cortez, Dwight Prudhomme, and Chairman Ron Clark voting yes

Motion carried unanimously

Mr. Whipp noted that Mr. Fontenot's application wasn't initially pulled because he placed his hire date with the Fire Department as having supervisory skills, causing the validity of his skills to be vetted.

Mr. Fontenot noted that he has been a Fire Inspector II for about 4 or 5 months, but noted that he was a Fire Inspector for 14 years. He also provided insight into his knowledge and skill sets to the board.

2d. Motion to approve the application of David Fontenot by Dwight Prudhomme

Motion seconded by Lane T. Cortez

Public comment: None

Opposition: None

Roll was called with Charley Whipp III voting no and L. Wayne Prejean, Lane T. Cortez, Dwight Prudhomme, and Chairman Ron Clark voting yes

Motion carried unanimously

3. Board authorization to approve applications for Police Major and Fire Inspector

Police Major

Qualified applicants:

Benoit, Matthew J.

Green, Todd A.

Griffin Jr., Thomas W.

Guidry, Jessica L.

Mayfield, Jarvis S.

Sices, Thaddeus C.

Terro, Shawn P.

White, Robert D.

White, William L.

Motion was made to approve applications by Dwight Prudhomme

Motion seconded by Charley Whipp III

Public comment: None

Opposition: None

Motion carried unanimously

Fire Inspector

Qualified applicants:

Adedayo, Stevenson

Broussard, Gregory J.

Chachere, Dustin R.

Devlin, Richard J.

Duhon, Javand M.
Guidry, David M.
Montgomery, Brandon M.
Roy, Nathan D.
Rubin, Trevon B.
St. Julien III, Darrel J.
Terry, Mia L.

Motion was made to approve applications by Dwight Prudhomme

Motion seconded by L. Wayne Prejean

Public comment: None

Opposition: None

Motion carried unanimously

4. Board authorization to approve score for Differential Response Officer

Chairman Clark read the passing score aloud.

Motion was made to approve score by L. Wayne Prejean

Motion seconded by Charley Whipp III

Public comment: None

Opposition: None

Motion carried unanimously

5. DISCUSSION: Request to correct discrepancy in seniority 108th firefighter recruit class by Interim Fire Chief John Bourgeois, II

Chairman Clark informed Interim Chief Bourgeois that he received a call from Ms. Britney at the OSE recommending that the board not rule on this request and to refer Mr. Bourgeois to the OSE. Ms. Hattan noted that the request is beyond the jurisdiction of the board.

Interim Chief Bourgeois provided insight regarding his request, noting that on the last update of the seniority roster, Chief Gauthier noticed a discrepancy. He provided more insight on the Fast Track program, which allows firefighters to complete the academy in 3 to 4 weeks instead of 17, but the process also causes fast trackers to forgo their seniority. He included the importance of the combination of chapter exams and final practical's used to establish seniority. Noting that three of the Fast Track Fire Fighters were confirmed before the class, putting them ahead in seniority. He highlighted his efforts to be proactive to correct the matter to avoid future issues and assured the board that he would contact the state for additional guidance.

Fire Training Chief Gauthier clarified that the agreements were both written and verbal. He provided more insight into the formula used to calculate the seniority, noting that the state provides a working test period upon graduation, which is different from the working test period of LCG.

6. DISCUSSION: Request by Danny Landry to address allegation of violations

Attorney Danny Landry noted that his request includes two violations, which include the original posting of the July 26, 2023, exam. His request to the board was a vote to nullify the exam results. Mr. Landry noted that he is unable to move forward with the District Court because he hasn't exhausted his administrative remedies with the board.

Board attorney Hattan informed Mr. Landry that she had reviewed the case he referenced from 1960s, noting that it is a singular litigation, but expressed her concern with the jurisdiction of the board. Ms. Hattan affirmed that his point regarding the posting is correct due to the posting notice not being posted on the bulletin boards in pursuit to state statutes. She noted that the state examiners don't have to be given in 18 months, but provided insight on her disagreement, stating that the statute says it shall. Ms. Hattan provided a brief recap of what caused the February 2024 FCOMII posting notice removal from the agenda but reiterated that the board under the current rules doesn't have an enabling authority, noting that the board has done investigations in the past but has no. She does believe that Mr. Landry has a good case that his client is confronting, but to move the discussion to an action item the board would need evidence of existing authority.

Mr. Landry believes that it is in the board has the option to investigate and find that the exam was not properly posted and that the board has the purview to vote on voiding the exam. While Ms. Hattan noted that the dispute of the request lies within whether the board has the administrative duty or if it is beyond its authority, is a concern to her due to her position of protecting the board, but she affirmed in agreement with Mr. Landry's issue regarding the failure of posting the exam notice properly. However, Ms. Hattan noted that the board does have jurisdiction over appeals of employee discipline due to appeal time limits being fashioned to address appeals of employee discipline.

Mr. Landy asked for a vote from the board to void the original test, which was improperly posted.

Further discussion was held on the exam posting removed from the February 14, 2024, meeting agenda. Board member Whipp noted that the exam was not needed because the eligibility list was not exhausted, and that the 18 months to call for the exam would be January 26, 2025, but ultimately, the request to remove the notice was received by the department.

Mr. Landry requested a vote by the board that civil service law was violated on the original test, that it should be voided, and that they be allowed to test to address how it should be based on the seniority they've been harmed with. He stated that on July 26, 2023, at the time the test was taken, only one person took the exam because of improper notice, calling it an absolute nullity.

Ms. Hattan requested a statutory authority that the Lafayette board has the authority under the rules to nullify this matter, other than the 1960 case. She questioned whose authority it is to do something about the matter. She noted that the board has investigative authority but not implemented authority.

Mr. Landry stated, "I will take the vote because then I would not have to worry about filing suit against LCG, them coming in saying you're premature, this is a board item, you should've brought it to them, and they should've addressed it." He stated that "I wanted the board to vote that the original exam was not properly posted, and as such, it needs to be vacated." He affirmed that he is trying to get to where everyone should be on the seniority for the test because it has long-term complications for all of the firefighters.

Vice Chairman Prejean made a motion that if the posting requirements were not met, if that fact gives rise to the June 2023 test should be nullified as a result of the failure to post the exam as according to law.

Motion was made to vote to find a determination on whether a failure to post the Fire Communications Officer II July 26, 2023, exam is a nullity because it was not posted pursuant to law by L. Wayne Prejean.

Motion seconded by Dwight Prudhomme

Public comment: Ms. Paula Broussard noted that it was established who called off the exam and that it was requested under the operation of the Fire Chief. She affirmed that the Fire Chief did not confirm nor deny the request, and also did not provide a comment regarding the removal. She stated, "If anyone can call off a test, let me know because I'll do it because the authority should come out of the Fire Chief's office, not just any individual who works for the Fire Department." Mr. Forest Chaisson requested more clarity on the violation from the board regarding the board admitting that the posting was not properly posted according to the statute. Ms. Hattan noted that it was not the board's posting, but the board gives the posting to each department to post on the bulletin board. She stated that the statute does not prohibit sending it by email, but it mandates that it be done on the bulletin board.

Roll was called with Charley Whipp III, L. Wayne Prejean, Lane T. Cortez, Dwight Prudhomme, and Chairman Ron Clark voting yes.

Opposition: None

Motion carried unanimously

Chester Bergeron inquired about confirmation from Board member Whipp on who called to cancel the February 2024 exam. Mr. Whipp confirmed that the Communications Chief called to let him know that it was not needed.

Ms. Antonette Gerald noted that she spoke to Mr. Whipp in February 2024. She told him that there were active scores, and it was not yet 18, 12, or 10 months, but she did not tell him not to give or cancel a test.

Chairman Clark noted that now exams will be called for every 12 months going forward, and no one can cancel a posting of the exam without a written request.

Mr. Rick Zeno noted that he supports what needs to be done by the board, but questioned how the decision made by the administration will be affected if nullify. He also inquired if the board has the authority to dictate to the administration which action must be taken due to the matter not being disciplinary. Ms. Hattan noted that she thinks the city should come prepared to address the issues. She affirmed that both sides should be heard and provided insight, no arguments raised in the past,

but ultimately depends on what is being asked of, reiterating what is being asked of the board, noting that it may be a proven way to go to let the courts decide the ramifications.

Interim Chief Bourgeois noted that the issue with not giving an exam within the 18mths could inadvertently hurt someone by the seniority as they are waiting to take the exam because it could be looked at as manipulating to control who could be on the list to take the promotion but calling for the exam in a timely manner removes the doubt and gives the appearance of a better playing field. Chairman Clark affirmed that he wants everyone who wants to take a test to have an active score at all times. Mr. Whipp inquired from the Chief his thoughts on calling for an exam too early. Mr. Bourgeois noted that he doesn't believe you can call for a test too early because everyone reaches their promotional status by being confirmed at different time frames in their rank, but he doesn't believe it would hurt anyone by giving the exam more often. Mr. Whipp noted that a lot of engineers will wait till the last minute to become a captain to jump from an engineer to a captain. Leaving Mr. Bourgeois and Mr. Whipp in agreement that if the exam is given within a certain time frame, the doubt of manipulation is removed. Mr. Bourgeois expressed his agreement with Ms. Hattan that with emails, it can go to spam or being full being the biggest problem, noting that he always informs personnel to keep their eyes on the board.

Ms. Broussard expressed her concerns about how the posting notice was removed and the rush of the promotion. She noted that the exchange between Ms. Gerald and Mr. Whipp reads differently in the minutes. Ms. Broussard stated that the notes read as Ms. Gerald saying she called off with Mr. Whipp and that the promotion was rushed, and nothing was settled. Chairman Clark confirms recalling the situation and how he did inform the Chief of the options of waiting to promote, but he did clarify that the board had no jurisdiction to intervene in the decision of the appointing authority. He assured Ms. Broussard that, going forward, no phone calls will be accepted and requests will have to come from the appointing authority.

7. General Board business, if any – Secretary Francis confirmed that the office has a new printer awaiting setup from the IT department. Chairman Clark inquired whether the office had any outstanding public information requests. Ms. Francis noted that all requests for the redacted Fire Chief application were completed, leaving no outstanding requests.
8. Report of Counsel or legal updates, if any – None
9. Public comment – None

Motion to adjourn by Dwight Prudhomme
Motion seconded by L. Wayne Prejean
Public comment: None
Motion carried unanimously
Meeting adjourned at 12 p.m.



Ron R. Clark
Chairman