

**Civil Service Commission Minutes**  
**Thursday, April 17, 2008**

The Civil Service Commission held a quarterly meeting on Thursday, April 17, 2008 in the Board of Supervisors' Chambers, 701 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz, California.

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

1. Call to Order: Vice Chair Gordon called the meeting to order at 5: 49 p.m.
2. Attendance: Commissioners present: Vice Chair Jack Gordon, Michael Barsi, Judy Jones, and Robert Taren. Commission Chair Fink was absent. Also present: Thornton Kontz, Commission Attorney, Laurie Hill, designated Staff to the Commission, Ajita Patel, Acting Personnel Director, Rama Khalsa, Director the Health Services Agency, and Personnel Analysts Terri Cobbs, Christa Schleiner, Kim Begley, and Nisha Patel.
3. Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the January 17, 2008 meeting were approved 4-0.
4. Oral Communications: There was no public comment.
5. Secretary Report: Secretary Hill reported no pending appeal hearings.
6. Old Business:
  - a. Status of the ad hoc committee on Civil Service oversight, job specifications, job reclassification and the Whistleblower Hotline. Commissioner Taren submitted a report to the Commission, dated April 17, 2008, on the activity of the Ad Hoc Committee (attached). He said that the Ad Hoc committee met three times in private, once with SEIU and took testimony from individuals regarding provisional appointments and the Whistleblower Hotline. The Ad Hoc committee did not meet with management or the Personnel Department. The committee is still looking into the matter and proposals to address concerns. Taren said that complaints reported to the Whistleblower Hotline that were directed back to the department manager to investigate could present opportunities for retaliation. Taren felt that this situation needed to change and that he would contact similar sized counties for some ideas. Ad Hoc committee member, Commissioner Barsi, expressed concerns regarding provisional hires and felt that such hires gained an unfair advantage over other candidates for the job. He heard allegations that the individuals were not qualified for the positions. He suggested that the Whistleblower Hotline be conducted outside the County and that the Board consider an independent body. Commissioner Barsi also said that the Ad Hoc committee investigation was still underway. The Commission directed Personnel staff to submit a report on provisional hires for a period of 3-5 years. Commissioner Jones recommended that the Commission read the rules governing provisional appointments.
  - b. Commissioner Jones reported on the Personnel Director recruitment. She said that she met with Personnel, the County Administrative Officer, and Commissioners.

She planned to participate in the final rounds of interviews and that the County Administrative Officer (CAO) would make the final selection. Nancy Elliott said she was shocked that SEIU was not involved in the selection process and that the Commission should provide for SEIU's participation. She said that Nick Steinmeier, Executive Director, specifically requested SEIU's participation in the selection. Commissioner Gordon said that it was not the role of the Commission to direct the selection process and that he was confident in Commissioner Jones' participation. Commissioner Taren asked about the role of the Board and Ajita Patel, Acting Personnel Director, responded that the CAO may discuss the proposed selection with the Board, adding that the final selection belonged to the CAO.

7. Reports

- a. Commission adopted the Delegated Classification report 4-0.
- b. Commission received the Employment Services Workload report.

8. Received Correspondence Items

- a. Commission noted the letter sent to the County Administrative Officer on their behalf regarding the Personnel Director selection process.
- b. Commission received the letter from SEIU 521, dated February 14, 2008.
- c. Commission received the thank you letter from the Board of Supervisors.

9. Adjournment: There being no other business or public comment, the quarterly meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Hill, Staff to the Commission