

MUNICIPAL POLICE OFFICERS' SUPPLEMENTAL PAY BOARD MEETING MINUTES
February 21, 2024

NATALYA BESSE:

OK, so everybody's ready? So today is February 21st, 2024, and we're holding Municipal Police Supplemental Pay Board meeting. Let's establish the quorum. Chief Judice?

CHIEF JUDICE:

Present.

NATALYA BESSE:

Captain Martin?

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

Present.

NATALYA BESSE:

Brian Fleming?

BRIAN FLEMING:

Present.

NATALYA BESSE:

James LeBlanc?

JAMES LEBLANC:

Present.

NATALYA BESSE:

Rebecca Taylor Hill? Missing.

NATALYA BESSE:

Paul Richard? Missing.

NATALYA BESSE:

Jim Craft? Missing.

NATALYA BESSE:

Adrienne Bordelon?

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Here.

NATALYA BESSE:

Mayor Toups?

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MAYOR TOUPS:

Here.

NATALYA BESSE:

So we have six people at the board -

CHIEF JUDICE

-of nine members. Of those, how many are voting members, Miss Natalya?

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes. Out of nine board members.

CHIEF JUDICE

There are six voting members on this board, correct?

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes, so we have four.

CHIEF JUDICE

Which is a majority of the voting members, four of six is a majority.

NATALYA BESSE:

Yeah.

CHIEF JUDICE

Is there any objection to a quorum being established?

DAVID TOUPS

No objection. Look, the non-voting members - there's no use for the non-voting members to make these meetings if they're not counted in the quorum. It makes no sense for them to even be on the board if they're not counted in the quorum. I'm wasting my time by coming here every month if I'm not going to be counted in the quorum.

GAIL HOLLAND

Well, if that's the case, then you need five members. The quorum is nine? You have nine members?

NATALYA BESSE

Yes, ma'am.

GAIL HOLLAND

Then five would be the quorum.

GAIL HOLLAND

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How many people are present on the board?

NATALYA BESSE:

Well, right now we have six.

CHIEF JUDICE

We have established a quorum and so we can move forward. Any objections to that? Thank you very much.

NATALYA BESSE:

So before we start the meeting, I would like to remind everybody to state your name before you speak.

CHIEF JUDICE

Thank you, Miss Natalya.

NATALYA BESSE:

Do you want to take over, chief?

CHIEF JUDICE

Yes, ma'am. So allow me to find my agenda. My paperwork fell out of my folder. Alright, so we'll start with our appeals. Oh, I'm sorry. No, we need to approve the Minutes from the previous meeting, is that correct?

ADRIENNE BORDELON

That's correct. I have a correction.

CHIEF JUDICE

Sure.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

So on page 3 where it says Adrienne D. Bordelon said the DOC. No, what I said was the OSE, Office of State Examiner, not Department of Corrections.

CHIEF JUDICE

OK.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

And then the only other question I had on the Minutes was on page 13. It says Natalya confirmed the implementation of the payment method to municipalities on schedule and the first payment will be January 31st.

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes.

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ADRIENNE BORDELON:

I thought you said July.

NATALYA BESSE:

Well, we did send the update later on - the update about the postponing payment -

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

OK.

NATALYA BESSE:

-was in December. OK. Yes, sorry.

GAIL HOLLAND

So that was correct at the time. It has since - it did not go through and it will now be July 31st will be the first week. But so with the one amended subject offered by Miss Bordelon, we do have a motion to accept the Minutes as published?

DAVID TOUPS:

Motion by Touns with the noted corrections.

CHIEF JUDICE

Do we have a second?

JONAS MARTIN:

Second.

CHIEF JUDICE

We have a second from Captain - I'm sorry, Captain. I cannot remember your last name.

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS INAUDIBLE:

Martin.

CHIEF JUDICE

Captain Martin. So the Minutes have been accepted. And now we'll go into the appeals and we have several people with us here today so we'll take their appeals first if that's OK. Starting with the Baton Rouge City Court, and I think they have representation here today. Baton Rouge City Court?

CHIEF JUDICE

They do not. We'll come back to them. Jeanerette Marshal? Anyone here?

MISTY BENTLEY:

Nija Marks?

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CHIEF JUDICE

Not present yet.

CHIEF JUDICE

So if it's OK with the board, can we go to the new business minutes and deal with these people that are present?

DAVID TOUPS

I'll make a motion to go take up new business.

CHIEF JUDICE

Specific to Evergreen Marshal is present.

DAVID TOUPS

To Evergreen Marshal.

CHIEF JUDICE

And so you should have received in your packet the Evergreen Marshal's status change by the municipality. This specifically deals with his status. There are two things in the state law that we have to establish to be able to pay a police officer and our police chief, and that is that they are full-time employed and that they are POST certified. Chief Robinson is present today because his municipality has changed his designation from full-time to part-time after 8 1/2 years of service with the Evergreen Police Department.

CHIEF JUDICE

So he has been getting supplemental pay all the way up until now. He's still getting it - nothing has changed. This board is now having to review his status as an employee. I personally have reviewed the state law. I've also spoken with some people that agree that this board is very limited with what we can authorize, and it is under those two contexts – one: full-time employed and two: state POST certified -

CHIEF JUDICE

-the reason - and this is just for common purposes - but the reason why his status was changed from full-time to part-time is not disciplinary. It was because the municipality was having to pay 30 plus percent of his salary to MPRS, the retirement system, and by designating him as an employee with less than 30 hours, they are no longer subject to paying his retirement.

CHIEF JUDICE

This is an unintended consequence of the community in a bind financially having to deal with that. Having said all of that, I would like to give Chief Robinson an opportunity to explain his situation to the Board and let them hear him out, and then we will then accept any motions and decisions. Chief?

CHIEF ROBINSON:

Thank you all. I've been with the town since August 17th, 2015.

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CHIEF JUDICE

One second, Chief.

GAIL HOLLAND

Yes. Can we swear you in first? Please raise your right hand. Do you swear or promise or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

CHIEF ROBINSON

I do.

GAIL HOLLAND

Thank you.

CHIEF JUDICE

OK, Chief Robinson. And please speak - actually, if you would come here so that we can pick up your audio.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

Yes, I've been with the town of Evergreen, for the Evergreen Police Department since August 17, 2015. I went to the Academy, Alexandra Regional Academy. They did send me to the Academy. I think I completed I think it was 2018 and so I started receiving a supplement pay up until MPRS come in and started taking out for my retirement, and then I'm paying two or two out of my check - when I started, I was only making \$300.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

And then they gradually went up. Right now, I gross \$1600 a month, and after taxes \$1300 and \$30 and some cents. But now, since MPRS have come in, it's like \$1100 or something a month. So I'm still way underpaid.

CHIEF JUDICE

Amen.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

And so they came up with this ordinance that I have here. They put it in the Bunkie paper. I have this newspaper here.

CHIEF JUDICE

What agency?

CHIEF ROBINSON:

-put it out for the public to see it. When they first introduced it, they didn't introduce it to the public. It was just that they were introducing it on January the 9th, but actually on February the 13th, they had a public hearing. No one showed up from the public on February the 13th.

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CHIEF ROBINSON:

So what I did was made a copy of it and emailed it, and then I also brought it up here today and so now - I hadn't clocked in until June of 2023. The mayor told me to start clocking in so I did and since they passed this year, I think it was 29.47 hours. I believe somewhere near that, I went on and clocked out. And so and then for this week, I worked Monday. Then I worked Tuesday, so I know I got to stay under 29 hours, considering it's part-time. So I didn't want to be insubordinate since passing this ordinance. And I do have a great concern about it even though I am POST certified.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

And it would hurt me a lot not to receive the supplement of you know saying what I already make for the month. And I do work a part-time job within a town Police Department too. You know, I might go work maybe once a week to you know help out, but yeah, this would really, really, really, really, really take a big effect on me.

CHIEF JUDICE:

And Chief, my question to you is as the police chief for the Village of Evergreen, how do you manage a citizen complaint beyond those 27 hours? What are your duties? What are you responsible to do there?

CHIEF ROBINSON:

I patrol. I write citations. Actually, we had something Saturday which Louisiana State Police had to come down and one of the gentlemen that was staying there - he's deceased because it was open fire, so they had to decessate the person. And then that was January the 29th and then - excuse me, not January 29th, Saturday would have been let's see. Let me look at my phone, and I'll tell you when it was.

SPEAKER 7:

Just this past -

CHIEF ROBINSON:

Yes, ma'am.

SPEAKER 7:

The 17th?

CHIEF ROBINSON:

No, no, it was -

SPEAKER 7:

The last Saturday in January?

CHIEF ROBINSON:

Yes.

SPEAKER 7:

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So that was the 27th.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

Yeah, the 27th. The State Police had to come down and handle that situation. So that was on a Saturday. And then I had a situation that almost could have turned out like that on January the 29th.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

I gotta turn in three reports to the DA probably tomorrow or Friday - I'm going to have to turn it in. I had to deal with some people that had warrants, but one to have warrants and then turned out the other person had warrants, and it turned violent, so three people went to jail, two adults and one juvenile. But anyway, I patrol, write citations. The Sheriff's Department helps me out because I can't work all day. You get fatigued, you know, so I have to get my rest.

MISTY BENTLEY:

Do you have any other officers?

CHIEF ROBINSON:

No, I'm the only one.

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

Captain Martin, State Police. Are you basically telling us that you're subject to call even when you're not clocked in, respond to calls for service within the City of Evergreen?

CHIEF ROBINSON:

The mayor has called me, and to be honest with you, I didn't answer. I mean when that happened, January the 27th, I was at a funeral so they still knowing that I'm off, they're still calling me, you know, I mean. And I just don't see myself putting flip flops on and pair of jeans and going out there in the public. I like to be in a uniform in my best, you know. So when I'm off, I'm off.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

You know, it just doesn't seem fair to me, you know, because at some point you're going to get fatigued and you can't operate in the public, you know, what help am I going to be being fatigued.

MAYOR TOUPS:

I have a question. Are you an elected chief or are you an appointed chief?

CHIEF ROBINSON:

Appointed.

MAYOR TOUPS:

Oh, you're an appointed chief.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

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And I don't even have a cage in the back of my car, so the other agencies had to come help me. So it's a lot that I've been dealing with and just try to work with my mayor and the alderman and, you know, just doing the best I can do as being the appointed chief and protecting and serving and also supporting.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

I'd like to clarify a question that was just asked. So it's your testimony today that if you're off and the mayor calls, you don't answer.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

There's times I have been, so I'm not going to say I didn't answer, but if I'm like I was at a funeral and I couldn't answer.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

So is it your testimony you only work less than 30 hours a week?

CHIEF ROBINSON:

Oh, no. Until this ordinance was passed right here, that's - .

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

But now that this ordinance passed, is it your testimony that you work less than 30 hours a week?

CHIEF ROBINSON:

Yes, ma'am. I just don't want to be insubordinate and going and because it's a touch time clock, and because I don't want to be insubordinate going over the hours.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Chief Robinson, understanding that this just took place February 13th, 2 weeks ago, I guess a week ago, how do you foresee moving forward if a citizen calls you after you've already completed the 27 hours of your work week and a citizen calls and says someone is breaking into my home? How do you envision yourself reacting to that scenario?

CHIEF ROBINSON:

I'll tell you what just happened Monday when I went to clock in. Wait a minute, I think it was Tuesday. Yeah, it was Tuesday. As I was driving up to the town hall to get ready to clock in and I was sitting in my car getting ready to get out, a truck comes so fast down the road and I guess he saw the unit and then there were no lights on because when I pulled up, I turned everything off to get ready to clock in. It was like about around 5:00, in between 5:30 and 5:40 or something, somewhere around there I was going to clock in – in the a.m. - and the truck just disobeyed the stop sign. So I try to tell them things like that.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

How can I go stop that person from disobeying the stop sign when I hadn't clocked in yet. You know, things like that. And like I said, if I was to get a call, you got to take time to put your clothes on and go

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out there. I mean, and like I say, if when I go out, I really have my vest and my gear and my uniform to put on. It is difficult trying to, you know, get dressed.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

But I mean it's a small volume; we don't have a high volume. But like I say, you know things happen because look what happened January the 27th, you know, and that was one of the alderman's sons. Yeah, it was her son that the State Police had to deacease him because of his actions.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Chief, having taken the oath you took when you were sworn in to defend the Constitution of the State and the Constitution of the United States, is it your understanding that if a person, if you encounter a person who is a significant threat at any point, whether you're in uniform or if you're at the grocery store or at a funeral, somebody walks in? Is it not your duty to act?

CHIEF ROBINSON:

Correct.

CHIEF JUDICE:

And it is not your responsibility to do so under penalty of potential penalty of law for not acting?

CHIEF ROBINSON:

Correct. Yes, Sir.

CHIEF JUDICE:

All right. Any other questions?

CHIEF ROBINSON:

But doing this here, you know, this I mean puts me in a bind here, you know. And then even afterwards, you know, say for instance you've been at work 8 hours or 9 or 10 or 11 or 12 hours and you are sleeping and if you do get a call and you don't hear it because of fatigue, I mean so that's what the Sheriff's Department, they help me when I don't answer, you know, when I'm not available.

CHIEF JUDICE:

One more time and again this is just from a clarification perspective. Chief, if this Board moves forward with suspending your state supplemental pay, what does the future look like for you in terms of employment with the Evergreen Police Department?

CHIEF ROBINSON:

Especially, I have been relying on that supplement pay. Like I said, I started out with \$300.00 and then they went up to \$500.00, but I would have to go back and look. And then when I went to the Academy, that's when I started getting it. Especially if you have bills and then I'm still not getting paid right. Yeah, it would, it would hurt me, you know, because I have bills to pay.

CHIEF JUDICE:

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U-huh.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

Yeah, it definitely would. And I am in dire need of it, you know. I would appreciate it if you all consider it and pass it today, because I mean like I said, I did just got some motorcycles, I ride motorcycle. I mean, you know, I have to pay my bills. But like I say, I probably would - I like the job that I do like I say to protect and serve and support and try to help people in the community, but yeah, it would hurt me if you would all suspend it. It would.

CHIEF JUDICE:

OK. Any other questions for Chief Robinson?

BRIAN FLEMING:

Right. I have just a general question. Does the law define full-time? Is it strictly 40 hours?

CHIEF JUDICE:

It does not, by way of hours, and I will say that this Board has previously ruled that a police chief's job is full time regardless of their hours because of their obligations. I am a tad bit concerned with Chief Robinson's response about not answering the mayor's call when he's not on, but I will remind the Board this: that Captain Martin and I, as law enforcement officers, if somebody walks in this room right now and is a threat, we are required, whether we're on duty, off-duty, shopping, sleeping, we must take action and failure to do that is malfeasance. And this is not Burger King.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

Right.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Clocking in is not a requirement of defending or protecting the public, so there's kind of a conflict there with regards to Chief Robinson's testimony and what we are required to do, and not just as police chiefs, but as law enforcement officers.

CHIEF JUDICE:

I also am conflicted by the fact that state law is clear and that this document that we have received from the Village of Evergreen clearly designates him as a part-time police chief to not work more than 27 hours in a week.

CHIEF JUDICE:

So those two things to me, conflict. I will tell you, I will share with the Board right now, I have already contacted Louisiana Association of Chiefs of Police Legislative Committee and asked that we ask for some type of legislative change in the upcoming session with respect to police chiefs, regardless of whether they're designated part-time or full-time because of the duties of the police chief and the requirements of a police chief, that supplemental pay be entitled to them not necessarily changing

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anything for the officers but for those police chiefs who are designated part-time by way of an ordinance or through their employment, they would still be eligible.

CHIEF JUDICE:

But that doesn't help us today. Miss Bordelon, you had something?

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

No, I was just going to say that it appears that the actions of the Village of Evergreen is having an unintended consequences on their police chief and they need to decide if this cannot be fixed in the legislative action, by legislative action, I read the statute to say he has to be full-time, right? Regardless of his title, he has to be full-time, and the Village has clearly designated him as a part-time employee; and, therefore, under the supplemental pay, which is 40:1667.1 D #3, that he is no longer eligible for supplemental pay and that at some point the Village has to make a cost benefit analysis on do they pay into MPRS? If that is the issue and he receives supplemental pay or they keep him at a part-time and he loses supplemental pay, but I don't personally see a way around for this Board to continue to allow him to maintain supplemental pay without a legislative act.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

And I'm going to say as chief was saying just now, you know me working 29, 28, 27, 26, 24 hours, you know, part-time, and then I get a call, I mean, I can't go clock in and like you said, it's like it won't be malfeasance on my part in office because they tell me I'm a part-time chief, and then like I say, even if it was full-time, you know, at some point you do get fatigued and dispatch does have the time, the hours I work, too. And that's what I told them, you know. But this, I'm between a rock and a hard place -

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Absolutely.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

You know, say for instance like right now where I got like 16 hours. I worked Monday and Tuesday. So I was going to work one more day and maybe have 24, 25 or 26 hours and then and that's if I break up, you know, maybe work a Monday, Tuesday and then come back on a Thursday, you know, however, but then what about the other days I get a call. I mean I can't go touch the clock. That's like being insubordinate. And then so how do we look at that?

CHIEF ROBINSON:

You know, and then when I go work my other job, like I said, I work in the town Police Department. I might go work once a week or sometimes twice a week, but most times it's once a week that I go help out. So I'm in between a rock and a hard place. You know and like chief just said, it is our duty to uphold the law. But at some point, the other officers that come on and dispatch that come on, they should know and sympathize that hey, this chief already worked maybe 8 hours, 9 hours, 10 hours, 11 hours. This guy is tired. You know what would that look like having somebody that's overwhelmed trying to get out and help the community and, you know, protect and serve by myself. So I mean and look at the help that I had to get January the 29th because - and I don't argue with my mayor or the aldermans - I've just zipped it. If they say the town don't have no money, they always say that. Maybe somebody needs to

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come in and look and those two people, those three people, they were very belligerent. It was no way I could have transported them without a cage in the police unit so I have to rely on the other locals which we help each other, you know, whenever they get in the bind because so that's just what we do because it happens, you know, in your smaller municipal towns.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

But this would hurt me if y'all didn't help me today and continue my supplement pay. You know, like I said, I have a home to pay for. I just got some motorcycles. But I think a home is more relevant, you know, than a vehicle, but we have to start all over, you know.

JAMES LEBLANC:

So I just wanted to clear up a couple of things. So I'm 32 years part-time deputy with Ascension Parish Sheriff's Office, and I've never been able to receive supplemental pay, never in my life because I'm part-time.

JAMES LEBLANC:

I want to make sure the Board understands also, even if the chief would have said that if the mayor calls at 2:00 in the morning and he gets up out of bed and he gets dressed and goes to answer the mayor's call at 2:00 in the morning, it still does not take the place of him being a part-time deputy, a part-time chief. So I sympathize with the chief, but the way the law is written, there's nothing that this Board today can do to change it. And I'm sorry for that. I mean like I said, 32 years I've been a deputy in Ascension Parish, and I've never received supplemental pay because I'm a part-time deputy and unfortunately, it's the law.

JAMES LEBLANC:

And until we get the law changed, there's nothing that this Board can do, and I appreciate you coming down here and I appreciate you pleading your case. But this Board cannot change what the law says. And that's just my plea.

MAYOR TOUPS:

The reason why I asked the question if you're an elected official or not, elected officials is 24/7 365. To me, appointed positions is governed by the municipality which clearly by ordinance just recently cut you. So it's by the actions of the Village of Evergreen that your supplemental pay has been stopped, so it would take an action for them to make it a full-time position.

MAYOR TOUPS:

And I understand it was a monetary concern apparently benefits-wise. But until they change this or legislative act. I mean it clearly states in ordinance that it's a full-time position. I could fight for you if you was a - further if you was an elected official because I think they all full-time.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

Then you can see the pay that I get is still not fair to me either, you know what I mean? And that's what helped me out, the supplement. I mean \$1600 a month. I mean you do the math on that, you know, for

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a chief of police, and it took almost eight years just to get there, and I don't get paid by the hour. And you can look at the history. I think I put on that January the 29th, I think I put in a little over 50 hours.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Any other questions for Chief Robinson?

CHIEF JUDICE:

All right. The Chair would now entertain a motion, so the issue at hand for this Board is he is currently receiving state supplemental pay as of today. The question at hand is do we have a motion to stop that based on his redesignation as a part-time chief?

CHIEF JUDICE:

Do we have a motion?

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

I'll make a motion.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Captain Martin makes a motion. Do we have a second?

SPEAKER INAUDIBLE:

I second the motion.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

So let me ask you, would I get it for February?

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes, you'll get prorated pay.

CHIEF JUDICE:

You'll get up to today.

NATALYA BESSE:

Up to the 13th.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Oh, the 13th. I'm sorry. You'll get to the day that they changed you to part-time.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

So we receive 13 days.

CHIEF JUDICE:

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Yes, but it won't be a full 600. It's based on the number of days that you worked in February so from the first to the 13th. I don't remember what that formula is but Miss Natalya, do you? So let me go back. We have a motion and a second on the floor. All in favor.

MULTIPLE INAUDIBLE SPEAKERS:

Aye.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Any opposed? The motion will carry. Your state supplemental pay will be suspended as of February 13th. Again, I will reiterate as did Colonel LeBlanc and Chief Toups my deepest concerns about this. I do think that there needs to be a change in the law with regard to police chiefs, and I will be working towards that and continue to communicate with you for that end.

CAPTAIN MARTIN

Chief, I just want to say that I don't think it's fair what the Village is doing to you.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

Yes, sir.

CAPTAIN MARTIN

And I wish the law gave us some leeway, some sway, to be able to help you.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

Yes, sir.

DAVID TOUPS

Are y'all going to be at midwinter conference?

CHIEF ROBINSON:

Yes, I'm going to be there.

DAVID TOUPS

Is the mayor going to be able to come? I'm sorry.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

Yes.

DAVID TOUPS

If so, please look me up and I'll try and tell them what happened by the actions of the Village. I don't mind.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Yeah, our hands are tied.

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DAVID TOUPS

But I would like to do it in person with you.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

Do you know about how long this would take?

CHIEF JUDICE

So the legislature don't come into session until April and finish until June and then any acts there are based on the Governor's signature. So it would probably be July at the very earliest, maybe beyond that.

CAPTAIN MARTIN

And this is a long -.

CHIEF JUDICE:

OK, so they go in March, but I don't think we have anything that will pop out until the end of the session, right?

CAPTAIN MARTIN

Or it just depends on when the effective date, so they can have it effective in an effective date in January 1 of the following year. It just depends on how the legislation is written and if there's any impact that would affect the implementation.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Yeah. So there's a lot of hoops to jump through. Again, we will begin seeking a legislator who is willing to sponsor that - we have other things in the law that probably need to be amended in my opinion. So we're going to try to get that done this legislative session.

CHIEF JUDICE:

And I will definitely keep you updated on how that bill is written and its progress.

CHIEF ROBINSON:

Do we have something about what a chief's pay should be or there's just still totally up to -

CHIEF JUDICE:

It makes no difference to this Board what a chief's pay is. This Board only has to fulfill 2 requirements, Chief: a full-time and a POST certification. Once they've done that, this Board has authority to act. Short of that, we have a responsibility to act.

SPEAKER INAUDIBLE:

Other than the exceptions and individuals listed specifically in the statute.

CHIEF JUDICE:

That's correct. There are some that are allowed for, some exemptions. That's correct. Okay?

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CHIEF ROBINSON:

Yes, sir.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Miss Natalya, we should have an appeal on the incentive pay from Kenner Police Department.

NATALYA BESSE:

No, we did not see that.

CHIEF JUDICE:

We had denied three of them because - is it 3, Chief?

SPEAKER INAUDIBLE:

Two of them.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Because they had employment with the Sheriff's Office before they were not certified.

NATALYA BESSE:

Did you submit this appeal to us? Because I think one time we planned to discuss it with the sheriff.

SPEAKER 10:

I sent it to the chief.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Yeah, I know. I have received some communication.

Speaker 10

He reported it. I wasn't sure exactly what the procedure was, so I sent a request for reconsideration to the chief, and he said he would put the appeal on the agenda.

CHIEF JUDICE:

I thought I had sent that in, for it to be placed on the next meeting. I'm going to check my e-mail, too, real quick.

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes. We can vote to add it.

CHIEF JUDICE:

But in absence of that, can we ask the Board to add this appeal today to the agenda?

NATALYA BESSE:

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Yes.

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

I make a motion to add this appeal to the agenda.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Thank you, Colonel Martin. Captain Martin. I'm sorry. Captain Martin has made a motion to add the Kenner Police Department incentive pay appeal to the agenda. Do I have a second?

NATALYA BESSE:

OK. That is for the incentive pay.

CHIEF JUDICE:

It is the incentive pay, yes. It was some that we denied in the previous meeting.

NATALYA BESSE:

Okay.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Two of the ones that we had denied in our - what month did we meet? Candy?

CANDY DIEZ:

November.

CHIEF JUDICE:

So do I have a second?

Speaker 4

Second by _____?

CHIEF JUDICE:

A second by Toups to add the Kenner Police Department incentive pay. And so we will be a little bit handicapped, Chief, with regards to not having the documents in front of us, so it may require a little bit more explanation as to the point of the appeal. I'm sorry she's pulling them up.

Speaker 5

Application Institute denied.

Speaker 7

And then it's Lionel Holmes. And Angela Smith is Misty.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Yes, Misty. Thank you. Okay. Can you put them up or no?

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NATALYA BESSE:

No, we will not be able to. Do that here but -

CHIEF JUDICE:

Okay, so what I think the best order of business, Misty, if you would, can you tell us on the application previous employment was listed with another law enforcement agency, is that correct?

NATALYA BESSE:

I'm looking at the minutes.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Oh, I'm sorry. Yes, ma'am.

NATALYA BESSE:

So one is Holmes proposed the applicant was previously employed full-time at New Orleans Police from April 25, 2021 to August 9, 2021. Then started the Training Academy but did not complete, resigned.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Okay, so they never made it to a POST certified status at that point, is that correct? Is that with our fund?

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes. And just to remind you, according to the minutes that the statute defines that all new officers who were hired after July 1st, 2023. So it seems like he already had previous employment, not certification status. So Miss Adrienne, I'm gonna refer to you real quick. And in terms of -

CHIEF JUDICE:

I remember the Board's discussion, but it was our determination that he was employed by a law enforcement agency or she.

Speaker 9

Right. So the statute I just pulled it up, it was Acts 376 of the 2020 regular Legislative Session.

Speaker 10

Huntsville Police 60.

Speaker 7

Three. So the law specifically says - .

Speaker 10

Do you want me to go through my little -

CHIEF JUDICE:

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Let her educate and I'll get with you, chief.

NATALYA BESSE:

It says okay -

Speaker 9

The Statute specifically says.

Speaker 10

I'm sorry the first page is -

NATALYA BESSE:

It's Okay. So this is a newly-employed officer.

Speaker 9

A newly-employed officer, and it defines a newly-employed officer means a person who gains or is appointed to a full-time employment as a law enforcement officer with a Louisiana eligible agency on or after July 1st, 2023, and who has never before been employed as a law enforcement officer of this state. And so that is the definition of newly-employed officer. And if I'm not mistaken, the.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Can you -

Speaker 9

The discussion that we had back in November turned on the fact that even though some jurisdictions said that they are a law enforcement officer immediately upon hire, regardless of whether they are POST certified or not. And so the position we took back in November was that if they had any previous employment as a law enforcement officer, whether they were POST certified or not then they were not newly hired under the statute.

Speaker 9

This was adopted by the legislature, and so that is why they were denied back in November because they showed previous employment.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Thank you, Mr. Bull???? So now I would like to recognize the Chief from Kenner Police Department who will educate us on his view. Yes, sir. Chief?

Speaker 10

Colin, Kenneth. Gonna be sworn in or -

CHIEF JUDICE:

It needs to be sworn in. He's going to testify to the appeal. Does any of this morning -

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Speaker 7

Do you swear or affirm or promise to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth so help you God?

Speaker 10

Yes, I did it. So the way everything read in the record was true and correct, but it went further and defined what a law enforcement officer was. Okay. It wasn't just when they were employed by an agency. So the ACT actually defines the law enforcement officers, an officer whose permanent duties actually include the making of arrests and performing with searches and seizures or the execution of a criminal.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Thank you.

Speaker 10

Lawrence and who is responsible for the prevention or detection of the crime and enforcement of the penal traffic highway laws of the state. Law enforcement should not include any elected official, appointed head of any law enforcement department. Both of these offices, they recruit to my Academy. They're graduating Friday. They'd be here today except they're prepping for the POST.

Speaker 10

So they take it tomorrow. One of them. She was a POST. Angela Smith was opposed to Level 3 certified officer by the Williams Fair Sheriff's Office. But the level itself, it doesn't allow them to perform any of the duties that are found as a law enforcement officer.

Speaker 10

By law, they can only maintain prisons, take care of prisoners in custody. Lino Holmes was in an Academy in New Orleans, and he resigned from New Orleans to come to us. He never rose above the level of a crew. And he's still a recruit at the Academy so as to the Act, none of them meet the definition of a law enforcement officer.

Speaker 10

They were employed by an agency, but they didn't reach that next level of being law enforcement officers defined by the Act. So those are the two exceptions. I appreciate all the work you all did to get all the nuances of Act V or Bill 563 through. We did benefit. Eighteen of our recruits benefitted that. It's a huge boost on to law enforcement, our recruiting efforts, but I felt bad for these two because they were left on the wayside and they don't come under the aspects of this Act in particular which highly defines a law enforcement officer.

CHIEF JUDICE:

All right. I'm going to direct it to Miss Bordelon. Just from a perspective of what you read in the statute. There is 2-pronged, both employed by and as a law enforcement officer, those two.

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Speaker 9

Yes. And we had that discussion, if I'm not mistaken. We had the discussion about it in November, and the issue that we turned on was that some departments don't issue their commission cards until after they're recruit status, and some departments issue their recruitment commission cards upon hiring date. And correct me if I'm wrong because I think it was the gentleman down there that discussed this, and we determined that there was no way for us to make that determination on the Board so we took the position that if they showed employment as a law enforcement officer or as you know at a previous department that we were going to take that position. I mean that was what we discussed in November.

CHIEF JUDICE:

And Miss Bordelon, could you say that with the Chief's testimony today, we have learned that the two prongs have not been met based on his testimony, and that is that they were hired by law enforcement agency, but they're not as a law enforcement officer in advance of July 1 of 2023, it wasn't until the Kenner Police Department - and to this date, they're still not law enforcement officers, is that correct?

Speaker 10

They're not. No, they would not. Friday they will be. They will graduate from the Academy.

Speaker 10

But I understand with - all this is due to all of us so I think it's a case-by-case basis, and I realize that some agencies like an Evergreen, maybe that's the situation where they strap a gun and a badge on and wait for us to come and they are commissioned to make arrests and act in a capacity as a law enforcement officer, but in these two cases, it never happened.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Understood, Chief. Captain Martin?

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

I'll withdraw my question.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Okay.

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes. I just want to mention that looking at the Minutes, at the last meeting, the conversation was that if the officer starts receiving a paycheck from the eligible agency, he is an officer. So which would disqualify him from incentive pay?

CHIEF JUDICE:

And I will say that that may have been an error because under the definition of law enforcement officer, as defined in that statute, and I represent a small Police Department, and in fact we do not commission a person on the first day of working, throw a badge and gun on him and say, go do - he must meet the requirements of a law enforcement in terms of POST certification, current status. So they are considered

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a recruit until they achieve all of those, and then again, I'm a small department. Not all do that and I totally understand that - the discussion of the Board previously, but having the chief's testimony today telling me that in fact these officers or these recruits had not performed any of the duties as a law enforcement officer either with the New Orleans Police Department and/or the Sheriff's Office, that the young lady worked for as previously even with a Level 3 certification, which is a correction, certification only guarding inmates, they did not do the duties of what is described as are defined as a law enforcement officer in the statute. Yes, Miss Bordelon.

Speaker 9

Okay, so my apologies. I didn't read this particular provision, so it defines law enforcement officer means an officer whose permanent duties actually include the making of arrests, the performing a search and seizure or the execution of criminal warrants and who is responsible - everything that the chief talked about. However, when you go down and you read the provisions about to qualify for the incentive pay, a newly-employed officer shall meet the following group criteria, attain POST certification within one year of the date right and you read the statute together, arguably the interpretation is that you have to be presumed to be a law enforcement officer even as a recruit status because it's your permanent duties - it's the duties that you're going to perform completely into, you know and that it takes into account the fact that you have one year to get your POST certification, so I would still go back to the argument. That's just my interpretation. The Board can do what it wishes.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Understood. I think that's pretty -

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

It's about did you have previous employment for which your permanent duties, meaning your long-term duties, had you stayed, would have been law enforcement regardless of whether you completed the POST certification and was "a commissioned officer" at the time. That's how I read the statute.

CHIEF JUDICE:

I'm tracking where you're going. So let me just say this. Let's definitely sever the two. So we have Holmes and what was the lady, Smith?

INAUDIBLE SPEAKER:

That's Angela Smith.

NATALYA BESSE:

Excuse me, Chief. Miss Gail, could you give us your opinion? Aren't you the attorney representative? Could you give us your opinion?

Speaker 7

I am the attorney. I really don't know the answer. I'm reading the word here now for the very first time. I understand what you're saying and I agree with it, but I just I need to probably conduct research on it.

CHIEF JUDICE:

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So let's do this if we can. Let's sever the two. The Holmes issue, he was previously employed by a law enforcement agency with the intent once he completed the Academy, he would have those duties. And so I understand the argument of Miss Bordelon and certainly, I think we may look to table that one. He quit prior to completing their Police Academy and went to work for the Kenner Police Department.

INAUDIBLE SPEAKER:

But was he POST certified?

CHIEF JUDICE:

He was not.

CANDY DIEZ?

Can I just say something that might sound very simple? When we're reviewing applications, they have to meet that one year and POST certified.

CHIEF JUDICE:

This is for supplemental pay; this is incentive.

CANDY DIEZ:

Right, right, right.

CHIEF JUDICE:

We took two different -

Speaker 8

Yeah. And it does sound like they're kind of running into each other. Okay. My point is that we do accept that one year of employment -

CHIEF JUDICE:

Employment, even though they're not certified in there.

CANDY DIEZ:

Right.

CHIEF JUDICE: I understood that.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

This is the incentive pay.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Yes.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

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And again having spoken with Speaker Schexnayder about this particular statute back when it was drafted because the original draft required your POST certification prior to hire, you know. And I sent him an e-mail and said this doesn't work. You cannot be POST certified prior to hire if you're a newly employed employee, officer -

CHIEF JUDICE:

And that was impossible.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

And that's why they changed the original bill. If you go back and change their - look at the history of the bill, and you will see that it was changed to give them one year to complete POST certification. So again I hate to speak going to the issue of intent, right? But you can go to intent, if the statute is not clear, and I think if you go to the intent of the legislature, the intent of the legislature was that somebody who's never been in law enforcement prior to July 1st - but again it's for the Board to decide.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Understood. Thank you. Thank you. I can't make a motion as the chair, but I again would like to totally separate the two cases. So let's forego Holmes for a second. Let's look at Smith. And so Smith was employed by what Sheriff's Office?

Speaker 10

The Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Which is a law enforcement agency which does civil process and corrections only. They do not do enforcement - they don't go arrest people and all that. She had a Level 3 POST certification with that agency, which certifies you to handle prisoners, none of the duties described as law enforcement officer. He recruited her from there, hired her after July 1 of 2023. And I think that she should be eligible for the incentive pay, even though she's worked for Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office, she was not as a law enforcement officer.

GAIL HOLLAND:

So you're looking at her as a brand new -

CHIEF JUDICE:

I am.

Speaker 5

So I just would like to bring to light that to qualify for it right, they said an eligible agency. Eligible agency is defined by a Sheriff's Office. It doesn't dictate what is being performed by the Sheriff's Office.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Also, but the second prong to that Captain, as a law enforcement officer. Am I correct Miss Gail?

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GAIL HOLLAND:

U-huh.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Two things -

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

I mean, when you look at the purpose, right, the purpose of the program is to provide a one-time incentive payment for a \$5000 to certain newly employed law enforcement officers in the state, right? So that's the purpose, right? That the legislature said that's their purpose, that's their intent. And then again they define a law enforcement officer whose permanent duties are making arrests, performing search and seizures and so on, and then they define newly employed as a person who gains or has gained or is appointed to full-time employment as a law enforcement officer with a Louisiana eligible agency on or after July 1st, 2023, and who has never before been employed as a law enforcement officer of this state.

Speaker 10

And neither of these have ever been employed as a law enforcement officer with an agency in this state.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Well, I would disagree.

Speaker 10

So the definition of a law enforcement officer again states that they have to have the permanent duties actually include making of arrests, performing their searches and seizures, and execution of criminal warrants who is responsible with the prevention or detection of crime or the enforcement of the penal traffic and highway laws of the state?

MISS BORDELON:

I would disagree.

Speaker 10

A POST Level 3 employee is just mainly custodian of prisoners, and Mr. Holmes never completed an Academy, so he never was a law enforcement officer.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

I would argue that. The gentleman that was in the Academy was a law enforcement officer for purposes of this statute because his permanent duties would have been as a law enforcement officer, and you have to go back to what is the purpose of the Statute and the purpose of the statute is a one-time payment for people hired prior – after, excuse me, July 1st, who has never – those were the words – never before been a law enforcement officer in the state so I would argue that at least vis-à-vis him, he would not be eligible.

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INAUDIBLE SPEAKER:

Correct.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

But as to the other person, I think it is open to discussion. That's my interpretation of the statute.

CHIEF JUDICE:

So again, keeping them separate so that we're clear, we'll go back to the officer who was employed by Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office and had a Level 3 certification which does not define, which does not fit the definition of law enforcement officer under the Statute for incentive pay. I would accept a motion at this point in any direction, either to reverse the decision of this Board back in November or to reaffirm the decision. So do we have any type of motion either way on Smith? And that's again the corrections officer.

Speaker 5

I'll make a motion to maintain the Board's decision to deny benefits for that individual.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Do I have a second to reaffirm the Board's decision back in November?

CHIEF TOUPS:

I second that opinion and motion

CHIEF JUDICE:

OK, so Martin and Touns.

CHIEF JUDICE:

All in favor of reaffirming the decision back in November signify by saying aye.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Are there any nays? OK. So that deals with Smith. Go back to Holmes. I personally think - and again I can't make motions, but I will entertain any motion that the Board makes. I do think that with respect to Holmes, I would like to give our attorney, Miss Holland, some time to review the Statute, maybe get some type of clarification and potentially let's table this matter to the next meeting. Thus she can report to us her findings in that time. Do I have any type of motion on the Board at this point on this floor?

JAMES LEBLANC:

LeBlanc cannot make a motion, but I agree with you 100 percent.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Thank you, Mr. LeBlanc.

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NATALYA BESSE:

Well, I think you're non-voting, yes.

CHIEF JUDICE:

No, he was just voicing that he is supportive of my suggestion, but he is not making a motion.

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

I make a motion to table this to the next meeting.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Captain Martin has made a motion to table this to the next meeting giving counsel time to research. Thank you, Captain Martin. Do we have a second to Captain Martin's motion?

BRIAN FLEMING:

I'll make a second.

CHIEF JUDICE:

We've got a second from Fleming. And so all in favor?

INAUDIBLE SPEAKERS:

Aye.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Any opposed? So Chief, what we have done is we have denied Smith again, and we have tabled the Holmes situation so that Miss Holland can bring us additional information. We will continue to correspond. I'm also going to ask Miss Holland to also review that Smith application.

Speaker 10

That's what I was going to ask, if we could reconsider that and table that as well because, you know, it might relieve her.

CHIEF JUDICE:

You may be able to make a second appeal, but let's get some correspondence from Miss Holland, Chief, if that makes sense.

CHIEF MARTIN:

Yes, sir.

CHIEF JUDICE:

So the door's not completely closed. The issue is going to be this, Chief. I don't know how many applications we have for review today, maybe 67? Is that right?

NATALYA BESSE:

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U-huh.

CHIEF JUDICE:

At some point we are going to run out of money. There's limited funds.

CHIEF MARTIN:

I understand.

CHIEF JUDICE:

So we are going to put a priority to that and make sure that we continue to correspond with you because again I don't know that it's fair if in fact they didn't meet the definitions, Chief. I want these officers to get theirs. That's what it's intended for.

Speaker 10

I appreciate any consideration. Again, thank you for your time. I would like to file and introduce into the record some notes I have - the actual Act and some notes about each officer that I spoke of today so that the Board can refer to that.

CHIEF JUDICE:

We'll accept that and we'll present to Miss Holland for her review.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Chief, thank you for your time and appreciate you making the trip. God blessing. Good luck on graduation.

CHIEF MARTIN:

Have a great day.

Speaker 9

Chief, can we take a break?

CHIEF JUDICE:

We can take a break. Can I get a motion to take 5 minutes and a second to take a 5-minute break?

CHIEF JUDICE:

We are back on record and back to the agenda. I'm being told that we do have a representative from Baton Rouge City Court, so we'd like to take that matter up next, that appeal matter up next. So we have five officers who were denied in the November meeting and have appealed, and we have a gentleman here from Baton Rouge City Court. The Chair will recognize - can you please state your name for the record?

MR. ALFORD:

Elzie Alford.

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CHIEF JUDICE:

Mr. Alfred, welcome.

INAUDIBLE SPEAKER:

If I remember correctly, there was a limited -

CHIEF JUDICE:

I'm sorry, Mr. Alfred. We do need to swear you in.

GAIL HOLLAND:

Do you swear, promise or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth so help you God?

MR. ALFORD:

I do.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Thank you, Mr. Alfred. You may proceed.

MR. ALFORD:

If I remember correctly, it was a limited appeal issue that I just wanted to bring before the Board. I think the main issue that we were looking at was the job duties of the probation officer at the time. We submitted I guess an informal job duty, but I wanted to actually give the Board the actual job duty of the officer which I submitted this time, and I guess after reviewing that from my understanding I think they met the other qualifications we had the letter from the Council.

CHIEF JUDICE:

U-huh.

MR. ALFORD:

Very important - full time and those things. But I think there was an issue, actually two -

NATALYA BESSE:

I'm sorry, I would like to remind the Board that at the last meeting applications were denied because the officers are probation officers, not law enforcement officers of the municipal police department.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Correct, correct. I'd like to recognize Miss Adrienne Bordelon to specify for us in the statute, not the specific duties that we are allowed to pay for. Can you describe those for us?

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Okay so in Revised Statute, 40:1667.1 paragraph C1, it says - well, for purposes of this part, a municipal or tribal police officer entitled to additional pay out of state funds shall mean and refer to any person

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employed on a full-time basis by municipality or tribe and all of whose compensation out of public funds is paid solely from the municipal or tribal funds for full-time work as a duly commissioned law enforcement officer for the performance of primary duties which encompass the enforcement of state laws and municipal and tribal ordinances, including actual arrests - excuse me, actual enforcement of state and local traffic laws, the making of physical arrests, testifying in court and bearing arms and other like functions. So those for purposes of a police officer are the primary duties that they have to have. I reviewed the job descriptions that came in the packet, and when you look at the general description, it says some employees of this class may be required to carry a weapon and work various hours, including nights and ride with police officers, serve warrants, monitor probation conditions, conduct drug screens or make arrests. "May" is a permissive word; it's not a mandatory word. And then when you look at their essential work tasks, which I would suggest to you is their permanent duties, it does not meet the definition that I just read in the statute. So that's my interpretation.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Thank you, Mr. Alford.

MR. ALFORD:

Yes, and that's just why I wanted to just supplement that. The job description that you have is the job description is written by laypeople.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Yes.

MR. ALFORD:

And essentially it can be changed at any time and eventually you know - so me being a lawyer, of course, I know may, shall and those different verbs -

CHIEF JUDICE:

Right.

MR. ALFORD:

-and what they mean. But when you have a lay person, that's really, you know, writing something that they're trying to encompass what a person is doing, sometimes they may not get it correctly.

CHIEF JUDICE:

May not or should not? Mr. Alford, I would ask -

MR. ALFORD:

They don't.

CHIEF JUDICE:

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With all respect, I guess I am not an attorney and my question to you is these five probation officers who have applied for state supplemental pay, are they frontline police officers doing the duties that are described in that statute as read by Miss Bordelon?

MR. ALFORD:

When I read that statute, the one thing that they do not do according to that statute is the traffic piece.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Okay.

MR. ALFORD:

They're not making traffic stops but they do make arrests, serve notices, orders, subpoenas, conduct authorized home visits, job verifications and things of that nature. So the actual duties that are under their classification are make arrests, serve notices, orders, subpoenas, writs, home visits, job verification, execute on warrants and all other orders.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Thank you, Mr. Alford. And so, yes –

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

May I speak?

CHIEF JUDICE:

Miss Adrienne, go ahead.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

So I would point to what Miss Natalya said - that their job titles are probationary officers. So that's their title, right? That's their title. And when you look at the statute and you look at the statute as a whole, right, and you look at people who are in the statute that actually work for courts, right, the only courts that court employees get supplemental pay is going to be the constables and deputy constables of the First City of the City of New Orleans or police officers of the City of New Orleans assigned to the Civil District Court for the Parish of Orleans. And so those are the only court employees that the statute actually allows supplemental pay to be paid to.

MR. ALFORD:

I think our constables get supplemental pay.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Your constables do.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Your constables do.

CHIEF JUDICE:

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That's a separate statute and it's a reduced amount than what - I believe, am I correct?

CANDY DIEZ:

Yes.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

My point is -

CHIEF JUDICE:

But that's not court personnel I don't think. Constables have a specific part in this statute.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Yes.

CHIEF JUDICE:

And I do recall Miss Bordelon's point that a specific inclusion for New Orleans City Court probation was put into the statute, is that right?

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Well, it says the City of New Orleans for full-time work as a Commissioned Special Officer of the Police Department of the City of New Orleans, assigned to the Civil District Court. So yes, they are special police officers assigned to the City Civil District Court and it's a special provision in the statute.

CHIEF JUDICE:

And so they don't have to meet the requirements, required duties of the other part of this. It's separate.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Correct. They just have to be POST certified.

CHIEF JUDICE:

And so again I think we're stuck with another example of what the statute allows us as a Board, who they allow us to pay and not, and we have people that are doing duties that I think should be compensated by the State of Louisiana based on what they're doing, but the statute does not recognize them. Am I saying that right, Miss Bordelon?

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

U-huh.

CHIEF JUDICE:

That's just my opinion obviously, so are there any other arguments, Mr. Alford, before we -

MR. ALFORD:

No, it was like I said, my understanding it was the job duties, but I guess I'm hearing today is the job title.

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ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Well, it's multiple, right? It's the job title and it's the fact that they are not police officers in a police department of the municipality. They are employed at the City Court as probationary officers, and there is a specific provision in the statute that speaks to the City of New Orleans, and so I would argue that because New Orleans is in there and everybody else is excluded, everybody else is excluded.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Mr. Alford, I'll tell you from a layperson, as a Chair, it's for me more of what I actually know as a police officer, a probation officer from a court to be doing, and those are not the duties that she described in that statute. They do do home visits. They do make arrests from time to time. But the enforcement of laws, responding to 911 calls, those kinds of duties are not inclusive of probation officers. On the record now, there may be a time where they're close by and they'll come help kind of thing, but that for me is more of a latched in either the job title or the job description. It's what I know probation officers actually do. Again, I think we need a change in the statute. If New Orleans officers, because they're such a big court like Baton Rouge is, I don't know that other municipalities have that level of -

MR. ALFORD:

And I think one of the reasons is, like you said, with the larger cities, we're actually larger than New Orleans.

CHIEF JUDICE:

God bless you.

MR. ALFORD:

I think -

JAMES LEBLANC:

May I speak?

CHIEF JUDICE:

Yes, Mr. LeBlanc?

JAMES LEBLANC:

So to clear up a couple of things. Number one, the reason why that law is in effect for New Orleans is because they went and got the legislature to change that just for their parish only. Even though Baton Rouge is bigger than New Orleans, New Orleans for some reason, they know how to get to the legislature every year and get laws to just adhere to their parish. I want to clear up anything as far as constables. So there's 737 constables in the State of Louisiana. Every one of them gets \$100 supplemental pay per month only if they do the required training that the Louisiana Attorney General's Office supplies for them. If they do not do that training, they don't even get that \$100 supplemental pay. So I just wanted to clear that up on constables.

CHIEF JUDICE:

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Any other questions for Mr. Alford? Is there a motion with respect to the appeals as it pertains to Baton Rouge City Court officers, their appeals of the five individuals?

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

I make a motion to reaffirm the board's decision for denial.

CHIEF JUDICE:

We have a motion to reaffirm from Captain Martin. Do we have a second?

BRIAN FLEMING:

It's actually one.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Fleming will offer a second. All in favor of reaffirming the denial signify by saying aye.

INAUDIBLE SPEAKERS:

Aye.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Any opposed? Mr. Alford, I would strongly suggest that you try to get a legislator on your side.

MR. ALFORD:

I'll do that because like I said, you know what I was reading for from was a piece of legislation that we did pass, and I'm sure we can definitely get included in it.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Thank you, Mr. Alford. Thank you for your time and God bless you and your work.

CHIEF JUDICE:

All right, so next on our agenda is to Jeanerette Marshal. Is there anyone present with respect to that appeal? Miss Natalya, can you give us the purpose of the appeal, please?

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes. Officer Marks is holding a POST officer administrator, and she works at the non-Civil Service Municipality. And just to remind that the Board agreed with the AG's position that only civil service municipalities clerical positions are eligible for supplemental pay.

CHIEF JUDICE:

OK. And did she submit an appeal or did anyone submit an appeal?

NATALYA BESSE:

She did a letter appealing to PD that she moved to a different –

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CHIEF JUDICE:

Oh, I'm sorry I got -

NATALYA BESSE:

-municipality that would help her family and now she might lose her supplemental pay.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

This is Adrienne Bordelon. So in her letter dated December 13th, she gives her job duties as "my new job as Deputy Marshal, I shall require me to have the same answering calls for service, dispatching service calls, care and custody of inmates within the jail or courtroom and yearly mandated posts." That she also - if you look at the original job description, she was kind of like an administrative deputy marshal, I believe, and so I think her primary duties are administrative. It's not that she doesn't do these things, but that's not her primary duties. And again, we had the discussion early about primary duties versus secondary duties.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Understood.

Speaker 3

The letter that was initially submitted in her packet dated July 5th from Ernest J. Martin, Jeanerette, City Board, 3 Marshal, the letter clearly says if he's hiring her as a full-time office administrator. This is clear and concise information that she would need the qualifications for supplemental pay.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Any other discussion with regards to Miss Marks? I would entertain a motion.

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

I make a motion to uphold the Board's decision on denial of benefits.

CHIEF JUDICE:

We have a motion from Captain Martin to reaffirm the denial. Do we have a second?

MAYOR TOUPS:

Seconded by Touns.

CHIEF JUDICE:

All in favor?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS:

Aye.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Any opposed? We have reaffirmed the denial.

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CHIEF JUDICE:

Next is Old Business which we had none and then New Business none. I'm sorry - New Departments.

None.

Speaker 8

We got one.

CHIEF JUDICE:

I'm sorry. We do have one.

Speaker 8:

Did we do the Sean?

CHIEF JUDICE:

No, we haven't gotten there. We went back to - so that'll be next. So the next order of business would be an appeal for Sean Dancer, a police officer.

NATALYA BESSE:

No, it's not an appeal. We received an application from him -

CHIEF JUDICE:

Oh, it's an application.

NATALYE BESSE:

Yes, it's an application from Officer Dancer who was previously employed by Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism in the position of Park Ranger 2 at one of the state parks.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Okay. Yes.

NATALYE BESSE:

So according to the statute, the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism is not one of the state agencies that included prior service calculation. It's only including a Fire –

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

DOC, Wildlife and Fisheries and State Police.

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes.

CHIEF JUDICE:

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And he does not fall under any of those 3 categories.

NATALYA BESSE:

No.

CHIEF JUDICE:

And so his application is for state supplemental pay and he would not be eligible now until he reaches one year of employment with this new agency, is that correct as opposed to immediate?

NATALYA BESSE:

That is correct.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Using prior service?

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes.

CHIEF JUDICE:

I am going to open the floor. Is anybody not up to date on this? It's just a new application where his request for prior service with an agency does not meet the statutory requirements? Is that right, Miss Misty?

MISTY CRAWFORD BENTLEY:

Yeah. I am looking at the job description and while he is with Culture and Tourism, he is supposed to enforce state and federal laws, things like that, carry firearm. So there are factors of his job description that could but yeah -

CHIEF JUDICE:

But that agency is not recognized specifically in the statute as is Department of Corrections State Police, Wildlife and Fisheries. Correct. Alright. So can I get a motion with respect to - so this would just change the eligibility date from prior service to one year of employment with the new agency?

CANDY DIEZ:

Yes.

CHIEF JUDICE:

So can I get a motion to make Mr. Dancer's state supplemental pay effective one year from the date of hire with the - remind me of the agency -

MAYOR TOUPS:

Motion by Touns as stated.

CHIEF JUDICE:

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So Toups would offer that motion. Do we have a second?

BRIAN FLEMING:

I second it.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Second by Fleming. All in favor?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS:

Aye.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Any opposed?

NATALYA BESSE:

I just wanted to make for the record that the eligibility date will be February 6, 2024.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Very Good.

Speaker 7

Is that all he needs, is to get POST certified?

CHIEF JUDICE:

Well, he's already POST certified, so certified with that previous agency. We have a POST certification in his stack. Thank you all very much for that one. Let's go on to - .

NATALYA BESSE:

-budget projection. So I'll give you.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Yes. We got a lot of money, actually.

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes, we have plenty of money. We money to pay officers until the end of this fiscal year.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Very good. So the initial appropriation was \$41,852,488, is that correct?

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes.

CHIEF JUDICE:

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And we have a current balance of \$3,846,310?

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes, that's including the actual expenditures, the projected expenditures and Act 110.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Oh, okay. So that's a surplus, a projected surplus for the end of the fiscal year June 30th.

NATALYE BESSE:

Projected, yes.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Very good. Very good. I would entertain a motion to accept the financial presentation by Miss Natalya.

NATALYA BESSE:

Yeah, I think it's more like informational, right.

CHIEF JUDICE:

So we don't have to accept it? Okay.

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes, sir. It is just suggested information.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Thank you. Very good. Thank you, Miss Natalya, very good work.

NATALYA BESSE:

So we have Act 110 money to approve for 69 applications.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Yes. And so these are people that had benefits coming to them prior to June - July 1?

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes.

CHIEF JUDICE:

And so were there any issues in there, Miss Misty or Miss Candace, with respect to concerns on these 69 applicants? I would ask that the Board consider accepting the 69 applications in globo and approve their 110 funds. Do we have a motion on that?

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

I will make the motion.

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CHIEF JUDICE:

Captain Martin will make the motion. Do we have a second by?

MAYOR TOUPS:

Toups.

CHIEF JUDICE:

We have a second by Toups. All in favor?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS:

Aye.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Any opposed? So those 69 applications, Act 110 funds are in.

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes. So the next one is incentive pay applications to review.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Yes. And so we had 67 of those, is that correct?

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes.

CHIEF JUDICE:

OK. And I did not download and print each one of those, but I will again ask Miss Natalya - I mean, Miss Misty and Miss Candace if there were any concerns. Oh, I'm sorry. We do have some concerns, Miss -

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

I do have some concerns. I'm sorry. I looked at the information that we got from Rebecca on their POST, right.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Oh, yes.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

And so there was 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 that I would suggest do not meet the qualifications.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Okay. So having done that, would you please identify the 12 and we'll go down the list here and deal with it.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

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Larry Goodwin.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Goodwin.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

I think is currently at Ball.

CHIEF JUDICE:

What agency because it's by order of agency?

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Ball.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Ball Police Department, okay.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Last name Dylan, is that Byronesha? I don't know how to pronounce that.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Byronesha.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Byronesha, Breaux Bridge.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Is that Scott Police Department?

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

No, she's currently with Breaux Bridge. She was with Scott.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Oh, I got you. Okay. Understood.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Chelsea Theriot with the Chimetta Tribal.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Who was she with previously?

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Saint Mary Parish Sheriff's Office.

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CHIEF JUDICE:

Okay. Let me find let me find that one. You said Saint Mary parish like the previous?

Speaker 3

It's like under the first - number 12 or 13.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Oh, yeah. I'm sorry right underneath. OK. Yes. OK. I'm sorry. Go ahead.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

That's okay. Dakota Gordon currently with Franklin.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Yep.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Let's see, George Verde - how do you pronounce it - currently with Golden Meadow.

CHIEF JUDICE:

U-huh.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Shane G-A-E-T-A. Currently with - I don't know who he's currently with - Causeway.

CHIEF JUDICE:

As a reserve it says. Okay, I'm following you.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Cameron Long currently with Honda.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Joseph Bergeron currently with East Feliciana Sheriff's Office. I'm not quite sure why that's filed with us.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Okay.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Jayden Hunter currently with Ringgold.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Right.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

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Andrew Callaway, currently with Slidell.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Okay.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Jamie Mesa, Mesa, currently with Slidell.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Okay.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

And Marcus Anderson, currently with Sulphur.

CHIEF JUDICE:

So that is 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 applicants that there is potential issues that we've identified. I would entertain a motion that we remove those 12 candidates that were just read by Miss Bordelon and then address the remaining 55 applicants. Do we get a motion for that?

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

I make the motion.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Okay. So Captain Martin makes a motion that we remove the 12 from that list. Do we have a second?

MAYOR TOUPS:

I second the motion.

CHIEF JUDICE

Toups and so all in favor of that?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS:

Aye.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Any nays? Anyone opposed? So that passes. So now we're left with 55 applications which the staff of DPS has indicated are no issues. Is that correct, Miss Misty?

NATALYA BESSE:

Well, it's not the application. It's more like getting according to the statute acknowledgement, a certification from the Chief of Police that the police officer actually is an officer who performs duties that were defined by the statute and acknowledgement from the police officer that if he will not follow the law –

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CHIEF JUDICE:

Getting the certification? Yes.

NATALYA BESSE:

-after certain time, he will have to return the money back to the State. So, yes.

CHIEF JUDICE:

But if you see an application, Miss Natalya, I just want to clarify for the Board. If you see an application that clearly doesn't meet the statute, in other words, has been employed with a Police Department for five years and then just leaves, comes on new and you got that -

NATALYA BESSE:

That doesn't tell you yes.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

That application doesn't tell you that.

NATALYA BESSE:

So that's when we get information from Rebecca.

CHIEF JUDICE:

But don't we certify as a police chief that he is newly employed? Doesn't an application require me to under some penalty to sign saying that he's new, not previously employed? Doesn't it say on that thing?

NATALYA BESSE:

Well this -

CHIEF JUDICE:

It does. Okay so we have a certification from a chief saying that they meet the criteria and that's I guess my point. And then POST then chimes in with what they have on record.

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes, to make sure that none of the applicants have prior service before July 1st, 2023, yes.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Training and certification. So the 55 remaining on this list have met the criteria under the law based on POST review and have on file with us the certification from the chief that they're new and the certification that if they don't fulfill going to the Academy in one year and continuing 2 years of employment that they would pay it back. Is that correct?

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes.

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CHIEF JUDICE:

So I got a yes from the staff. I would now entertain a motion to -

Speaker 8

Well, that was on the incentive pay, right? This is on incentive pay?

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Yes.

CHIEF JUDICE:

So I would now entertain a motion that we accept the 55 applicants who are remaining on this list who have -

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

You just did that.

CHIEF JUDICE:

I did it?

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Yes.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Okay, so we approved it. Sorry.

Speaker 8

Yeah. You moved to the new applications.

CHIEF JUDICE:

So let's do this before we go to the new applications, let's go back to incentive pay and address these 12 that were eliminated. Is that proper at this point?

INAUDIBLE SPEAKER:

U-huh.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Okay. So the first of the 12 is Larry Goodwin currently with Pineville Police Department?

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ADRIENNE BORDELON:

He's currently with Ball.

CHIEF JUDICE:

With Ball Police but appears to have -

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

He did work for Pineville because we have the records of that as well.

CHIEF JUDICE:

From POST?

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

No. I have the records from Pineville because they're one of our agencies.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Oh, state supplemental day. Civil service – them crazy people.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Civil service. So he did work at Pineville, granted, for a short period, but he did not separate from Pineville till after July 1st, 2023, so he cannot meet the definition of a newly employed law enforcement officer.

CHIEF JUDICE:

I'd entertain a motion to deny Larry Goodwin's incentive pay.

BRIAN FLEMING:

I'll make a motion.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Mr. Fleming makes the motion to deny. Do we have a second?

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

I make a second.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Second by Captain Martin. All in favor.

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS:

Aye.

CHIEF JUDICE:

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Any opposed? He's denied.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Dylan, Byronesha Dylan?

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

So according to what POST informed us, right, it said they were with I'm assuming a she was with Scott from 8/29/2022 to unknown, so Scott is in our system. I looked her up, I did not show records of employment for her, so I don't know what her employment status with Scott was but apparently POST indicates that she was - they sent in the form to POST saying that they hired her.

CHIEF JUDICE:

OK, so I will request -

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

In August of 2022.

CHIEF JUDICE:

I would request a motion from Board members to table this one so that we can get clarification from LCLE and potentially Scott Police Department and bring this to the next Board meeting, this application. Can I get a motion to table?

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

I'll make a motion to table.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Captain Martin has made the motion to table. Do we have a second?

MAYOR TOUPS:

I'll second it.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Toups will second it, and it is tabled.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Chelsea Theriot.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

So again, according to POST, she worked for the Saint Mary Parish Sheriff's Office from 8/18/2010. I don't know the status but she was POST certified with St. Mary's Sheriff's Office on 5/11/2011.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Also, with Chitimacha -

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ADRIENNE BORDELON:

That's her current employer.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Is it? But it was prior to June, July 1st.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Oh, you're right. My bad.

CHIEF JUDICE:

So yeah, I would entertain a motion to deny Miss Theriot's application for incentive pay.

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

I make a motion to deny.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Captain Martin has made the motion. Do I have a second?

BRIAN FLEMING:

I second it.

CHIEF JUDICE:

By Fleming. Any opposed? All in favor?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS:

Aye.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Any opposed? Motion carries. Denied. Mr. Goodwin or Miss Goodwin maybe?

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Gordon. Dakota Gordon. So our records indicate that she worked with Morgan City from 8/5/2022 through 11/14/2022 as a police officer recruit.

CHIEF JUDICE:

I would make a motion based on the fact that their eventual duties would have been under the provisions of that statute. Do we have a motion to deny?

MAYOR TOUPS:

Motion by Touns.

CHIEF JUDICE:

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Toups. A second?

Inaudible Speaker:

I second it.

CHIEF JUDICE:

All in favor?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS:

Aye.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Any opposed? Denied. Jorge Verde.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Again, this indicates that he did work for Golden Meadow for like 12 days in 2022.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Wow. All right. I would entertain a motion to deny the candidate's incentive pay.

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

I make a motion to deny.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Captain Martin has made the motion to deny. Can we get a second?

BRIAN FLEMING:

I second it.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Second by Fleming. Are all in favor?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS:

Aye.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Any opposed? He is denied or she is denied. Shane Gaeta.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

It looks like he was previously employed with the Franklinton PD from 7/1/2021, the Madisonville PD currently as a reserve officer which I realize is not a full-time employee, but it does look like he was employed with Franklinton. I don't know. And apparently he was employed with the Causeway PD in 2018.

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CHIEF JUDICE:

Okay. Based on that, I would entertain a motion to deny his candidacy based on his employment in 2018. Do we have a motion to deny?

BRIAN FLEMING:

I make a motion to deny.

CHIEF JUDICE:

We have a motion from Fleming. Do we have a second?

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

I second it.

CHIEF JUDICE:

A second from Captain Martin. All in favor?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS:

Aye.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Any opposed? Cameron Long.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Yeah, unfortunately for Cameron Long, he was hired at Pineville on June 26th, 2023, so you had to have been hired after July 1st.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Understood. He missed it, but based on that, I would entertain a motion to deny.

MAYOR TOUPS:

Motion by Touns.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Motion by Touns. Touns makes a motion to deny. Do we have a second?

BRIAN FLEMING:

I second it.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Second by Fleming. All in favor?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS:

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Aye.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Any opposed? Joseph Bergeron. I'm sorry. Cameron Long. Oh, I already did him. Joseph Bergeron, I'm sorry.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

I mean it appears that he's – no, Port Allen Police Department. But it appears he did have employment with the East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office from 10/26/2021 to 9/29/2022, the West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office from 12/1/2022 to 7/20/2023, so he was actually employed with West Baton Rouge.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Based on that, I would entertain a motion to deny for previous employment.

BRIAN FLEMING:

I make a motion to deny.

CHIEF JUDICE:

A motion from Fleming. We have a motion to deny. Do we have a second?

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

I second it.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Captain Martin gives us a second. All in favor?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS:

Aye.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Any opposed? Jayden Hunter.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

According to the information we received from POST, he was currently, previously employed with Lincoln Parish Sheriff's Office from May 2022 through November 2022.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Understood. So based on previous employment with a law enforcement agency, I would entertain a motion to deny motion.

MAYOR TOUPS:

Motion made by Touns.

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CHIEF JUDICE:

We have a motion from Toups. Do we have a second?

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

I second it.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Captain Martin has seconded it. All in favor?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS:

Aye.

CHIEF TOUPS:

Any opposed? He is denied. Nathaniel Bond. I'm sorry. Andrew Callaway, Andrew Callaway.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

Mr. Calloway was hired with the Slidell Police Department in February of 2023 so he was hired prior to July 1st, 2023.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Based on his hire date, I would entertain a motion to deny his incentive pay. Do I have a motion?

MAYOR TOUPS:

Motion by Toups.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Motion by Toups. Any second?

BRIAN FLEMING:

I second it.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Second by Fleming. All in favor?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS:

Aye.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Any opposed? He's denied. Jamie Mesa.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

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This indicates that they were hired with Slidell on May 4, 2023, which would have been prior to July 1st, 2023.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Based on hard data, I would entertain a motion to deny. Do I have a motion?

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

I make a motion.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Motion to deny from Captain Martin. Do we have a second?

BRIAN FLEMING:

I second it.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Second by Fleming. All in favor?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS:

Aye.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Any opposed? All right, then we have Marcus Anderson.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

So this one is a little unclear because apparently he was a reserve officer with the Jennings Police Department from November 2015 to December of 2018, but he was not a full-time employee so I would defer to the Board as to whether y'all want to indicate that that is a newly-employed - you know, a new law enforcement officer.

CHIEF JUDICE:

I would make the argument that, in fact, it is. Reserve employment for those who don't know is volunteer. They do not get paid; they do not get compensated at all. And often times some of the things that hold them back from becoming full time is that they have a decent paying job somewhere, and I think the intent of the legislature was to offer this 5000 to bridge that in some areas so I think, you know personally again, the Chair would think that that is not actual employment in any way, shape or form and that anyone hired full time after July 1 of 2023 having been reserved prior would not be interfered with that receiving incentive.

JAMES LEBLANC:

LeBlanc agrees.

CHIEF JUDICE:

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All right.

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

I'll make a motion to approve Marcus Anderson.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Captain Martin has made the motion to approve. Can I get a second?

BRIAN FLEMING:

I second it.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Second made by Fleming. All in favor?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS:

Aye.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Any opposed? That is done with the incentive pay.

INAUDIBLE SPEAKER:

So only 11 was –

CHIEF JUDICE:

No, 10. One was tabled, 10 were denied and one was approved.

INAUDIBLE SPEAKER:

Ten.

Speaker 3

Do you want this with your notes on it?

CHIEF JUDICE:

I can scan it and send it back to you.

INAUDIBLE SPEAKER:

No. That's all right.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Okay. So now we move on to the next order which is the new applications.

NATALYA BESSE:

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This is just for the information that is as of the time we created this agenda. We reviewed and approved 139 applications.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Okay. And let me just clarify one more time on the record. These people, most of these people are already getting paid, right? We're just rubber stamping their – your approval of them, is that correct?

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Alright. So these are people who have met all the 10 criteria required by the staff of the DPS, have all of those documents have been approved and reviewed so this is a Board action to basically stamp the work of Miss Misty and Miss Candace so I would entertain a motion to accept all 139.

MAYOR TOUPS:

I just had one quick question. I see some yellow highlighted areas and I see regarding future dates which is eligibility dates.

CHIEF JUDICE:

That's regarding future dates.

MAYOR TOUPS:

OK. I just want to make sure. That was my only concern.

CHIEF JUDICE:

So I would entertain a motion to approve all 139 persons on this document. Do we get a motion?

MAYOR TOUPS:

I make a motion.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Toups gives us a motion. Do we have a second?

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

I second it.

CHIEF JUDICE:

We have a second from Captain Martin. All in favor?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS:

Aye.

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CHIEF JUDICE:

Any opposed? Before we move on, I would like to address the Board quickly by saying that I did have an opportunity to meet with Miss Natalya with respect and Miss Candice with respect to what I have seen, maybe a backlog or a - you know, it's taking time for applications to get it to this point. I'm being reassured that - so it's kind of a couple of things going on. One, we've moved over to our new portal system which seems to be working really well. I know for January it worked well for me and I'm able to see an applicant on there now that is being tracked so hopefully we are moving in the right direction but for the first part of that, I think we have some log jam, right?

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

Excuse me. So my purpose here today is to give you a little update on all of this.

CHIEF JUDICE:

God bless you. I would like to recognize - what is your name, ma'am?

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

Kay DeBenedetto.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Miss Benedetto, give us an update. I think you've been with state supplemental pay. But you have been since we've begun. 46 God-given years.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

I have sat on this Board. I have 46 years here in the Department of Public Safety. I am not full time. I am officially retired and only work part time. Can we plug that in though? I have something to put up on the board.

CHIEF JUDICE:

She's doing that, Miss Kay. Thank you for your service. And thank you for coming here today to educate us and get us in the right track.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

Yes. I want to give y'all a brief update, and I know this has been a very long meeting, and I know everybody's tired, but Colonel Graphia actually asked me please to come and update y'all so that you would know the progress we've made since 2000 and some of the accomplishments and where we're going from here and to get your input.

CHIEF JUDICE:

God bless you.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

My history. OK. I'm sorry. Natalya, would you bring up the - let's see. The first one - I think they're in order.

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JORDAN MOREAU:

This one?

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

No, I'm sorry. The one that says Board update modernization project.

JORDAN MOREAU:

Let me see if that's the right one.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

That's it. Like I said, I'm Kate Benedetto. I worked at the Department of Public Safety my entire career. I sat on this Board for about six years, have administered supplemental pay beginning in 1989 so I've got a lot of history for supplemental pay, and the staff comes to me and that's my purpose here. Still, they keep me on just part-time for historical knowledge. And I have a couple of historical things I'm going to import to y'all.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Thank you, ma'am.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

Just to show you what happened though, check the date of this document. This was back in January of 2020 which is when we started, and there's a gentleman back here who has been - God, I can't tell you how much time and effort the team has put in, the OIS team, the data people, have put into this project. We started because the business case, as you will see, we were operating at that time \$500 a month to 13,000 recipients. And I don't know that y'all hear that enough, how many actual recipients there are in supplemental pay on a system that was over a 40 years old. And there wasn't a person left at this department or at OIS downtown that could make any changes in the system. Literally the knowledge was gone. Other than that, it was housed on a mainframe that OTS was about to try to disable, and if not, it was going to cost a million and millions of dollars to continue to get support for that mainframe. And so we agree. Yes, we need to move this on.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

That happened. We submitted this. We got approval to move forward in 2020 and guess what happened in March? COVID. Everybody went to the house. Nothing happened, okay. We can get rid of that one and pull up the first one, the board update phases of supplemental pay phases of sum pay. We all came back together sometime that late fall and got funding which was a hard not to get, I'm going to tell you. I wish Trenicia was here because the funding was hard to get, and if it hadn't been for that time Colonel Jason Starnes, who happened to run into somebody downtown and say, look, we're in a crucial - we're gonna- you know, if this thing blows up, 13,000 people are gonna be calling you at home to say, where's my supplemental pay? And they gave us some funding. That was in late 2000. We cranked up in 2021, and our phase one project went live on October the 10th of 2022, and anybody who's been with the state any length of time and been through any major system update knows that is a record accomplishment. And not only did we get, you know - the first purpose was just to give us what we're

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doing now, give us the ability to pay and the ability to track. We got that and a hundred other things that were just making everything much better.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

We were able to enter and maintain recipient information, municipality uploads. We get information from them now. We designed the warrants. You know those warrants were 40 years old, okay? We still had the recipients' addresses on them, which as you know, police officers don't really like their addresses to be public. There was nobody around that could take them off. We removed their addresses. We updated the NACHA file which is the file that goes to the banking institutions to actually process the payments. Got that on board with new technology. We automated month-end balancing and payments which in itself used to take you know two or three days of staff time just to make sure 13,000 recipients actually were getting paid. We now have check on demand where we can if something happens and we need to pay a recipient other than the end of the month, we can do that. DOA mail service - that was a huge thing for the staff. The staff used to have to spend an entire day with the entire staff printing, stuffing and mailing those warrants out every month. Then it became all automated, went to the D of A.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

They did it for us. That was a huge staff time. So that was just the first thing. In the interim, can somebody pull up - can we use dual screens here? No? Okay. That's fine.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

OK. So then we moved on to phase two. Phase two became we need to get a good accounts receivable system because what we were using again, sorry to say, extremely antiquated. We couldn't get reports. We couldn't get things as y'all may have known. If not, you need to know the accounts receivable for supplemental pay is millions of dollars. Yeah, OK. We were we were given the task we need of that needs to be reduced. And we said in order to do that, we're going to need a better accounts receivable system that actually does aging of receivables, does first, second and third requests. So that if they still don't respond at the first, second and third request, then we can send that out for collection.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

It gives us the ability to bill either the recipient or the municipality, depending upon the situation of how the overpayment occurred. We are expecting that to go live July 1st. We went with the LaGOV accounts receivable system which will feed information on the back end into our sum pay system so that we will be able to - when we have these new 140 something, we can see the system is going to stop us to say, wait a minute, this applicant used to work at this department and has an outstanding receivable, and we can collect that through typically his back pay or extend that payment on. We'll be able to make better collections and that will be a huge financial savings to the State.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

Automated emailing of warrants. We implemented that, I'm sorry, six months ago, five months ago. I'm not exactly sure of the date. That's where now we even have gotten rid of the postage costs, and the municipalities get their warrants immediately instead of waiting for mail and it went to somebody else. We now keep that e-mail list up and they get their warrants right away.

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KAY DEBENEDETTO:

We are still continuing to polish the screens and create reports that are going to make us better able to audit things. We'll be able to see who's getting a new temporary pay, who may have had prior service, but all of these things we're getting reports that are going to give that information to the staff in a moment's notice and it's going to be much better. We're dealing with the bugs. There's always bugs everywhere. New ones crop up. The team is still dealing with that and we had to - you may have heard of this, but the State is undergoing a huge plan to make all automated systems compatible.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Imagine that.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

Imagine that. You know, imagine that we have, I don't know, thousands and thousands of automated systems in the State of Louisiana, each one developed separately. Each one looks different. You can't integrate anything. It causes massive problems. So halfway through, they said, oh, wait a minute. You need to develop this system along with this new Pelican format so that our system will be able to integrate in future times with different systems as needed.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

Phase three. We're winding down and trying to get all everything we need. The big phase three is the portal, and I wish I could show it to you. We might after we're finished with this show you. This is the dream spot. This is where municipalities I think you may said you may have already seen one.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

I mean municipalities will have access to send us applications and warrants through the portal. No more of this, well, I emailed it to you. No, we can't find it in the six or 700 emails we get a day or it gets lost in the mail or went to the wrong person. This way we have a designated preparer in every municipality and a designated approver in each municipality, and those people have access to this portal.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

The preparers will attach, can now attach the application package, just enter a little brief information, attach the packet, we get notified immediately. We start working on them on a daily basis. It's all right there. We don't have to print them. We don't have to do anything. We work it from the screen. And we have an approval process within here. Misty looks at it first. Misty says yeah, it looks all good to me. She sends it on. Candy does our second level review because when we initiated this, we're going to put them on before final Board approval, we said we've got to have a little bit more hands on and so we have a first review and a second review and those are just the applications, of course, that meet all of the standard parts of the statutes.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

They can also now attach their warrants. They've gotten their warrant through e-mail. They've done it, done everything they need to do with it, gotten it all signed and approved. They attached that back in

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the portal. So there's no more calling back and forth, emailing back and forth. We didn't get your warrant. Oh, I sent it on such and such a day. All that's gone.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

Next step, probably April 1st, we will be opening up the integrated application, which means not just will they just take that paper application, scan it and attach it in the portal, they will actually - the preparer will begin to enter all of the pertinent information that we need to have. Of course, the specific information on the recipient. We already know what town they're from. We know all that contact information. They will put in POST certification dates, prior service dates, employment hire date, all of that stuff. And the system, our sum pay system, will actually be able to calculate the eligibility dates and the temporary pay amounts. Now that may just sound like a bunch of words to a bunch of law enforcement officers and attorneys and whatever, but to this supplemental pay staff, that is going to reduce the time of working an application from a couple of hours to a couple of minutes.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

OK. And we will be able to retain all that information in the employee record for future applications. OK, game changing. This will also happen in April or March where the municipalities will now also receive their warrants in the portal. OK? They will get an e-mail notification - hey, your warrant's there. They'll go in. They'll be able to download their warrant, make all their changes, scan it and re-upload it and submit it to us and again goes through our processes. These are the things that all of the municipalities and all the years that I went out and talked to groups and did trainings - this is all the stuff they asked for. It's all the stuff they're still asking for today. Now they're going to have it.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

To be determined, phase four. Guess what? We're out of money. OK, so we're going to have to start this process again. We still get some things. There is still now a brand new designated State OIS employee who is going to take the maintenance of the system over so we'll never again be faced with, oh my God, we need to make a change and no one has the knowledge to do it. We will have that knowledge base, but we're still going to continue to ask for certain things to be added. And the one big thing on my mind is - well, two things really. It's the interactive warrant where not only could the municipalities download a paper warrant and mark their changes, but they will actually be able to bring up their warrant and actually make the changes online.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

We would add in a few more bells and whistles, probably that satisfies us that they are really reporting what they need to be reporting to us and do and then resubmit that back to us. We'll save the municipalities a lot of time. And for both applications and warrants, we would like to initiate - and this is not going to happen anytime real soon but it is on our game plan - to actually do an approval workflow where the municipality submits an application, they fill in everything, they attach all the documents they need. It goes from the preparer to the approver, typically the police chiefs. The police chief will do a digital signature for their approval and then actually go to the mayor, where the mayor would do a digital signature for their approval. And then it would come to us.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

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Now that - I can't tell you how much time that's going to cut down from the actual time, not so much our staff time, but the actual time that someone comes on at a Police Department till the time that his application is actually submitted.

CHIEF JUDICE:

And that officer's receiving pay?

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

Then they'll start receiving pay. Okay, close that one out.

MAYOR TOUPS:

Hey, I have a question. The interactive application process - do y'all have forms that y'all can provide all the clerks -

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

That's one of our accomplishments that I want to talk to you about.

MAYOR TOUPS:

-and police chiefs throughout so that information 'cause a lot of clerical work is coming back on us. So if you have what the pertinent information that has to be put in, if they had that ahead of time and when the Police Department is assigned new employees and stuff, they can make sure this form is filled out.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

We have revised all of the forms. We are doing some really detailed instruction manuals for not just completing the forms and working this portal, but we're going to add in things like what are the eligibility criteria, when do you submit things? These are all things. One of our biggest problems that this system can never solve, only y'all can solve, is to get these police departments to submit applications timely.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Yes.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

You know, the longer that they wait -

CHIEF JUDICE:

To our defense, a lot of times it's waiting on a letter of prior service from a larger department like New Orleans or Baton Rouge or Shreveport. Those are not very easy things, but I can tell you from our agency's perspective, most of the delays are letters of prior service from previous agencies. Now having said that, Ms. Kay, you're are speaking such good language right here, right now, I'm sitting in roses, okay? The staff is wonderful. The staff is great, but one of the things I think we're lacking on is being able to recognize that this officer was being paid by this agency from this time to this time. Y'all are doing it. Y'all are paying him.

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CHIEF JUDICE:

And saying that he just moved from this agency to this agency.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

Yes.

CHIEF JUDICE:

And I met with Miss Natalya, and we talked about it and I totally 100% understand the responsibility on the shoulders of Miss Misty and Miss Candace with making sure that we are approving people that are justly approved. I don't want to give state police, state money away. I totally understand. But if we were giving it to him yesterday and he just moves departments tomorrow, I think the whole renewal process of from scratch is redundant.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

One thing that we're going to do, that we're doing, well number one, this interactive application where they will actually or even now when they're now sending the whole paper packet, scan it and attach it in the portal. We are moving those documents. They're going to remain, they're going to lie in two places. That document will stay in the municipality so we will know the municipality, and then it's going to also go to the recipient. So on that recipient's record, we're going to have his former prior service forms.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

When we get to the interactive part, which is where the preparer will actually enter the prior service dates - because you can see on some of these new application spreadsheets, some people have six or seven or ten different scenarios of prior service, all with breaks in between and whatever. Chris, Christian back here, we, he and Brandon, who had to leave, we spent an entire day trying to go through all the different crazy scenarios -

CHIEF JUDICE:

Yes.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

-to figure that eligibility date and they got it now. Okay, they got it now.

CHIEF JUDICE:

OK. And I also just want to make this point. Somehow, someway, LCLE figured it out because it doesn't matter how many agencies you worked for, how many times you broke - your training records as a law enforcement officer for - I've been an officer since 1985, all of my training records are there. And when I left the Sheriff's Office, it just followed me to the new agency.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

And it does. And if they would let us into their system -

CHIEF JUDICE:

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What about Pelican? The Pelican?

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

They're not a state agency.

CHIEF JUDICE

LCLE is not a state agency.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

No.

INAUDIBLE SPEAKER:

Yes, they are.

CHIEF JUDICE:

They're absolutely funded -

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

OK. Well, they may not be under the umbrella of the Division of Administration.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Okay.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

But that is all being worked towards, but what we are going to do in our next steps is yes, we're going to now have these individual dates where John worked. We have a copy of his prior service form. It's going to be attached to that record and so if he moves from one town to the next, we will be able to see that.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Thank you, Miss Kay.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

And we may have where the town will also be able to see that depending on how it's written. But one of our next steps in what we'd like to have too is to really integrate with some of these systems.

CHIEF JUDICE:

That's fine. Wonderful

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

The Fire Board really wants to integrate with the State Fire Marshals Office who now has all of their training records. Now that they've taken that over and it is under a state agency. So those are those are all things that are going to be happening. Can you pull up that last document, the accomplishments?

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JORDAN MOREAU:

I think there's a lot of things going on at once so it's kind of lagging.

NATALYA BESSE:

Yes, you can close the other documents.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

Do you have to close that one out?

JORDAN MOREAU:

The mouse is not even moving. Okay, there we go.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

Okay. Here you can see just some of our accomplishments. We've talked about this, our internal processes. We are totally rewriting all of our desk procedures to make sure that we have good information to account for. One of our biggest problems is we had so many staff changes. For now, we finally have, and I will say this, and I don't know how many times I can say it in front of how many people, this staff that we have now, the specialists actually performing is the best we have had in 10 years so they are really on the ball with getting this stuff done. We will have smooth transitions if we have to because you know people do get promoted and those kind of things or get married and leave or do whatever.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

The processing time we're estimating used to take at least three months just about to get somebody paid because we had to wait for a Board meeting. Now probably 75% of applications are going on or more than 75%. That's a real mild estimate - are going on within typically 30 days -.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Nice.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

-we received it in the month, about 75% of them get on, get put on for a payment at the end of that month. That will increase as we implement some of these other administrative rules, the police rules went through an emergency review and got updated. We are continuing to make some changes there, and we'll do another version as we go along. The statute updates, we initiated legislation last year, the year before, now I'm lost in my time - to do all of the housekeeping type stuff -

CHIEF JUDICE:

Sure.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

-wording, what used to actually say still we issue checks and stuff like that. We did all that. Our desk procedure, we've updated all of our forms, we're doing instructions, all the new forms are in a PDF

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fillable format. And we want to encourage y'all to pass on through y'all's organizations, we have fillable forms out there. They're still printing them and handwriting them in. Half of our problems when we went to emailing warrants was that the e-mail address that we had on file was the best we could possibly read from their handwritten form, okay, and entered into the system. And, of course, it's got to be a good address to get it. So we want them to use these fillable forms. We need them. We encourage the municipalities to set up a shared e-mail box, you know, and I'll use a Fire example because we actually can. I don't want to accidentally use one of y'all's emails as their addresses, but we actually had a Fire Chief whose e-mail address was Hotchief@hotmail.com.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

Okay, those kind of things, no, you know, they need to have a department e-mail address that's shareable, so that if the preparer is out on vacation, the approver can go in and do this stuff. You know, those are all things that can be done to make it better. Addresses. We have a lot of municipalities - and I think that's probably some of our fault because we still had addresses on the warrants and although you know we mail those, you know how things get lost or taken when they shouldn't, people's eyes or whatever - they started using the department address as the recipients address.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Wow.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

That I understand in their theory, but particularly when we do this accounts receivable and you know the municipalities get real mad at us, we get a lot of complaints because timing, whatever an employee gets paid for a couple of days in a month where they actually resigned and we'd already closed out before they sent the resignation in, and so we send it to the municipality, pay us \$200.00 and they're like that dude's gone. We can't get any more money. Well, we'll be happy in the future to bill that recipient, but we need an address.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

We need to know where he is. So we can follow him. Okay. So we're going to make that kind of stuff mandatory so y'all might get flak for that. But that's the reason.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Sure.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

Of the applications and the warrants, that's all time savers on the municipalities. So if y'all could let them know we're thinking about them and trying to save their time, too. And their records are going to be housed in here, and you know a lot of times with these prior service forms, you know, if the recipient or the municipality had kept copies of the forms, they would already have them. They wouldn't have to go out and get them again.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

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You know that recipient had applications from all those places he worked at and had prior service forms. Why doesn't he have a copy of that? Why didn't the town keep a copy of that so they could just submit those?

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

We're doing a bunch of database cleansing projects. I know that's not really of concern to y'all, but we want to make sure everything in the sum pay system is the best possible information.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Great.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

And we're going to start some down at the very end, we're going to start some more detailed training that municipalities can attend to help them with their issues and problems. And just a few technology updates. Guess what? We don't want anybody to ever fax us again. OK. I'm like getting rid of the fax machine. We don't put the fax number on anything. Some people still call and ask for it. Okay, no. Everything's going to come through that portal.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

Voicemail shouldn't be a need for them to call us on the phone any longer because they'll be able to do their questioning through the portal, okay. The munpay e-mail box and I'm not teasing when I say 5 and 600 emails a day comes into that box. Do you know how difficult that is to maintain? But with the portal, that's going to significantly reduce, okay, so that if for some reason a town emails us, the specialists are going to do that on a daily basis, but still better to do an electronic communication. They're not leaving a voicemail.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

And I'll tell you all this, too. We don't talk to recipients. Somebody calls us and says I didn't get my supplemental pay. How the hell do we know that that's who's calling. Because in my 45 years of experience, do you know how many ex wives called in and said how much is my supplemental pay, okay, because they were going for child support or whatever. We can't trust communications from the recipients. We don't know them.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

We tell all recipients go to your town, go to that preparer. Let them ask your questions. And the portal's going to be it. And we are going to - not tomorrow, but by the end of the year, we're going to require - we're not going to accept applications by e-mail. We're not going to accept an application that gets mailed. Some people still mail them. We're not going to accept an application from a Board member.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Right.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

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Everything has to come through that portal. That is going to be the integrity and the record retention. Questions? Anything y'all want to ask for?

CHIEF JUDICE:

I'll just say this from a police chief who was uneducated in the process, Miss Kay, prior to sitting on this Board, I am impressed with the staff. I'm impressed with the work you do. I was told who you are and how long you've been doing that and of course of the advancements. And I think that that is a critical, critical part of moving forward. Police chiefs were very frustrated with the lack of communication. What you just did here in 20 or 30 minutes has really been great, just there's a person on the other side, right. And so I intend to carry a message to police chiefs real soon saying that were definitely saw it. I mean they've seen it, too. They've seen advancements. We were fortunate to have the ladies from staff come to our last conference and made a presentation which was very informative and helpful. So certainly looking forward to all the things you just talked about. I think that we're headed in the right direction.

CHIEF JUDICE:

And hopefully we can address all those issues that the legislative auditor found that this Board was doing either improperly or were not in compliance with our duties. So thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Give us another 46 years. And we'll have it right. We'll have it right. I'm telling you.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

I'm gonna give you all two little fun historical facts. You know, I sat over there in the corner and I tried not to say anything.

CHIEF JUDICE:

You didn't throw nothing at me so I was good.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

I tried my best and those who know me and some of you, some of some people in this room, actually have known me a long time are probably shocked, but fun historical fact. How many people know? Vijay Bella. OK. Vijay was actually a representative when supplemental pay was first initiated in the '50s. And in the 60s, when Fire got added, of course he's the one that actually got that added for Fire because it was originally just for police.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Right.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

And let me tell you why supplemental pay got started. It was so that every little municipality - I'm not talking about big ones, I'm not talking about Baton Rouge and New Orleans, right - I'm talking about the village of Greenwood. Was it Greenwood?

CHIEF JUDICE:

Evergreen.

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KAY DEBENEDETTO:

Evergreen - excuse me - could hire a full time police chief because back then all they had was somebody who agreed okay, I'll go work at the jail for y'all, you know? The intent of the legislation was to assure that every municipality in the State of Louisiana could hire a full-time police chief. So when y'all talk about changing that to a part time, that was not why it was created, okay?

CHIEF JUDICE:

Correct. Right. I copy, but at that time -

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

It was not. No, no, it's not the 50s and the 60s now.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Right. And there was no MPRS taking 30% of the officer's salary from that **miscount**.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

It's a little whole different world. Well, that's on the town.

CHIEF JUDICE:

There's a big story on that, but I should tell you that the town doesn't have a choice any more. We are mandated to enter the MPRS or at least offer it. And then we now have to give 30% of what we pay that officer. So just think again. I don't wanna get into that, but -

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

Yeah. Oh, believe me. Other than supplemental pay, my history here is a lot in HR, so I know what related benefits cost. Okay. The other little fun fact is that New Orleans Civil Court, they came forward and they presented that their officers did, and they did, you know, it was New Orleans, and it was at a time when, oh, my God, they had people there who weren't probation officers. They did police work.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Right.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

They did it inside that courtroom, and they did it outside of the courtroom, and that's how they got at it.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Sure.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

All these other little courts who want to come on because, yes, they are truly just a probation officer, well then go out and get your own supplemental pay.

CHIEF JUDICE:

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That's right.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

I mean -

CHIEF JUDICE:

We could have used you.

KAY DEBENEDETTO:

The Colonel would like me to really be the historical voice. I'm not gonna tell you all the time - in every one of my emails to whoever I'm sending it to, be it the Colonel or one of these specialists, this is only my opinion.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Yep. Understood. Thank you again, Miss Kay. A great, great service and we appreciate you, thank you. Yeah, and they get their credit, too. They certainly agree with that.

CHIEF JUDICE:

So the last thing on the agenda was the Louisiana legislative auditors report, and I'll be extremely brief, but I did want to address this Board with respect to some of the stuff I saw and in my communications with them. I first want to say that I think they did a bang up job. I think they really looked at things from a perspective of many different angles and made sure that they've given us some level of guidance with regards to where we should go. I also encouraged the Board to look at those recommendations and help guide us in the way that they think is right. Some of it is legislatively. I do think that it is time that this Board collectively - and I'll present at the June meeting some of the legislation that I hope will get passed prior to our June meeting, but certainly will as a citizen of the State of Louisiana, I will be talking to legislators about what I think needs to be changed and some things are very minor, right. You know, we're talking about in their overpayments, officers who were not certified but continue to get payments.

CHIEF JUDICE:

But then I review the law and the law says you have to have two things. You have to have full-time employment and a POST certification. It doesn't say anything about continuing your certifications. If you got it, you got it and there's - I don't even know this Board - now Miss Bordelon said you could assume or presume that a POST certification dies when that officer fails to continue his certification, but it doesn't say that in that at law, and we could talk to LCLE and find out. But I would like clarification in our law, in 1667, that I would say specifically this is when your pay would get suspended if you don't fulfill these obligations and then give this Board some teeth, some power moving forward.

CHIEF JUDICE:

So certainly that. And then, of course, acknowledging the hard work of Candace, Misty and Natalya again. I don't think we can overstate that, guys. I know when I came here in in July of 2023, it was almost like a standoff. It was like we couldn't break barriers. I think we've gotten there. We've gotten over the fence. We can talk to each other kind of openly and make sure that we're moving forward. So I'm

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pleased with the progress. I'm not so much disappointed in the legislative auditor's report as I am concerned that we can do better and that will be our mission moving forward, at least from my eyes.

CHIEF JUDICE:

And again, to all of you, thank you for your service on this Board. I think it's critical the mission will continue to be to get that officer paid as soon as possible, reduce these 6, 9, 8, 10 months of back pay and you know whatever this Board can do to help you accomplish that, we are here to serve you as much as we are to serve these officers. So if there's something we can be doing better, Miss Natalya, please feel free and again, you know, I'm pretty open to anytime, anywhere. Just let me know and I'll do what I can for myself.

CHIEF JUDICE:

So on behalf of the Louisiana Chiefs of Police Association, thank you. I would accept a motion to adjourn.

CAPTAIN MARTIN:

I make a motion to adjourn.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Captain Martin made a motion to adjourn.

NATALYA BESSE:

The next meeting?

CHIEF JUDICE:

Oh, I'm sorry. The next meeting is June 12th at 10:00 a.m. right here.

ADRIENNE BORDELON:

I'll be back. I'll barely be back, but I'll be back, on the 10th.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Okay. I'm sorry. Now I'll entertain the motion from Captain Martin to adjourn. Do I have a second?

MAYOR TOUPS:

I second it.

CHIEF JUDICE:

Adjourned.