



MINUTES for the  
REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE CITY OF ALLENTOWN CIVIL SERVICE BOARD GOVERNING THE APPOINTMENT  
AND PROMOTION OF POLICE OFFICERS AND FIRE FIGHTERS

**Board Members in Attendance:**

John Stribula, Chairman  
Maria Brace, Board Member  
Daniel Blount, Alternate Member

**Board Members Absent:**

Yvette Hailey , Alternate Member  
Walter Felton, Secretary

**Staff in Attendance:**

Joshua Mazin, Solicitor CSB  
Christopher Matthews, APD (FOP President)  
Madison Schettig, APD  
Charles Roca, Chief, APD  
Jim Gress, APD  
Ryan Koons, APD  
Phil Shedaker, APD  
Chief Matt Eharth, AFD  
Chief Freddie Agosto, AFD (joined via phone)  
Sarah Rotz, Asst Solicitor - COA  
Hiba Khouri, HR Generalist - Fire  
Stella Oakman, HR Generalist

**Call to Order**

Chairman Stribula called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.  
NOTE: Hiba Khouri, HR Generalist informed the Board and others present that Steve Salloum was no longer with the City.

## **Roll Call**

Roll was called. A quorum was present.

## **Reading of the Minutes:**

Minutes from the December 2025 meeting were not available; they will be approved at the February 2026 meeting.

## **Organizational Meeting**

Chairman John Stribula called for the 2026 Organizational Meeting. He opened the floor for nominations for the positions of Chairman and Secretary.

**Maria Brace nominated Stribula for Chairman. After three (3) calls for nominations, the nomination was closed. Stribula is Chairman for 2026.**

**Maria Brace nominated Walter Felton for Secretary. After three (3) calls for nominations, the nomination was closed. Felton is Secretary for 2026.**

**Maria Brace nominated Josh Mazin to be appointed Board Solicitor. After three (3) calls for nominations, the nomination was closed. Mazin is Board Solicitor.**

**Stribula, Felton and Mazin were installed into their positions by acclamation.**

## **Old Business**

There was no old business to discuss.

## **New Business**

### **Third-Class City List**

- Chief Matt Eharth, AFD explained the need for the list. He stated the rules require a list of approvers to be established. The list gives the names of the people from other third-class cities around Allentown who could be called and asked to participate in the oral portion of the testing process.
  - Discussion between Brace and Eharth took place about how often the list is reviewed and updated, as people may retire, relocate, etc.
  - Stribula stated it should be reviewed annually at the very least
  - AFD will submit a proposal for a process to allow for regular review of the listing – to ensure that names are removed as necessary.

**MOTION: Brace moved that the list as presented be approved. Stribula seconded. Motion was passed 2-0, with Blount voting in the affirmative.**

### **Firefighter Entry List**

- Mazin reviewed communication received from McCann who conducted the testing. McCann stated they will not band due to any liability falling on them.

- Lengthy discussion took place about past practice and how the Board came to be in this position. After much discussion which centered around the various versions of the rules circulating, it was determined that the Board needs to move forward with a solution.
  - Brace suggested hiring a senior university graduate math student to do the banding. She can reach out to Lehigh University and find someone to do this for the Board.
  - Eharth expressed concern that the Board was not approving the list based on the scores presented – he stated that he felt the Board was changing the rules.
  - Discussion was then held about how candidates are moved on the list when banding is done. Chief Agosto joined the meeting via phone and explained that the candidates are taken in threes going down the list based on scores.

**MOTION: Brace moved that the Civil Service Board reach out to Lehigh University to identify a qualified graduate student to provide statistical banding in order to finalize the Firefighter entry list. Stribula seconded the motion. Motion passed 2-0, with Blount voting in the affirmative.**

- Hiba Khouri, HR Generalist for AFD was instructed to send the list of candidates without names to Brace.
- Stribula asked that an email go out to the candidates letting them know the scores have been compiled and banding is taking place.
  - Discussion took place about giving candidates idea of their scores (upper quartile, low quartile, etc). After some time, it was decided not to provide any scoring information until banding is completed.

### **Veteran's Preference**

- The question of using veteran preference points with APD promotions came up.
  - Chief Roca stated that the points can be used one time – either at entry into APD or at promotion.
  - Chief Eharth noted that AFD does not allow preference points to be used for promotion.
    - Stribula stated it was understood the Third Class City code provides for use either at entry or promotion – reference was made to Huffman - v- Whitehall Township.
  - Discussion was held as to whether the procedure should be an administration decision or Board decision.
    - Mazin was asked to review and give opinion on status of using points for promotion

### **Fire Department Report**

- Promotional Testing: Khouri reviewed the status of the current postings (Captain of Suppression and Asst Chief -Fire Prevention. Positions have been posted as required and someone from the Third Class City listing will be contacted to assist with the agility test evaluations.
- Stribula asked Khouri for a copy of all lists (AFD and APD) that are active

## Police Department Report

- Progress Report – Lt Testing: Khouri reported that now that the city’s purchasing system is open she will follow up with getting available dates for the vendors already contacted in order for the process to move forward.
- Assistant Chief eligibility: Khouri noted that the date on the list should have read November 1, 2024 to November 1, 2026.
  - Brace pointed out it should actually be November 1, 2024 to October 31, 2026.
    - Khouri corrected the listing and the Board signed.
  - Ryan Koons informed the Board that the current list has 56 candidates. 13 are currently working; seven have personal history and have not been hired.
  - Chief Roca noted that there is an expectation of a large number of retirements at the end of 2026 (in 2006, more than 17 officers were hired, and they have hit their 20 years in 2026).
    - Chief stated the APD is focused on proactive testing.

Brace asked about the Sergeant testing (not on the agenda) and Chris Matthews reported that there have been no negative reviews about the Aspirant (vendor) testing being done. Candidates report they feel it is fair and applicable to the expectations of the job.

- Khouri mentioned to the board that there was one candidate who was allowed to take the test although they arrived late.

**MOTION: Brace moved that the candidate be disqualified. There was no second. No motion**

Discussion was held about who does the disqualification – is it APD or HR? Brace noted that moving forward there has to be a person with authorization to close the door and refuse entry. Further discussion was held as to if this is an HR function or APD function. Stribula noted that if the candidate took the written test and is denied the oral portion, candidate can appeal that he should be permitted.

Matthews pointed out that if HR is present at the test, and HR allows the candidate to take the test, then the responsibility falls on HR to make the disqualification and notify the Board – it is not an APD matter.

**Stribula directed Khouri to send the notice of disqualification to the candidate, informing him of his right to appeal.**

- Khouri reported the APD has four tests scheduled for 2026

Stribula asked that the dates for July and September meetings be moved due to the July 4<sup>th</sup> and Labor Day weekends. **MOTION: Stribula moved that the July meeting be moved to July 10<sup>th</sup> and the September meeting moved to September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Braced seconded. Motion passed; Blount voting in the affirmative.**

Brief discussion was then held regarding Board appointments and reappointments. Sribula stated that it would be best to wait for the new City Council to be seated and then present the matter to Council.

Sribula asked Stella Oakman, Recording Secretary to ensure the 5<sup>th</sup> floor conference room was booked in advance for the meetings. Stella acknowledged that would be done.

**Adjournment:** There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 11:02 by Sribula.

**Next meeting:** The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, February 6, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. in the 5th Floor Conference Room, City Hall, located at 435 Hamilton Street, Allentown, PA, 18101.

Minutes Submitted by: Stella Oakman