

**MINUTES OF A CIVIL SERVICE BOARD PUBLIC HEARING HELD
JULY 21, 2026**

The St. Tammany Fire District No.3 Civil Service Board met in special session at 1:00 p.m. July 21, 2026, at the Administrative Building located at 27690 Main St. Lacombe, LA.

Call to Order:

Roll call: Samantha Osbon and Justin Stiehl were present. Timothy Moreau was absent.

Chief Geissler and Chad Danenhowe, and Captain Guillot and Kevin Vogeltanz were also present.

Ms. Osbon stated that she wanted to ensure that everyone was clear and the scope of the proceedings that the Board will follow. The Board's jurisdiction in this matter is narrow and defined by state law. Under Louisiana Revised State Statute 33:2555 section B sub section 2C, the only question before the Board today is whether Mr. Guillot, the appellant was given a fair opportunity to prove his ability in the position of Assistant Fire Chief during his working test period. The Board is not here to decide issues of good faith, just cause, reasonableness or any other matters that apply in general disciplinary appeals. Within that narrow jurisdiction, the Board has complete charge of the hearing and may conduct it in any manner it deems advisable providing that no party is prejudiced. The Board's decision must be based on competent and relevant evidence. Council should therefore focus their presentations on evidence that directly relates to whether Mr. Guillot was afforded a fair opportunity to demonstrate his ability. Ms. Osbon also stated that Mr. Guillot bears the burden of proof and will present his case first. The District will present its case second. Witnesses will be sequestered and objections may be made during testimony. She will rule on procedural matters and objections pursuant to Board rule 4. The Board reserves the right to question witnesses, and a court reporter is present to ensure a complete record. The Board may also enter executive session as authorized by law to receive confidential legal advice or conduct investigative proceedings. These guidelines are intended to ensure fair, orderly, and efficient hearing for everyone involved.

Ms. Osbon asked for a motion to amend the agenda to consider the motion to continue and her preliminary ruling. Captain Stiehl made a motion to amend the agenda. Ms. Osbon seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Captain Stiehl – Yea, Ms. Osbon – Yea. Motion carried.

Ms. Osbon opened the floor for discussion and wanted to summarize the basis for her preliminary ruling on the Motion to Continue.

Ms. Osbon stated that the parties have known of the July 21st hearing date for several weeks and all council confirmed their availability for this date on June 17th. Official written notice of the hearing was sent on June 23rd. Mr. Guillot submitted his Motion to Continue on Friday, July 17th, only four days before the hearing. Based on the fact that acting administrative Chief Marc May began previously approved annual leave on July 15th and is out of the state through July 27th. State law gives the Board complete charge of the hearing and allows them to conduct it in any manner they deem advisable provided no party is prejudiced. The Board's rules do not require a continuance simply because a subpoenaed witness is unavailable especially where reasonable alternative means of securing testimony exists. The Board, its council and the parties have already devoted

substantial time and effort preparing for this hearing, including work over the weekend to address pending motions. Fairness to the District and the tax paying public requires that these proceedings be promptly resolved. For these reasons she did not find good cause to continue the hearing and she issued a preliminary ruling denying the Motion to Continue. She also noted that if the Board later determined that Mr. May's testimony is necessary to their decision, they may hold the record open for a limited time to receive his testimony by deposition or another reasonable means that does not require postponing today's hearing.

She opened the floor for public comment.

Mr. Vogeltanz stated that he was fine with the decision and was ready to proceed. No further discussion.

Captain Stiehl made a motion to confirm the preliminary ruling of the Motion to Continue. Ms. Osbon seconded. A vote was taken. Motion carried.

Appeal Hearing.

Ms. Osbon stated that the evidentiary portion of the hearing will begin. She asked that the court reporter swear in all witnesses.

The following subpoenaed witnesses were sworn in.

Adrienne Bordelon

James McQuilkin

Paul Sehlinger

David Darby

Mark Waniewski

Danny Hall

Michael Geissler

Jordy Johnson

Michael Guillot

All witnesses responded affirmatively.

Mr. Danenhower stated that Darby and Johnson were not on the list and that Mr. Waniewski has appeared via subpoena from 321 miles away and he is entitled to be paid for his travel expenses. This is a \$480.00 expense that he is entitled to.

Ms. Osbon stated that all witnesses are instructed to not discuss their testimony with anyone other than the attorneys in this matter. The witnesses were sent to the day room at station 31. Once they have testified they are free to go.

The travel cost to Mr. Waniewski will be part of the final ruling.

Exhibits were discussed and the following submitted.

G2- Refusal to confirm

G3- Assistant Fire Chief Classification plan

G4 – STFD3 policy

G9 – Petition for Appeal/Request for hearing and investigation
G10 – Notice of Appeal dated June 29th
G11 – Request for issuance of subpoenas
G12- email from Geissler to Guillot on or about May 13th.

There were objections to G5, G6, G7, and G8.

There were no exhibits submitted from the District.

Witness, Ms. Adrienne Bordelon, State Examiner.

Ms. Bordelon explained that the appointing authority can fail someone in their working test period for any reason as long as it was not discriminatory. Further discussion took place regarding fair opportunity definition, examples, and reasons a person could be failed in their working test period.

Ms. Osbon started a five-minute break at 2:12pm.

The Board returned from recess at 2:21pm.

Mr. Olinde made sure the audience understood that the witnesses were sequestered for a reason and no text messages should be sent to them. If discovered, their testimony will could be excluded. Ms. Osbon stated that the board wanted to be fair and just for everyone and sending texts would not be fair and just to everyone involved.

Witness, Chief Michael Geissler.

Chief Geissler stated his definition of fair working test period as timely, gives the employee the ability to do the job, to show that they can do or perform the job, can be trustworthy, honest, and as long as he allowed the employee to do those things he thinks that it is fair. They can show they can do the job by previously stated definition and that they need to be present, involved, be able to work closely with the Fire Chief, be able to fill in for the Fire Chief when he is not able to be here, honesty, integrity, supportive of the Fire Chief as well as the subordinate employees.

He confirmed that Captain Guillot worked in the Assistant Chief position from 9/18/2024 to 5/17/2025 as provisional. He started his probation period 5/17/2025. Chief Geissler confirmed that Captain Guillot was in the Assistant Chief position from 9/2024 through 5/2026.

Issues and reasons that Chief Geissler did not confirm Captain Guillot were discussed.

Recess for 5 mins. at 3:22.

Back from recess at 3:35. Chief Geissler still on witness stand.

Discussion regarding complaints with Captain Guillot when he was working in the Assistant Chief position were discussed. The Assistant Fire Chief classification plan was discussed. Other reasons for not confirming were discussed. Done with this witness.

Witness, Captain James McQuilkin. Mr. Danenhower objected to this witness due to the fact that he has no factual relevancy on the basis for the rejection. The Board allowed the witness to testify.

Captain McQuilkin stated that he has worked at this department for 17 years and is currently a Fire Captain. He stated that when Captain Guillot was in the Assistant Chief position, he was his immediate supervisor. He stated that he and M. Guillot were captains together on the same shift. Ms. Osbon stated that the questions be limited to fair opportunity.

Captain McQuilkin stated that he thinks that he did get a fair opportunity to do his job, and he felt he did an excellent job.

Ms. Osbon wanted to confirm that Captain McQuilkin said that he did get a fair opportunity, Captain McQuilkin stated yes. No more questions.

Witness, Captain Paul Sehlinger

Captain Sehlinger stated that he has been with the department since 2013 and is currently a Fire Captain. When asked whether or not Guillot was given a fair opportunity to prove that he could be a great assistant chief, Captain Sehlinger replied that he didn't know because he wasn't in admin, he was on the suppression side, and they don't really know what goes on in admin. No further questions.

Witness, Michael Guillot

Captain Guillot stated that he has been employed by the department for 17 years. He stated that he started in the assistant chief position about 2 years ago. Discussion of conversations of not confirming him took place. He discussed areas that he felt he helped the Chief and the department. He stated that if Chief had told him to do something, he would've done it since he was in probation. He discussed that he was never told the expectations of the job, not told he was failing any job duties, not disciplined or written up. He felt that he did an excellent job in the position. He stated that he has a good relationship with the men and he is well liked. Exhibit 2, the non-confirmation letter was discussed.

Mr. Danenhower asked if day to day were never discussed. Captain Guillot stated that he did not come in and discuss day to day behavior. He also stated that some of the things that Chief Geissler listed, he discussed and he did correct the behavior and tried to make those things better although he had no coaching. During these follow up questions, Captain Guillot stated that he did not receive coaching or directives from Chief Geissler. Exhibit 3 introduced by Mr. Vogeltanz, page 2 was discussed regarding response to all emergency calls was discussed in how it was unclear that he had to respond. Captain Guillot stated that he was never told to respond to all calls. Mr. Captain Guillot was asked if he applied for the job without referring to the job classification plan. Captain Guillot stated that he would expect to be held to the standard of previous assistant chiefs and that he did read the job classification plan.

The Board asked questions as to where Captain Guillot resided during his probationary period. Captain Guillot stated that maybe for the first four months or so. Mr. Olinde asked if he was told that he had to respond to major incidents. Captain Guillot stated that he was told if he was able to respond. He was asked how many calls he responded to outside of administrative hours. Captain Guillot stated that he responded his guess would be somewhere between seven and a dozen. He was asked if there was a policy about using phones while driving a departmental vehicle, Captain Guillot stated that he believed that there was but he wasn't certain. Mr. Olinde asked if he asked the Captains to call a certain phone, would that slow down their emergency response? Captain Guillot stated that he didn't believe so.

No further questions.

A 5 minute recess started at 4:55.

5:02 pm, back on the record.

Mr. Vogeltanz had no further witnesses to call.

Mr. Olinde asked if Marc May was here to testify what he expected his testimony to be. Captain Guillot stated that he would just be witness to conversations.

Mr. Vogeltanz would like to proffer exhibits 5 and 6, and would like to ask the board to hold until he could talk with Marc May.

Ms. Osbon will take Marc May into consideration when they deliberate.
Closing arguments, you are allowed 5 minutes.

Mr. Vogeltanz and Mr. Danenhower gave their closing arguments.

Captain Stiehl made a motion to enter executive session. Ms. Osbon seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Captain Stiehl – Yea

Ms. Osbon – Yea

Motion approved. Time 5:22pm.

All witnesses released.

Captain Stiehl made a motion at 5:53 pm to come out of executive session. Ms. Osbon seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Captain Stiehl – Yea

Ms. Osbon – Yea

Motion carried.

Ms. Osbon moved that the Board find that the testimony of Marc May was not necessary to the Board's decision. Captain Stiehl seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Osbon – Yea

Captain Stiehl – Yea

Motion carried.

Captain Stiehl made a motion to affirm the action of the Appointing Authority and rejecting the working test. Ms. Osbon seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Captain Stiehl – Yea

Ms. Osbon – Yea affirming the Appointing Authorities decision

Motion carried.

Ms. Osbon made a motion to instruct the board's attorney to draft a written ruling and order consistent with the board's decision. The board will meet to consider adopting the ruling and order at a later date and time to be announced. Captain Stiehl seconded. A vote was taken. Motion carried.

Captain Stiehl made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Osbon seconded. A vote was taken.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:56pm .

Minutes submitted by

Theresa McCarthy, Secretary

Approved by the board

August 18, 2026