

**Berkeley Unified School District**  
**Personnel Commission Meeting Minutes**

July 12, 2018 – 4:30 pm

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:31 pm.

**2. Roll Call & Establishment of Quorum**

Chairperson Goldstein, Vice-Chairperson Ortiz, and Commissioner Carter were present, and a quorum was established. Secretary Duwel was absent. Erin Arinez, Classified Personnel Supervisor, facilitated the meeting.

**3. Public Comments**

None.

**4. Approval & Adoption of Agenda**

Vice-Chairperson Ortiz made a motion to approve the agenda; Commissioner Carter seconded the motion, Approved, 3-0

**5. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Approve the Personnel Commission Meeting Minutes for the following:

- a) May 3, 2018, Regular Meeting Minutes
- b) June 7, 2018, Regular Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Carter made a motion to approve the meeting minutes; Vice-Chairperson Ortiz seconded the motion,

Approved 3-0

**6. Consent Items**

Ratification of Eligibility Lists

- a) Administrative Assistant I
- b) Custodian I
- c) Employee Benefits Specialist
- d) Executive Director of Facilities, Maintenance, and Operations
- e) Grounds Gardener
- f) Human Resources Technician

Vice-Chairperson Ortiz made a motion to approve the eligibility lists; Commissioner Carter seconded the motion,

Approved, 3-0

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**7. Conference Items**

- a) Advanced Step Placement Request- V. Sessions,

Ms. Arinez advised that the employee requested an advanced step placement to step two because she had worked on a limited term basis in the Payroll Specialist position since the spring of 2017 and that if the position had been vacant for transfer or promotion when the employee started the limited term assignment, she would

have already advanced to a step two.

Commissioner Carter made a motion to approve the advanced step placement; Vice-Chairperson Ortiz seconded the motion,

Approved, 3-0

**b) Personnel Commission Agenda Revision- Reports**

Chairperson Goldstein reported that Paula Philips, former BCCE President, had requested at a prior commission meeting to move the "Reports" Item to an earlier section of the agenda. Ms. Arinez recommended moving "Reports" to follow the "Consent Items" section of the agenda. Chairperson Goldstein said this request was made because it would be helpful to front load the staff, union and commissioner comments so members of the public would not have to stay for the entire meeting if the items prior to Reports were not of concern to them.

Vice-Chairperson Ortiz made a motion to approve the agenda revision; Commissioner Carter seconded the motion,

Approved, 3-0

**8. Closed Session**

**a) Employee Discipline and Legal Matters - Government Code § 54954.5  
(2017-D-01) (2017-D-02) (2018-D-01)**

The Personnel Commission went into closed session at 4:43 pm.

**9. Report from Closed Session**

The Personnel Commission came out of closed session at 5:07 pm. Chairperson Goldstein reported that the Commission discussed scheduling for pending appeal hearings and matters related to Commission personnel.

**10. Reports**

**a) Union  
None.**

**b) District Reports**

Brent Daniels, Human Resources Director, commented that the Personnel Commission and Human Resources are working with the Technology Department to expand use of the NeoGov platform to digitally onboard new hires. He advised that Professional Development (PD) day is coming up in August and encouraged input on content for the PD sessions. He reported that classified staff participated in an active shooter training in June. Director Daniels told the Commission that he is pleased with Ms. Arinez's assistance during Secretary Duwel's recent absences.

**c) Commissioners Reports**

Chairperson Goldstein acknowledged that BCCE had recently elected a new President and expressed her desire for a positive and productive working relationship. She also thanked Ms. Arinez for her help during Secretary Duwel's absence. She advised she would not hold office hours in July, but would be available via email.

d) Personnel Director

i. New Hires and Examinations administered in the month of June

Ms. Arinez reported that the Personnel Commission held numerous exams in the month of June. She said that summer is the busiest time of year for open recruitments. She advised that she was involved in setting up NeoGov to go live before school started.

**11. Public Comments**

Travis Dennis commented that he was employed with Berkeley Unified School District for about ten years, first as a School Campus Monitor and then as School Safety Officer. He noted that there was no union representation present at the meeting. Mr. Dennis handed several letters of character recommendation to Chairperson Goldstein.

Dana Moran, Berkeley High School Teacher, said she had worked at BUSD for twenty-five years and all three of her children were Berkeley High students. She noted that Mr. Dennis had been a positive influence during his time at Berkeley High; that he made the students feel safe and welcomed, and that her children only had positive things to say about him. She added that her children never heard Mr. Dennis speak inappropriately to students. Ms. Moran said she had Mr. Dennis's child as a student in her class and that she observed that he reflected the values of his parents. She requested that the Commissioners consider the impact that their decision will have on the students of Berkeley High and that Mr. Dennis is an integral part of the goals that they are trying to accomplish at the school.

Eli Marx-Kahn, a Berkeley High alumnus, read from a letter he wrote on behalf of Mr. Dennis. He mentioned that Mr. Dennis was a positive influence on him personally and that Mr. Dennis made a special effort to make all students feel welcomed and cared immensely for everyone. He said that Mr. Dennis has been a big part of over 10,000 students' lives and that he deserves a second chance.

Mariah Dennis, Mr. Dennis's wife, cautioned that the school needs to do their due diligence in investigation of the allegations against Mr. Dennis. She said Mr. Dennis did not say anything harmful. She also asserted that the administration at Berkeley High School helped the students build a case against Mr. Dennis, which she believes is illegal. She noted that the administrative staff asked Mr. Dennis if he had smoked weed with the students, which she believes was an inappropriate question.

Chairperson Goldstein pointed out that it would be helpful to explain the Commission's role in the appeal process for employment matters. She advised that the Personnel Commission is the end of the road after local remedies are exhausted, and that the Personnel Commission's decision is the final decision. She said that the case would be handled during a scheduled appeal hearing, which is conducted in Closed Session, and cautioned the public from making any comments that could affect the appeal hearing. Commissioner Carter stated that at this point in the process, the Personnel Commission does not yet have information about Mr. Dennis's case.

**12. Next Meeting**

The next regular meeting to be held on August 2nd at 4:30 pm.

**13. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm.

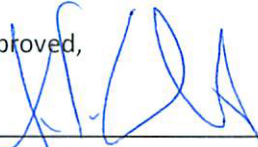
Respectfully Submitted,



\_\_\_\_\_  
Patricia Duwel  
Secretary, Personnel Commission

8/2/2018  
Date

Approved,



\_\_\_\_\_  
Heidi Goldstein  
Chairperson, Personnel Commission

8-2-2018  
Date