

MINUTES OF MEETING
NEW JERSEY PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS COMMISSION
October 26, 2023
10:00 a.m.
495 West State Street
Trenton, New Jersey

The meeting was called to order by Chair Joel M. Weisblatt.

Present were:

Commissioners:

John Bonanni
Craig Ford
William Higgins
Pasquale Papero
Paula Voos

Also present were:

Christine Lucarelli-Carneiro, General Counsel
Frank Kanther, Deputy General Counsel
John Boppert, Deputy General Counsel
Ramiro Perez, Deputy General Counsel
William Campbell, Deputy General Counsel
Grace Xanthacos, who acted as Stenographer

At the commencement of the meeting, Chair Weisblatt, pursuant to Section 5 of the Open Public Meetings Act, entered this announcement into the minutes of the meeting:

Adequate notice has been provided by the dissemination of a written "Annual Notice of Meeting." On December 15, 2022 a copy of such notice was:

- (a) prominently posted in a public place at the offices of the Public Employment Relations Commission;
- (b) e-mailed to the business offices of the Trenton Times and the Courier Post;
- (c) posted on the agency's web site.

Furthermore on October 20, 2023, copies of an additional written "Notice of Meeting" were posted and sent in a similar manner.

The first item for consideration was the minutes of the September 28, 2023 meeting. Commissioner Higgins moved the minutes and Commissioner Papero seconded the motion. The motion to adopt the minutes was unanimously approved (Chair Weisblatt, Commissioners Bonanni, Ford, Higgins, Papero and Voos).

The Chair reported that the Agency is fulfilling its responsibilities exceptionally well, working with dedication to the standards of neutrality and professionalism. We are carefully maintaining our staffing needs and currently have a highly experienced working group. All is well at the Agency as we anticipate Senate action on pending nominations to the Commission.

The General Counsel commented on a recent Appellate Division decision which affirmed a Commission decision, City of Newark v. Fraternal Order of Police, Newark Lodge No. 12 and Newark Police Superior Officers Association 2023 N.J. Super. Unpub. LEXIS 1627 (App. Div. Dkt. No. A-2993-21). That case involved the Commission finding a violation of the Act after the City unilaterally changed disciplinary procedures pursuant to a Consent Decree with the Department of Justice.

The first case for consideration was Watchung Hill Regional High School District Board of Education and Watchung Hills Regional Education Association, Docket Nos. CE-2022-005 and CO-2022-168 (Consolidated). Commissioner Papero moved the draft

decision and Commissioner Voos seconded the motion. Commissioner Ford is recused from voting on matters involving the law firm of Oxfeld Cohen. The motion to adopt the draft decision was unanimously approved (Chair Weisblatt, Commissioners Bonanni, Higgins, Papero and Voos).

The next case for consideration was Borough of Carteret and Firefighters Mutual Benevolent Association, Docket No. SN-2024-009. Commissioner Bonanni moved the draft decision and Commissioner Ford seconded the motion. The motion to adopt the draft decision was unanimously approved (Chair Weisblatt, Commissioners Bonanni, Ford, Higgins, Papero and Voos).

The next case for consideration was West Milford Board of Education and West Milford Bus Drivers' Association, Docket No. SN-2023-042. Commissioner Bonanni moved the draft decision and Commissioner Papero seconded the motion. Commissioner Ford is recused from voting on matters involving the law firm of Oxfeld Cohen. The motion to adopt the draft decision was unanimously approved (Chair Weisblatt, Commissioners Bonanni, Higgins, Papero and Voos).

The next case for consideration was Middlesex County Sheriff's Office and PBA Local 165, Docket No. SN-2024-004. Commissioner Higgins moved the draft decision and Commissioner Ford seconded the motion. A discussion ensued. The motion to adopt the draft decision was approved by a vote of five in favor

(Chair Weisblatt, Commissioners Bonanni, Ford, Higgins and Papero) and one opposed (Commissioner Voos).

The next case for consideration was Policemen's Benevolent Association, Local 334 and Juan Mendoza, Docket No. CI-2022-015. Commissioner Ford moved the draft decision and Commissioner Higgins seconded the motion. The motion to adopt the draft decision was unanimously approved (Chair Weisblatt, Commissioners Bonanni, Ford, Higgins, Papero and Voos).

The next case for consideration was City of Jersey City and Jersey City PSOA, Docket No. SN-2024-003. Commissioner Papero moved the draft decision and Commissioner Bonanni seconded the motion. The motion to adopt the draft decision was approved by a vote of five in favor (Chair Weisblatt, Commissioners Bonanni, Higgins, Papero and Voos) and one abstention (Commissioner Ford).

The Chair asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Papero made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Bonanni seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved (Chair Weisblatt, Commissioners Bonanni, Ford, Higgins, Papero and Voos). The meeting was then adjourned.

The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Tuesday, November 21, 2023.