



**PUBLIC SAFETY CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**  
**MONTHLY MEETING AGENDA**

*The agenda is subject to change to address immediate Commission concerns.*

**DATE:** Wednesday, June 17, 2026

**TIME:** 10:00 a.m.

**LOCATION:** In Person and Microsoft Teams (Webinar-view only)

**In-Person Location:**

SMT 1679 – 700 Fifth Avenue

Civil Service Department Hearing Room

**In-Person Attendance Instructions:**

Call **(206) 233-7118** or **(206) 586-1991** from the 4th floor lobby to be escorted to the 16th floor.

**Important Notes:**

- The Microsoft Teams webinar is **view-only**.
- Public comment will NOT be accepted through the webinar platform.
- Public comment may be provided **in person** or **in writing** only.
- For public comment instructions, visit the PSCSC website:

[Public Safety Civil Service Commission - Meeting Agendas and Minutes | seattle.gov](https://www.seattle.gov/public-safety-civil-service-commission/meeting-agendas-and-minutes)

**Webinar Public Login:**

[https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting\\_ZWE1ZmUzNTctZDdhZS00MmQ2LTk4ZGEtODdlZWVjZTZjNmUz%40threa\\_d.v2/0?context=%7b%22id%22%3a%2278e61e45-6beb-4009-8f99-359d8b54f41b%22%2c%22oid%22%3a%220cc67185-726d-44dc-b9dc-4e989f1dfbad%22%7d](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_ZWE1ZmUzNTctZDdhZS00MmQ2LTk4ZGEtODdlZWVjZTZjNmUz%40threa_d.v2/0?context=%7b%22id%22%3a%2278e61e45-6beb-4009-8f99-359d8b54f41b%22%2c%22oid%22%3a%220cc67185-726d-44dc-b9dc-4e989f1dfbad%22%7d)

**Commissioners, Staff, and Invited Guests:**

Please join using the Teams presenter invitation. Do not join through the public login link.

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**Public Safety Civil Service Commission**  
**Monthly Meeting Agenda**  
**June 17, 2026 @ 10:00 a.m.**

SMT 1679 Civil Service Department Hearing Room and Microsoft Teams Webinar-View Only

<b>1.</b>	<b>CALL TO ORDER LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b>	Commission Chair (PSCSC 2.04)
<b>2.</b>	<b>COMMISSIONER INTRODUCTIONS</b>	
<b>3.</b>	<b>ADOPTION OF AGENDA</b>	
<b>4.</b>	<b>PUBLIC COMMENT (In Person/Written)</b>	
<b>5.</b>	<b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</b>	April 17, 2026, PSCSC Monthly Meeting ( <a href="#">Pages 1-3</a> )
<b>6.</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE SESSION</b>	May be cancelled if not needed
<b>7.</b>	<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<p><b>A. REQUEST TO REVIEW OR MODIFY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DECISION</b> (<a href="#">Pages 4-31</a>)  Johnson v. PSCSC- PSCSC No. 26-07-020RCRM</p> <p><b>B. PROMOTIONAL EXAM PROTEST REVIEWS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fire Battalion Chief Oral Board-<i>There were no Fire Battalion Chief protest reviews submitted.</i></li> <li>2. Fire Boat Pilot Written Exam- 1 exam protest review was filed</li> </ol>
<b>8.</b>	<b>UPDATES/DISCUSSION</b>	<p><b>A. FIRE AND POLICE EXAM UNIT UPDATES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Police Exams Team</li> <li>2. Fire Exams Team</li> </ol>

		<p>3. Fire and Police Staffing (Hiring/Attrition Numbers)</p> <p><b>B. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BUDGET &amp; DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES</b></p> <p>1. Department Update</p> <p>2. Budget Update (<a href="#">Page 32</a>)</p> <p><b>C. CASE STATUS REPORT/APPEAL UPDATES/HEARING SCHEDULE</b> (<a href="#">Pages 33-36 CSR</a>)</p> <p>1. Hill v. SPD-PSCSC No. 24-01-004A</p> <p>2. Rigon v. SPD-PSCSC No. 25-01-032A</p> <p>3. Johnson v. PSCSC-PSCSC No. 26-07-020RCRM</p>
9.	<b>OLD/NEW BUSINESS</b>	
10.	<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>	<b>Next Meeting Date:</b> Thursday, July 16, 2026 @ 10:00 a.m.



**Public Safety Civil Service Commission  
Monthly Meeting Minutes**

**April 17, 2026 @ 10:00 a.m.**

Seattle Municipal Tower Room 1679 and Teams

1.	<b>CALL TO ORDER</b> Commission Chair (PSCSC 2.04)  <b>LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b>	Commissioner Mays called the meeting to order at 10:02 am. and read the Land Acknowledgement.
2.	<b>COMMISSIONER INTRODUCTIONS</b>  <b>STAFF, COUNSEL AND GUESTS</b>	<p>The Commissioners present introduced themselves: Commission Chair Queniya Mays and Commissioner Richard Greene. Not Present: Commissioner Tom Applegate</p> <p>Andrea Scheele, Executive Director; Commission Staff and Public Safety Exams Staff; Joe Levan, Assistant City Attorney/Commission Counsel. Anne Vold, Assistant City Attorney, Aaron Valla, Assistant City Attorney and representatives of Seattle Police HR and Seattle Fire HR.</p>
3.	<b>ADOPTION OF AGENDA</b>	Commissioner Mays moved to adopt the April 17, 2026, agenda. Commissioner Greene seconded the motion. The motion passed.
4.	<b>PUBLIC COMMENT (GENERAL)</b>	There was no public comment in writing or in person.
5.	<b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</b> <b>March 11, 2026</b> <b>PSCSC Monthly Meeting</b>	Commissioner Mays moved to accept the March 11, 2026, PSCSC monthly meeting minutes as written. Commissioner Greene seconded the motion. The motion passed.
6.	<b>UPDATES/DISCUSSION</b>	<p><b>A. Johnson v. PSCSC, No. 25-07-052A</b></p> <p>Consider Request by Captain Johnson to Revise or Modify a Decision of the Executive Director under PSCSC Rule 2.13.b. (Possible Vote)</p> <p>Commissioner Green moved to uphold the Executive Director’s decision to dismiss. Commissioner Mays seconded the motion. The motion passed.</p>

		<p><b>B. FIRE AND POLICE EXAM UNIT UPDATES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Police Exams Team</li> <li>2. Fire Exams Team</li> <li>3. Fire and Police Staffing (Hiring/Attrition Numbers)</li> </ol> <p><b>C. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BUDGET &amp; DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Department Update</li> <li>5. Budget Update</li> </ol> <p><b>D. CASE STATUS REPORT/APPEAL UPDATES/HEARING SCHEDULE</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Hill v. SPD-PSCSC No. 24-01-004A</li> <li>7. Rigon v. SPD-PSCSC No. 25-01-032A</li> <li>8. Johnson v. PSCSC-PSCSC No. 25-07-052A</li> </ol>
7.	<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<p><b>E. PROMOTIONAL EXAM PROTEST REVIEWS</b></p> <p>Police Sergeant Oral Board (No exam protest reviews were filed)</p>
8.	<b>EXECUTIVE SESSION</b>	<p>The commission went into Executive Session at 10:04 a.m. The Executive Session ended at 10:24 a.m.</p> <p>The commission went back into Executive Session at 10:25 a.m. Executive Session ended at 10:37 a.m.</p>
9.	<b>OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT TRAINING</b>	<p>Presenter: Joe Levan, Assistant City Attorney</p>
10.	<b>OLD/NEW BUSINESS</b>	<p>Financial Interest Statements</p>
11.	<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>	<p>The meeting adjourned at 11:37 a.m.</p>

Minutes submitted June 17, 2026, by: Teresa Jacobs

Minutes  Approved  Amended

**June 17, 2026**, by: PSCSC

Signed by PSCSC Commission Chair, Queniya Mays

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Monthly meetings are recorded, they can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgIMkgpm-XFGWnnYfMRL4tQ>

Previous recordings may be requested via the public records portal at

<https://www.seattle.gov/public-records>

# REQUEST FOR REVIEW

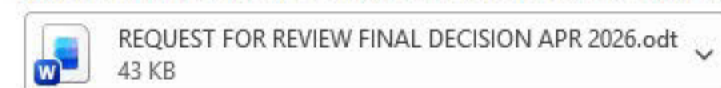


Johnson, Douglas

To CSC\_PublicSafety; Jacobs, Teresa

Retention Policy 90 days Inbox (90 days)

*i* This item will expire in 19 days. To keep this item longer apply a different Retention Policy.



Expires 7/1/2026



Thu 4/2/2026 3:13 PM

Re: March 24, 2026 Final Decision PSCSC Investigation 2025-004F-Johnson

To the Public Safety Civil Service Commission:

I submit this written request under PSCSC Rule 2.13(b) seeking Commission review and modification of the Executive Director Scheele's March 24, 2026 Final Decision in PSCSC Investigation 2025-004F-Johnson.

This request is timely. Rule 2.13(b) provides that a person adversely affected by an action or decision of the Executive Director may request that the Commission revise or modify that action or decision within ten days from the date of notice.

This request concerns the March 24, 2026 Final Decision, which is distinct from prior non selection communications because it is the first formal written Executive Director action imposing a defined two year restriction on my participation in civil service examination development and administration activities. The prior non selection communications provide background, but this request is directed to the separate final sanction imposed on March 24, 2026.

Good cause exists for Commission review and modification. The March 24, 2026 Final Decision imposes a prospective two year restriction based on disputed authority, disputed rule application, and a remedy that is not adequately supported by the decision itself. The decision expressly states that the record did not establish that my conduct materially affected the examination process, yet it imposed a separate forward looking restriction on future participation in exam development and administration activities.

I respectfully request that the Commission:

1. Accept this request as timely under Rule 2.13(b).
2. Revise or modify the March 24, 2026 Final Decision by rescinding the two year restriction on my participation in civil service examination development and administration activities.
3. In the alternative, conduct a hearing on the issues of authority, rule basis, and remedy.
4. In the further alternative, stay the two year restriction pending Commission review.

This request is submitted without waiver of any rights, objections, or positions I may have in any administrative, judicial, or other forum. Nothing in this request should be construed as conceding the legal or factual basis of the March 24, 2026 sanction.

Respectfully submitted,

Captain Douglas Johnson Seattle Fire Department



[douglas.johnson@seattle.gov](mailto:douglas.johnson@seattle.gov)



**From:** Johnson, Douglas <[Douglas.Johnson@seattle.gov](mailto:Douglas.Johnson@seattle.gov)>

**Sent:** Thursday, April 2, 2026 3:13 PM

**To:** CSC\_PublicSafety <[PublicSafety@seattle.gov](mailto:PublicSafety@seattle.gov)>; Jacobs, Teresa <[Teresa.Jacobs@seattle.gov](mailto:Teresa.Jacobs@seattle.gov)>

**Subject:** REQUEST FOR REVIEW

GOOD AFTERNOON. PLEASE SEE ATTACHED.

4/2/2026

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SAFETY CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE

Request for Review and Modification Under PSCSC Rule 2.13(b)

Captain Douglas Johnson Requesting Party

Re: March 24, 2026 Final Decision PSCSC Investigation 2025-004F-Johnson

To the Public Safety Civil Service Commission:

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Respectfully submitted,

Captain Douglas Johnson Seattle Fire Department

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [douglas.johnson@seattle.gov](mailto:douglas.johnson@seattle.gov)

[REDACTED]



Date: March 24, 2026  
From: Andrea Scheele, Executive Director Public Safety Civil Service Commission  
To: Fire Captain Douglas Johnson  
Subject: PSCSC Investigation 2025-004F-Johnson  
Final Decision

On March 2, 2026, you were notified that an investigation into your conduct during the PSCSC Battalion Chief oral board examination administered June 11–12, 2024 had concluded, and that the investigator found by a preponderance of the evidence that your conduct violated PSCSC Rule 9.29, requiring candidates to follow instructions related to conduct while participating in an exam and/or at the exam site.

You were provided with a copy of the investigator’s report, which included the findings, conclusions, and exhibits, and notified that as Executive Director, I was considering adopting the investigator’s findings and conclusions. You were notified that a sustained finding that you violated PSCSC Rule 9.29 could result in actions up to and including disqualification from the 2024 Battalion Chief promotional process and removal of your name from the promotional eligible register. You were provided with fourteen days to provide any additional information in writing but were not required to submit a response. The notice was sent to your employment and personal email addresses.

During the fourteen-day notice and information submittal period, you did not submit additional information for consideration.

This determination is limited to whether a violation of the PSCSC Rules occurred and does not address SFD employment-related policies.

As your employing department, SFD may take employment-related action in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement and departmental policy.

### **Applicable Rule**

PSCSC Rule 9.29(c) provides:

*Exam participants are notified of and required to follow instructions related to conduct while participating in an exam and/or at the exam site. Failure to follow instructions related to conduct at the exam may result in a candidate being disqualified from the exam process.*

## **Adoption of Investigative Findings**

The independent investigator interviewed witnesses and reviewed relevant documents, including examination instructions, witness statements, and other materials, and assessed witness credibility. In coming to my decision, I considered the report and associated documents that were part of the investigation, the PSCSC Rules of Practice and Procedure, and how exam conduct matters have been handled and addressed in the past.

After review and consideration, I adopt the investigator's findings and sustain the finding that your conduct violated PSCSC Rule 9.29.

## **PSCSC 9.29 Disqualification Standard**

A violation of PSCSC Rule 9.29 may result in disqualification from the exam process. Disqualification is a significant consequence but may be warranted where the failure to follow instructions:

- compromises the fairness or standardized administration of a testing process;
- creates a demonstrable risk of unfair advantage or disadvantage to any candidate; or
- compromises or risks compromising the security, confidentiality, or scoring integrity of the examination.

## **Consideration of Remedies**

In determining the appropriate remedy, I considered a range of actions, including issuing a warning, removing your name from the promotional register, and imposing conditions on future participation in exam development and administration activities. I also considered whether a lesser remedy would adequately address the impact of the conduct and preserve the integrity of the examination process.

## **Impact of Conduct**

The failures to follow instructions occurred during a structured, competitive assessment and disrupted the administration of the examination. Examiners were required to divert attention and time away from their assigned duties to address your disruptions and repeat instructions after you spoke over them. It is undisputed that you did not sign the confidentiality statement as drafted, did not take a seat when instructed, and did not sign the Written Exercise Sheet as instructed.

The record reflects that exam staff and other candidates took steps to deescalate the situation, and all candidates were able to complete the examination.

## **Decision and Future Expectations**

Under PSCSC Rule 9.29, violations of examination rules may result in disqualification where the conduct, in context, compromises the fairness, integrity, security, or orderly administration of the examination process, or otherwise warrants such action to maintain confidence in the civil service system.

The investigative record establishes that your conduct violated PSCSC Rule 9.29. However, the record does not establish that your conduct materially affected the examination process. In this instance, disqualification from the promotional process is not warranted.

This determination does not indicate that your conduct was acceptable for participation in a PSCSC promotional civil service exam.

You are hereby issued a formal warning. Future failures to follow exam rules or instructions may result in immediate removal from the examination site and disqualification from the testing process, as necessary to ensure compliance with examination instructions and the orderly administration of civil service examinations. Determinations during an exam are within the discretion of CIV exam staff.

All candidates are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the PSCSC Rules of Practice and Procedure, as well as applicable SFD policies, while participating in exam activities.

## **Two Year Restriction on PSCSC Exam Development and Administration Activities**

In addition to the failures to follow exam instructions, multiple witnesses observed you engaging in disruptive conduct during the instruction and testing periods of the exam, which included the substantiated failures to follow directions, using profanity while talking with PSCSC examiners, and talking over examiner instructions.

Your conduct was not consistent with the expectations of professionalism, sound judgment, and adherence to instructions required for participation in civil service examination development and administration activities. Selection for such activities is not a civil service right and is determined by PSCSC/Civil Service Department staff.

Accordingly, you are not eligible, for a period of two (2) years, to participate in civil service examination development or administration activities, for examinations that will be administered in 2027 and 2028.<sup>1</sup>

This determination is administrative in nature. A prospective limitation is necessary and reasonable to ensure that individuals participating in exam development and administration have demonstrated consistent adherence to instructions, professionalism, and applicable rules.

If you seek to participate in exam development or administration activities with PSCSC after the above-described period, your application will be considered in accordance with established committee selection processes.

cc:

President Kenneth Stuart, IAFF, Local 27

Ireneo Bartolome, Interim HR Director, SFD

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<sup>1</sup> Promotional exam development committees are generally selected in the year prior to exam administration, and Firefighter exam assessors are generally selected in the same year as exam administration. PSCSC selection processes and timelines are subject to change based on PSCSC and CIV business needs.



Date: March 2, 2026  
From: Andrea Scheele, Executive Director Public Safety Civil Service Commission <sup>ASM</sup>  
To: Fire Captain Douglas Johnson  
Subject: PSCSC Investigation 2025-004F-Johnson  
Notice of Findings, Proposed Disqualification and Opportunity to Respond

### **I. Background and Allegation of Exam Related Misconduct**

On or about July 1, 2024, complaints were received by the Seattle Fire Department (“SFD”) and the Civil Service Department / Public Safety Civil Service Commission (“CIV/PSCSC”) concerning your conduct during the Battalion Chief oral board examination administered June 11–12, 2024.

The alleged conduct, if substantiated, could constitute violations of PSCSC Rule 9.29 (Prohibited Conduct in Examinations).

In July 2024, PSCSC and SFD agreed that the allegations would be investigated by SFD. No investigative action was undertaken during the ensuing period. In September 2025, PSCSC retained an independent, neutral outside investigator to conduct a comprehensive investigation and analyze the findings against PSCSC 9.29. PSCSC’s portion of the investigation is now complete.

### **II. Summary of Investigative Findings and Conclusions**

The independent investigator reviewed documentary evidence, interviewed relevant witnesses, reviewed examination instructions and required documentation, and assessed witness credibility.

Applying a preponderance of the evidence standard, the investigator concluded that your conduct violated PSCSC Rule 9.29. A copy of the investigative report is enclosed.

### **III. Applicable Rule**

PSCSC Rule 9.29(c) provides:

*Exam participants are notified of and required to follow instructions related to conduct while participating in an exam and/or at the exam site. Failure to follow instructions related to conduct at the exam may result in a candidate being disqualified from the exam process.*

Under RCW 41.08, RCW 41.12, Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 4.08, and its adopted Rules, the Commission is charged with maintaining the integrity, security, and orderly administration of merit-based civil service examinations.

**IV. Eligibility Determination and Opportunity to Provide Additional Information**

You are hereby provided formal notice of the investigator’s findings and conclusions and of potential decisions under consideration with respect to your eligibility for the 2024 Battalion Chief promotional examination process, and future participation in PSCSC exam development and administration.

Under PSCSC Rule 2.12(h), the Executive Director decides all questions relating to the eligibility of applicants and all questions arising during an examination.

Based upon the investigative findings, I am considering whether to adopt the investigator’s factual findings and conclusions that you violated PSCSC Rule 9.29, and whether the conduct at issue rendered you ineligible in connection with the 2024 Battalion Chief promotional examination process.

If a determination of ineligibility is made, your name will be removed from the current Battalion Chief promotional eligibility register.

In addition, I am considering whether the conduct at issue warrants a determination that you are ineligible to participate in civil service examination development or administration activities for a period of up to two (2) years.

Before issuing a final decision, you have an opportunity to submit any additional information for consideration. You may submit a written response by email within fourteen (14) calendar days of this notice. Your response may include any facts, explanations, or other relevant information. You are not required to submit a response.

After review of any timely response, a final written determination will be issued.

**V. Scope of Authority**

Any determination limited to examination-related matters within the jurisdiction of the Public Safety Civil Service Commission.

As your employment department, SFD may take employment-related action, if any, in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement and departmental policy.

**VI. Retaliation Prohibited**

Please be aware that the City prohibits retaliation of any kind against individuals who have raised concerns with management about conduct they believe is unlawful or in violation of City policy. The City also prohibits retaliation against individuals who participated in the investigation process.

If you believe that you are experiencing retaliation because of your participation in the investigation, please notify me, your management, or a departmental Human Resources representative, so we may take appropriate action.

The City of Seattle treats allegations of misconduct confidentially to the extent permissible by law, and we ask that you do the same.

cc:

President Kenneth Stuart, IAFF, Local 27

Ireneo Bartolome, Interim HR Director, SFD



## CONFIDENTIAL INVESTIGATION REPORT

January 27, 2026

Andrea Scheele  
Executive Director, Civil Service Department  
Public Safety Civil Service Commission

Re: Investigation PSCSC 2025-004F

### **I. INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF INVESTIGATION**

This investigator was retained to investigate complaints filed on or about July 1, 2024, by employees of Public Safety Civil Service Commission (PSCSC) alleging that Capt. Douglas Johnson with the Seattle Fire Department (“SFD”) engaged in exam-related misconduct at the 2024 Fire Battalion Chief Promotional Exam oral boards held on June 11 and 12, 2024.

Specifically, the investigation was initiated by PSCSC to determine, by a preponderance of the evidence, the following:

- 1. Whether Capt. Johnson engaged in misconduct in violation of PSCSC Rule 9.29, which requires all candidates to follow instructions related to conduct while participating in an exam and/or at the exam site?**

This is my summary report.

### **II. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS**

The investigation concluded, by a preponderance of the evidence, that Captain Douglas Johnson violated PSCSC Rules of Practice or Procedure 9.29(c) during the 2024 Promotional Exam by failing to comply with verbal and written instructions.

On the first day of the Oral Boards, despite clear instruction to execute the mandatory Confidentiality Statement, Capt. Johnson refused to sign the statement as drafted. On the second day of exam testing, all candidates, including Capt. Johnson, were instructed to enter the exam room and be seated; however, Capt. Johnson remained standing and engaged in a tense exchange with the exam administrator. He also failed to sign the Written Exercise Instruction Sheet acknowledging receipt of the instructions and written memo topic, as directed.

Based on these findings, Capt. Johnson was found to have violated Rule 9.29(c)’s prohibition against failing to follow instructions.

### **III. INVESTIGATION PLAN AND PROCESS:**

In the course of my investigation, I interviewed Captain Drew Andrews, complainants, witnesses, and PSCSC and SFD organizational employees; reviewed records provided by PSCSC, SFD, Captain Andrews, and witnesses, including PSCSC rules in effect at the time of the alleged conduct, as stated in relevant part below.

#### **A. Persons Interviewed and Position:**

1. Yoshiko Grace Matsui, Sr. Fire Exams Analyst-PSCSC (9/29/25)
2. Rachael Schade, Sr. Public Safety Exams Analyst-PSCSC (9/30/25)
3. Adelaide Alderks, Sr. Public Safety Exams Analyst-PSCSC (9/30/25)
4. Chief Ryan Skedd, SFD (10/6/25)
5. Capt. Drew Andrews, with representative, Liam Roney (10/14/25)
6. Capt. Doug Johnson, with representative Jeff Miller (10/15/25)
7. Chief David Berry, SFD (10/24/25)
8. Helen Fitzpatrick, Executive Director of Administration-SFD (10/24/25 and 10/30/25)
9. Margaret Weihs, Workplace Investigator-SFD (11/19/25)

#### **B. Evidence Reviewed and Relied on:**

1. R.S. Memo to Dep. Chief Branum, 7/1/24
2. A.A. Statement on Candidate Interactions, 7/1/24
3. Y.G.M. Statement on Candidate Interactions, 7/1/24
4. Email Cover with proposed 2024 Battalion Chief Exam Bibliography, 11/22/23
5. Final Examination Bibliography for Battalion Chief 2024
6. 2024 Promotional Exam Process Information Booklet for Battalion Chief
7. Emails from/to D.J. re Wednesday, June 12th Writing Exercise, 5/28/24-6/6/24
8. Email from Y.G.M re. Exam Date Change Requests, 6/9/24
9. Email from/to D.J. re Exam Date Change Requests, 6/10/24
10. 2024 Fire Battalion Chief Written Exams Confidentiality Statement, 3/32/24
11. 2024 Fire Battalion Chief Oral Board Exam Confidentiality Statement, 6/11/24
12. 2024 Battalion Chief Oral Board Exam Confirmation of Assigned Materials
13. Battalion Chief Promotion Process 2024 Writing Exercise Instruction Sheet
14. SFD/PSCSC Monthly Huddle Meeting Notes by S.B., 6/13/24
15. Email from Dep. Chief Branum with Statements, 7/1/24
16. Mtg Invite re Follow Up BC Oral Board Event, 8/14/24
17. Emails PSCSC and SFD re. Status Update Requested, 3/10/25-6/10/25
18. Emails SFD and PSCSC re. BC Oral Board 2024 Intake/Invest., 7/1/25-7/16/25
19. Emails re. Eligibility for BC/Capt. Develop. Committee, 8/6/25-8/18/25

20. Email PSCSC re. 2026 BC/Capt. Follow-up on Committee, 9/15/25
21. Comparator Rescheduling requests
22. SFD Memo to File; Overview of Information
23. PSCSC Rules of Practice and Procedure
24. Notice of Investigation for D.J., 9/24/25

#### IV. RELEVANT BACKGROUND<sup>1</sup>

Douglas Johnson is a Fire Captain with the Seattle Fire Department (“SFD”). To be promoted to Battalion Chief, captains must successfully complete and pass the Battalion Chief Promotional Exam. In 2024, the exam was administered in two parts: (1) a written examination on March 23, 2024, and (2) oral boards conducted over two days, June 11 and 12, 2024, which included a written exercise on the second day.

The Battalion Chief Promotional Exam is administered only once every two years and, for the oral board portion, requires coordination with numerous external assessors who must travel to Seattle to evaluate candidates. For these and other reasons, candidates are informed of testing dates months in advance. See **Ex. 9** (email from Yoshiko Matsui explaining the exam administration process and deadlines: “Candidates are notified of exam administration days 8–9 months ahead of time.... For the orderly completion of the exam process, candidates are all expected to comply with their scheduled exam appointments.”).

The June 11–12, 2024 dates for the oral board portion of the promotional exam were first shared with candidates in the Proposed Examination Bibliography for Battalion Chief issued to SFD on November 22, 2023, and again in the Final Bibliography. See **Ex. 4** (“Candidates who pass the written examination will be scheduled for the oral board portion of the examination (assessment center), tentatively scheduled for June 10–14, 2024.”) (emphasis in original); **Ex. 5** (Final 2024 Battalion Chief Exam Bibliography restating, in bold, the tentative oral board dates of June 10–14, 2024).

On March 4, 2024, all candidates were provided with the 2024 Information Booklet, which expressly states, in relevant part:

***Please note: In order to participate in the oral board and to therefore be included on the final eligibility list, a candidate must achieve an acceptable minimum passing score on the written exam (per PSCSC Rule***

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<sup>1</sup> The facts comprising the general background and timeline were gathered from undisputed witness interviews and documentary evidence.

**9.12). Additionally, it is mandatory for candidates to complete all aspects of the oral board to be placed on the register.**

...  
The second component of the exam process will be the oral board. The oral board components of the exam will tentatively be administered on **June 10-14, 2024 and you may need to attend more than one day.**

Once the written examination scores have been tabulated, candidates who pass the written exam will be assigned and notified of their specific scheduled oral board date(s), time(s) and location(s).

...  
**There will not be a make-up session for the oral board portions of the exam process. Any conflicts with a scheduled written or oral board time must be resolved prior to the start of the examination process (email Yoshiko at [yoshiko.gracematsui@seattle.gov](mailto:yoshiko.gracematsui@seattle.gov)).**

...  
All candidates must pass the written examination to participate in the oral examination / assessment center. **Additionally, candidates must complete ALL phases of the oral board to be placed on the final eligibility list.** For clarification, this includes participating in all associated oral exam boards. Failure to participate in all testing events will result in removal from the eligibility register. If a writing exercise is added to the oral exam board (as an assessment exercise), candidates are also required to complete the writing assessment. Ex., p. 8 (emphasis in original).

...  
The final results of the process, including the results of the post-test review, will be computed and the final listing of results will be forwarded to SDHR. **Again, candidates must complete the written exam and ALL phases of the oral board to be placed on the final eligibility list.**

Ex. 6, p.4-10 (all bold emphasis in original).

On May 28, 2024, Yoshiko Grace Matsui, Fire Exams Administrator, emailed candidates confirming their scheduled oral board exams and advising that “candidates must attend the writing exercise on Wednesday, June 12, at 0900.” Ex. 7. One week later, Capt. Johnson asked whether administrators were “letting folks do their writing assignment the same day of the other three panels,” stating that he wanted to “do that vs returning downtown.” Id.

Ms. Grace Matsui responded that she was “not allowing any candidates to do their writing examination on the same day as Oral Boards” and confirmed that Wednesday was the only available date “unless you have an approved accommodation request.” Id.

Capt. Johnson replied, “what’s an approved accommodation(s)? I have personal obligations to tend to.” **Id.** Ms. Grace Matsui advised that he was “welcome to submit a request and I’ll review it.” **Id.**

Capt. Johnson reiterated his request to complete the written portion on the same day as “everything else,” again stating that he had “personal family matters to tend to.” **Id.** Ms. Grace Matsui requested a “detailed description of your conflict.” **Id.** Capt. Johnson responded that it was “none of your business, nor the city’s business,” characterized the request as “disingenuous and unprofessional,” and stated that, other than restating that he had “obligations,” he would not provide the City of Seattle with information regarding his personal family matters. **Id.**

Because the situation was becoming increasingly “complex,” the determination of whether to approve or deny the request was transferred to PSCSC Executive Director Andrea Scheele. **Ex. 9** (“Given the increasing complexity of this situation, we will have PSCSC Executive Director Scheele be your point person...”). Ms. Grace Matsui recommended denying the request. **Ex. 8.** In an email sent to Capt. Johnson on June 11, Executive Director Scheele noted: “[w]e did not receive any additional information or documentation of your request by 8:00 a.m., so we will see you Wednesday, June 12 at 8:45 a.m. for the regularly scheduled writing exercise.” **Ex. 9.**

On June 11, 2024, the first day of oral boards, candidates were asked to agree to and sign a confidentiality statement. Although he had signed the same statement less than three months earlier (compare **Exs. 10 and 11**), Capt. Johnson initially refused to sign it on this occasion. He ultimately signed the Confidentiality Statement after modifying it. See **Ex. 11.**

During the second day of oral boards, Capt. Johnson and another captain had interactions with exam administrators that the administrators perceived as inappropriate. These interactions are discussed further below.

SFD was first informed of a concern regarding their captains’ behavior by Chief Skedd, who witnessed the interaction between Capt. Johnson and exam administrators during the written exercise portion of the oral boards on June 12. On June 13, a meeting was held between SFD and PSCSC to discuss the concerns that arose during the oral boards. At the time, SFD’s Director of Human Resources Sarah Lee<sup>2</sup> indicated that she “did not [want] to let it go” and that SFD would look into it. See **Ex. 14.** SFD advised that they intended to have a follow up internal investigation. According to the Executive

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<sup>2</sup> Sarah Lee, the former Human Resources Director, is no longer employed with the SFD and was not available for interview. Where pertinent, the timeline has been reconstructed from her and others’ notes, emails, and other documents in the possession of SFD.

Director of Administration, after consulting with legal, SFD did, in fact, determine to start and take the helm on the investigation. Following request, the impacted exam administrators submitted written statements to SFD Deputy Chief Branum. See **Ex. 15**. The plan for SFD to conduct the investigation was reaffirmed during a status meeting on August 14, 2024. **Ex. 16**.

At some point shortly before or after the exams, Capt. Johnson went out on occupational leave. Reportedly due to the nature of the leave, Director Lee determined that Capt. Johnson would not be contacted or interviewed during the pendency of his leave. It is unclear what authority or policy Director Lee relied on to hold the investigation in abeyance during this period.

Although Capt. Johnson returned to work December 3, 2024, Director Lee did not indicate an intent to resume the investigation until March 2025. See **Ex. 17** (“Fact finding on Johnson was held in abeyance due to him being on medical leave. He has returned to full duty...I will restart now, but please keep in mind that I am also covering/managing our prior investigator’s case load until we hire a replacement investigator.”). SFD’s internal investigator position was vacant from March 5 (or March 13), 2025, until July 1, 2025. The prior investigator’s last day of work was reportedly January 14, 2025. It is understood by the current EEO investigator, however, that other investigations proceeded during this period.

Although Director Lee stated she was “pretty sure” the investigation would be wrapped up by June 2025 (one year from the subject event), it remained unresolved three months later. On June 9, Executive Director Scheele requested another status update. **Ex. 17**. Director Lee responded that the matter was “still open and pending.”

On July 1, 2025, Director Lee requested certain documents related to the 2024 Battalion Chief Exam. **Ex. 18**. In follow-up exchanges over the next several days, Executive Director Scheele provided the requested materials and noted the “length of time that has passed without resolution.” **Id.** In response, Director Lee advised that, “per SFD policies, operating guidelines, and the collective bargaining agreements,” SFD was “obliged” to stay the investigative process while a member is “out on disability and the disability impacts the ability to be interviewed.”<sup>3</sup> **Id.** She indicated that this circumstance was “outside the normal resolution timetable.” **Id.**

In September 2025, Capt. Johnson was informed that he was not selected to serve on a development committee due to the pending investigation into his conduct at the June 2024 Battalion Chief oral boards. **Ex. 20**. At that point, it became apparent that no

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<sup>3</sup> This investigator has not reviewed a policy, operating guideline, or collective bargaining agreement that prohibits entire investigations from proceeding due to the leave status of a party or witness.

substantive action had been taken in the investigation. Despite multiple status requests and discussions since June 2024, Capt. Johnson had not been informed of the complaint, no notices of investigation had been issued, and no fact-finding or interviews had been conducted.<sup>4</sup> Ultimately, Executive Director Scheele initiated an investigation to determine whether any PSCSC Rules of Practice had been violated.

## V. WITNESS SUMMARIES

Below are summaries of witness interviews relevant to the issues and do not reflect all information received from the witnesses.

**Yoshiko Grace Matsui.** Ms. Grace Matsui has served as a Senior Fire Exams Analyst with PSCSC for over seven years and is responsible for designing and implementing promotional fire exams. In this role, she develops and schedules examinations and coordinates air travel and lodging for approximately six to nine assessors from fire departments across the country to participate in the oral boards, during which candidates are evaluated based on their oral responses to questions designed to simulate job-related tasks. Because many assessors volunteer their services, rescheduling is generally not advised. While PSCSC is obligated to accommodate rescheduling requests for active-duty military service or pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”), other requests based on scheduling conflicts are generally denied due to logistical difficulty and limited capacity. Ms. Grace Matsui noted that there is greater flexibility to reschedule written examinations, which are multiple-choice, but not the oral boards or the written exercise component of the oral boards. Ms. Grace Matsui further stated that candidates are provided approximately nine months’ advance notice of exam dates and are expressly warned that there will be no make-up sessions for the oral board portions of the exam process. She noted that she has received rescheduling requests based on weddings, vacations, or family reunions and, while she understands such conflicts, those requests have been denied. Ms. Grace Matsui also provided examples of recent rescheduling requests for the record. See **Ex. 21** (communications informing candidates with personal conflicts that “there are no make-up sessions,” no “options for moving the date of your oral boards,” and no available “makeup dates”).

On May 28, 2024, Ms. Grace Matsui emailed candidates their specific oral board dates within the previously advised date range of June 10–14, 2024. See **Ex. 7**. Shortly thereafter, she received a request from Capt. Johnson seeking to reschedule the written exercise. Ms. Grace Matsui stated that she requested supporting documentation but did

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<sup>4</sup> This investigator is informed that Director Lee also intended to initiate an investigation into cross-complaints against exam administrator, but no notices have been sent or other action taken on those allegations either. See, **Ex. 19** (noting that “SFD has an open complaint” against Ms. Matsui) and **Ex. 22** (Director Lee reported to the new EEO investigator of pending cross-complaints).

not receive any.

On June 12, 2024, all candidates were scheduled to arrive at 9:00 a.m. for the written exercise portion of the oral boards. When one candidate appeared to be arriving late, an exam administrator left to locate that candidate, leaving Ms. Grace Matsui alone to review instructions with the group. While she was instructing candidates to sign in and then take their assigned seats, all candidates except Capt. Johnson proceeded to their seats and sat at their computers in preparation for the exam.

Capt. Johnson asked, “How long do I have to stay to get credit?” and “What do I have to do to get all zeros?” Ms. Grace Matsui found these questions startling because candidates must complete every portion of the exam to receive credit; there is no partial credit, zero score, or credit awarded for merely appearing. See also Information Booklet, Ex. 6.

Ms. Grace Matsui perceived Capt. Johnson as agitated, challenging, and confrontational, as he paced around the room. As she attempted to explain that he was required to participate in the written exercise in order to receive credit, she was interrupted by candidate Captain Andrews, who encouraged Capt. Johnson to “calm down and sit down.” Ms. Grace Matsui recalled that candidate Capt. Skedd “comforted” her by touching her in a manner she perceived as reassuring, as if to say, “you are doing okay.”

After Capt. Johnson sat down and the test began, the group was instructed to read and sign the written exercise instructions. Although the written exercise is allotted 60 minutes for completion, Capt. Johnson finished within approximately 10 minutes and, according to Ms. Grace Matsui, “left loudly.” Despite having been explicitly instructed to sign the acknowledgment of receipt of the instructions, Capt. Johnson did not do so. As a result, Ms. Grace Matsui signed his name on the acknowledgment sheet. See **Ex. 13**.

On the date of the written exercise, another candidate arrived late to the exam and was permitted to complete the exercise at a later time than scheduled. Ms. Grace Matsui reported that this occurred due to her own error, as she had mistakenly failed to inform the candidate of his assigned testing date and time. To remedy that error, the candidate was allowed to complete the exam at a different time.

Following these interactions, Ms. Grace Matsui and other exam administrators were encouraged to document their recollections of the events because they “knew something would come of it.” See **Ex. 3**. Ms. Grace Matsui reported that a subsequent meeting was held with executive leadership from PSCSC and SFD, during which SFD acknowledged hearing that “we had some candidates who treated you poorly” and offered an apology. Ms. Grace Matsui stated that this surprised her and that she assumed Chief Skedd—who

was working with human resources administration at the time—had reported the events to SFD.

When asked about any prior interactions with Capt. Johnson, Ms. Grace Matsui stated that she had known him for some time and asserted that her prior interactions with him did not influence her decision-making regarding rescheduling request. She further stated that she and other PSCSC exam administrators were aware the rescheduling decision would be scrutinized and were confident they followed the applicable rules in denying requests that were unsupported by documentation. Ms. Grace Matsui also emphasized the need for consistency and fairness in administering the exam process, stating that she “can’t in good conscience” grant an exemption for a family commitment when candidates had been given nine months’ advance notice of the exam schedule.

**Rachael Schade.** Ms. Schade has worked with the Public Safety Exams Unit for nearly 30 years administering police entry-level and promotional examinations. She also supports fire exam administration and, in that capacity, was present on June 11 and 12, 2024, for the oral boards of the Fire Battalion Chief Exam.

Ms. Schade reported that she had previously interacted with Capt. Johnson in a variety of settings and denied having any adversarial or conflictual relationship with him. She also reported occasional interactions with Capt. Andrews, primarily regarding entry-level examinations. However, she stated that her interactions with both captains on June 12 were so shocking that she requested to submit a written statement. See **Ex. 1**.

When asked generally about testing accommodations, Ms. Schade stated that fire exams are scheduled and notice is provided approximately three months in advance. Although “life happens” and rescheduling requests do occur, established protocols require candidates to provide documentation in support of such requests. To her knowledge in this case, both Capt. Johnson and Capt. Andrews requested accommodations to test on a different day but resisted providing documentation. She understood that the requests were approved contingent upon submission of documentation, which was never provided.

Regarding Capt. Johnson’s conduct on June 11, Ms. Schade initially described the interaction as a “spirited conversation” in which Capt. Johnson was “very animated,” spoke emphatically, and used expressive hand gestures. She was approached in the hallway by an “anxious” Ms. Alderks, who reported that Capt. Johnson did not want to sign the confidentiality form. Ms. Schade stated that “everyone has to sign the form.” She attempted to explain the form to Capt. Johnson, including its purpose and its application to third parties, but she believed he was not listening. She reported that he repeatedly stated, “You interrupted me,” while interrupting her as she spoke. She described him as being “in a repeat loop” and “not hearing anything I had to say.”

Ms. Schade characterized the interaction as “not pleasant,” “very strange,” and marked by Capt. Johnson interrupting her, appearing extremely agitated, and pursing his lips. Initially, his behavior was so concerning that she thought he might be experiencing a medical event. Because of his agitation, she placed her hand on him in an attempt to calm him. Although he was seated, he repeatedly partially rose from his chair and pointed at the form with a pen. Ms. Schade stated that she did not fear for her own safety but was concerned for his well-being.

Ms. Schade attempted to de-escalate the situation, stating that Capt. Johnson appeared to feel threatened by the confidentiality form, the exam running late, and a prior testing issue involving another candidate from years earlier in which he had been involved. Ultimately, a compromise was reached, and Capt. Johnson proceeded with the oral board examination. Ms. Schade escorted him to his first and second interviews and reported no further incidents that day, noting that she remained focused on maintaining calm and professionalism.

On June 12, Ms. Schade observed Capt. Johnson and Capt. Andrews speaking separately from the group of examinees. Initially, they were laughing, but their voices then lowered and their demeanor shifted to what she described as “angry mad.” The two approached her to ask for Dave Wright, and she informed them that he was not on site and advised them to send an email.

Later that day, after escorting the full group to the room for the written exercise, Ms. Schade observed Capt. Johnson state, “Okay, I showed up. That’s all I need to do, right? So I can go?” Ms. Grace Matsui informed Capt. Johnson that he was required to participate and could not receive credit merely for appearing. Ms. Schade then left the room to retrieve another candidate. When she returned, all candidates were seated.

Capt. Johnson was the first candidate to leave the written exercise. Ms. Schade was not present for any discussion that may have occurred outside the room. When Capt. Andrews finished the exercise, Ms. Schade reported that he “pretended he did not hear me” and leaned over her in a manner that suggested he did not trust her with the exam documents. She described his body language as “very adversarial.”

Ms. Schade stated that she believed Capt. Andrews was “very influenced by Capt. Johnson” and that she “became the enemy from June 11 to June 12,” noting that their behavior on June 12 was starkly different from what she had observed previously. She described the experience as “disappointing” and “surprising,” observing that candidates typically “behave professionally during the exam process.”

**Adelaide Alderks.** Ms. Alderks has been employed by PSCSC since 2021 and has served as a Senior Public Safety Exams Analyst since August 2024. In that capacity, she

supports the Senior Analyst, Ms. Grace Matsui, with exam administration, including candidate check-in and orientation.

Ms. Alderks reported having a limited number of interactions with Capt. Johnson prior to June 2024, primarily in the context of exam development committees. She characterized those prior interactions as “neutral” and denied any conflict or hostility, although she acknowledged some tension related to accomplishing successful examinations. Ms. Alderks also recalled one interaction during a pre-COVID exam in which Capt. Johnson experienced confusion about where to check in and subsequently expressed verbal concern about the process. She stated that she was aware, at a high level, that a rescheduling request had been denied due to the lack of supporting documentation, and that this had resulted in frustration directed toward Ms. Grace Matsui, such that Capt. Johnson did not wish to see her on the day of the exam. Ms. Alderks stated that she was not aware of any other interpersonal conflict between them.

At the request of PSCSC, on or about June 25, 2024, Ms. Alderks prepared a written statement describing her experience during the oral boards for Chief Branum. See **Ex. 2**. When asked whether her statement was complete and accurate, Ms. Alderks indicated that she wished to clarify her reference to Capt. Johnson “balling his fists.” She stated that he was not doing so in a violent manner and that she did not feel fear, explaining that “he looked kind of stressed.”

Regarding the day of the oral boards, Ms. Alderks described Capt. Johnson as generally skeptical when asked to complete and sign the first form (**Ex. 12**). She provided examples to address his concerns, which appeared to calm him somewhat, and he proceeded without further issue. However, when presented with the second form—the Confidentiality Statement—Capt. Johnson became noticeably more frustrated, and the situation escalated. Ms. Alderks reported that he began citing what she described as far-fetched hypothetical scenarios about how he could run afoul of the agreement, such as asking, “What if I sign this and get accused of cheating in some way?” She recalled that Capt. Johnson himself characterized these examples as far-fetched but stated that, in her view, they reflected his psychological state at the time.

Ms. Alderks further reported that Capt. Johnson expressed concern about being accused of disrupting the schedule and delaying testing. Because she was aware that he had requested not to interact with Ms. Grace Matsui, Ms. Alderks left the room to locate Ms. Schade, who was in the hallway.

After Ms. Schade arrived, Capt. Johnson continued to object to signing the Confidentiality Statement. According to Ms. Alderks, Ms. Schade’s attempts to de-escalate the situation were unsuccessful and appeared to have the opposite effect. Capt. Johnson exclaimed, “I don’t think you understand what you are f\*\*king putting us

through!” When Ms. Schade attempted to calm him by placing her hand on him, Capt. Johnson moved her hand away and told her not to tell him to calm down. Ms. Alderks observed him balling his fists.

Ms. Alderks further reported that, at one point, Capt. Johnson referenced a prior incident from several years earlier in which a colleague was disqualified for cheating, stating, “Yoshiko [Grace Matsui] fucked up.” This statement surprised Ms. Alderks because Capt. Johnson had been present during that prior incident and was aware that the other candidate had been found to have cheated. Ms. Alderks also stated that each time she attempted to speak, Capt. Johnson accused her of interrupting him.

Capt. Johnson ultimately signed the Confidentiality Statement after agreeing not to share testing information with others. As Ms. Alderks escorted him out of the room, she recalled him stating sarcastically, “I know you all work hard,” though she noted that he delivered the comment in a neutral tone.

**Ryan Skedd (Chief).** Chief Skedd was a candidate, along with Capt. Andrews and Capt. Johnson, during the June 2024 Fire Battalion Chief oral boards. According to Chief Skedd, when they found out another candidate had been rescheduled, both Capt. Andrews and Capt. Johnson were “disruptive in a very rude manner” and made the testing experience “uncomfortable.” He described their conduct as “embarrassing to the SFD and to themselves.”

In describing the events of June 12 during the written exercise portion of the oral boards, Chief Skedd reported that the test proctor was attempting to give instructions when Capt. Johnson stood up, talked over her, and repeatedly interrupted her. Chief Skedd found the behavior rude and stated that, even if Capt. Johnson did not like the exam administrator, “that’s fine, but do it behind closed doors.” Chief Skedd expressed the view that Capt. Johnson had issues prior to the exam but “used the exam to vent on her.”

Chief Skedd stated that the disruption interfered with his and other candidates’ ability to hear the instructions and caused a delay of several minutes because the proctor had to restart the instructions. After the administrator announced that candidates had 60 minutes and could begin, Chief Skedd recalled Capt. Johnson standing up and stating that he was done. When the proctor explained that he was required to participate in the written exercise, Chief Skedd recalled Capt. Johnson loudly striking the keyboard to complete “maybe, 1 sentence.”

Chief Skedd stated that he thought, “good grief, just suck it up,” and likened Capt. Johnson’s behavior to “a child throwing a tantrum.” The incident was sufficiently notable to Chief Skedd that he reported it to Helen Fitzpatrick, Executive Director of

Administration, upon returning to SFD offices.

**David Berry (Chief).** Chief Berry was also a candidate in the June 2024 Fire Battalion Chief promotional examination and was present on June 12. He reports that the day began on an “odd” note because one candidate had not shown up, despite it being known that the individual had prepared for and invested time in the exam process. By the time the group was escorted to the exam room, candidates were informed that the absent individual would be permitted to take the test at a later date.

Chief Berry states that this development upset Captains Andrews and Johnson because their own rescheduling requests had been denied, creating the appearance that another candidate had received an accommodation that they had not. As a result, both captains expressed frustration verbally. Unbeknownst to the candidates at the time, exam administrators had failed to inform the absent candidate of the testing date and time, and allowing the candidate to test at a later date was intended to remedy that administrative error.

Chief Berry observed the test administrators as “quick to frustration and anger,” short with Captains Johnson and Andrews, and exhibiting body language that conveyed dismissiveness and a lack of interest in what the captains were saying. In the testing room, Chief Berry recalls Capt. Johnson appearing upset and asking how much he needed to do to complete the written exercise. He does not recall whether Capt. Johnson was asked or instructed to sit down. He recalls Capt. Johnson being “intent on doing the minimum” and engaging in what he characterized as “self-sabotage.”

Chief Berry believes emotions were running high and that the situation could have been diffused by taking Captains Johnson and Andrews aside to explain why the other candidate had been rescheduled. He denies that the interaction was “hostile,” but states that Capt. Johnson was “clearly frustrated and angry,” and that Ms. Grace Matsui was “frustrated—just frustrated.”

Chief Berry further stated that trust in Ms. Grace Matsui and PSCSC is low, asserting that, in his view, she has been found to have “lied” in past testimony.

**Drew Andrews (Capt.).** Capt. Andrews was present during the written portion of the oral boards and affirms that he did instruct Capt. Johnson to sit down. He recalls Capt. Johnson asking whether he could leave after signing in, and Capt. Andrews responding by telling him to sit down. He does not recall any test proctor instructing Capt. Johnson to sit down.

**Helen Fitzpatrick.** Ms. Fitzpatrick has served as the Executive Director of Administration for the Seattle Fire Department for 12 years. She learned of concerns

regarding Capt. Johnson's conduct from Chief Skedd, who witnessed interactions between Capt. Johnson and exam administrators that were atypical and significant enough to prompt him to report the behavior upon returning to SFD offices. Chief Skedd described Capt. Johnson as "upset and angry" and "inappropriate," noting that the tension was apparent to other candidates.

**Douglas Johnson (Capt.).** Capt. Johnson appeared for an interview accompanied by his union representative. At the outset, he expressed significant frustration with the delay in initiating the investigation and stated his belief that "people are conspiring so their stories sound fresh."

Following the email exchanges regarding his rescheduling request, Capt. Johnson reported that he asked to have limited interaction with both Ms. Grace Matsui and Mr. Wright to avoid a "he said, she said" situation. See **Ex. 9**. Despite this request, the first person he encountered on June 11 was Mr. Wright, who escorted him to an oral board panel. This frustrated Capt. Johnson, as he believes PSCSC has sufficient staff such that another employee could have performed the escorting role. He further stated that the situation was exacerbated when Ms. Grace Matsui was present in the testing room on the second day of the oral boards. Capt. Johnson questioned why she was in the room for what he characterized as a "basic written memo exercise that has been the same for years." He did acknowledge, however, that as the developer of the test with responsibility for ensuring its proper implementation, Ms. Grace Matsui has oversight of test administration and has been present for other examinations.

When asked about his recollection of the first day of testing, Capt. Johnson stated that he had questions about legal language contained in the paperwork he was asked to sign. He reported asking Ms. Alderks, who was unable to answer his questions, and then Ms. Schade, who was also unable to answer but instructed him that he was required to sign the form. He stated that he does not recall specific details of those conversations, the form itself, or accusing Ms. Schade of interrupting him. He strenuously denied stating, "I don't think you understand what you are f\*\*king putting us through," or telling Ms. Schade that she should not "dance in here and tell him to calm down." He also denied stating that "Yoshiko f\*\*ked up," although he believes that statement may have been relevant to Capt. Dockter's test in 2020. He denied making any statements about Capt. Dockter, apologizing for losing his temper, or engaging in conduct that was agitated, disruptive, escalating, loud, or involved balling his fists. He asserted that when he asked to leave, it was done in a "regular voice."

Regarding June 12, the day of the written exercise portion of the oral boards, Capt. Johnson recalled that his intention was to sign in and leave, but that Ms. Grace Matsui informed him he could not do so. He asked whether this requirement was in writing, stating that he believed one "can't fail if you attend." Capt. Johnson claimed that "months

before the test” he had read “somewhere” that a candidate could “just sign in and walk away.” He was unable to identify where this rule was stated and could not name anyone who had actually signed in, left, and not failed. He further asserted that the policy has since changed as a result of what occurred during the June 2024 exam and that candidates may now fail an exam for not completing a portion. He stated that this change, and its connection to his exam cycle, was communicated to him by Chief Branum.

When asked how long he took to complete the written exercise, Capt. Johnson initially estimated between one and one-and-a-half hours. When informed that others reported he was present for less than 15 minutes, he stated that this could be accurate, noting the passage of time and the number of exams he has taken since then. He acknowledged that Capt. Andrews motioned for him to sit down but denied that it was because he was being disruptive.

Capt. Johnson believes the complaints were filed “a year later” in retaliation for the complaint he filed against Ms. Grace Matsui and Executive Director Scheele following the denial of his request to reschedule the written exercise so that both portions could occur on June 11. He believes Ms. Grace Matsui and Executive Scheele conspired to deny his request, citing their email communications, and asserted that Executive Director Scheele “stonewalled” his request until she could deny it and require him to appear the following day. See **Ex. 9**. He stated that the communications regarding the accommodation request caused him such distress that they resulted in a “diagnosable mental health disorder,” for which he received treatment on June 10 for mental stress.

Capt. Johnson denied having any conflicts or issues with exam administrators or PSCSC staff and stated that he has socialized with them, including going out for drinks and dinner. He reported serving on several PSCSC exam development committees and working “many, many hours” with staff without issue. He noted that they have appeared together in public settings without any “weird energy,” but stated that he has since been informed he cannot participate in an exam development committee because he is under investigation.

Finally, Capt. Johnson described himself as a “passionate” person and stated that he was particularly upset that Ms. Schade, whom he described as a “White woman,” made allegations that he believes rely on stereotypes portraying Black men as aggressive.

## **VI. APPLICABLE POLICIES AND STANDARD OF PROOF**

PSCSC Rule 9.29 PROHIBITED EMPLOYEE CONDUCT IN EXAMINATIONS.

- a. Any person who by themselves or in collusion with another person does or attempts to cheat, obstruct any other person's right of examination, disclose the content of an exam or aid in doing so, or make a false representation regarding an examination, will be disqualified from the civil service exam process, and may also be subject to investigation for possible policy violations by their appointing authority.
- b. Departmental members of a promotional exam development committee who engage in prohibited conduct such as discussing or disclosing exam related information with individuals not on the committee, will be disqualified from exam development processes, and may also be subject to investigation for possible policy violations by their appointing authority.
- c. Exam participants are notified of and required to follow instructions related to conduct while participating in an exam and/or at the exam site. Failure to follow instructions related to conduct at the exam may result in a candidate being disqualified from the exam process.

## **Guiding Principles and Standard of Proof**

Investigations are conducted pursuant to the Association of Workplace Investigator Guiding Principles and EEOC guidelines, to include the application of credibility factors to assess witness credibility and the application of the preponderance of the evidence standard of proof. Findings were reached after considering all the information obtained during the course of the investigation. This report does not include an exhaustive account of all investigative efforts, or all the evidence obtained, but includes what is relevant to the findings.

## **VII. FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS**

### **A. Capt. Johnson violated PSCSC Rule 9.29(c) by refusing to follow instructions several times during the oral boards held in June 2024.**

The investigation was initiated to determine whether Capt. Johnson's behavior during the 2024 Fire Battalion Chief Promotional Exam oral boards, held on June 11 and June 12, 2024, violated any PSCSC Rules of Practice.<sup>5</sup> Based on the testimony of the complainants—whom I found credible—corroborating witness testimony, and Capt.

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<sup>5</sup> To be clear, the investigation's scope does not include reviewing or assessing the propriety of denying the reschedule request.

Johnson's own admissions, I find that his conduct on at least three occasions violated PSCSC Rule 9.29(c).

Rule 9.29(c), in clear and unambiguous language, requires that candidates "follow instructions related to conduct while participating in an exam and/or at the exam site." The rule contains no exception for candidates who disagree with the instructions given. It is a strict rule.

By his own admission, Capt. Johnson was upset that his rescheduling request had been denied, and that frustration continued when his request to avoid interaction with certain PSCSC personnel was not honored. It is true that harmful racial stereotypes exist, including the bias that Black men are perceived as aggressive when they are not. In this case, however, not only did multiple witnesses independently describe Capt. Johnson as "angry" and acting inappropriately, but Capt. Johnson himself described his demeanor as "passionate." I do not doubt that he was similarly passionate on the day of the exam. Based on the record as a whole, I find it more likely than not that he was in an emotional state that contributed to him not complying with directions and instructions.

More importantly, the essential facts—distinct from subjective perceptions—are not meaningfully disputed. Capt. Johnson did not sign the Confidentiality Statement as drafted, did not take a seat when directed to do so, and did not sign the Written Exercise Instruction Sheet as instructed.

I find the statements of Ms. Grace Matsui, Ms. Alderks, and Ms. Schade to be credible. Their statements were provided within days of the events and are consistent with one another. I find no credible evidence of collusion or conspiracy to fabricate or misrepresent events, even when accounting for the potential influence of implicit racial bias. Their accounts are further corroborated by the statements of Chiefs Skedd and Berry, both of whom lack any apparent motive to be untruthful. Notably, Chief Berry expressly stated that his trust in PSCSC is low, yet he nevertheless described Capt. Johnson as "frustrated and angry."

Although Capt. Andrews did not recall why he told Capt. Johnson to sit down, I find it more likely than not that he did so because Capt. Johnson had failed to follow the instruction to take a seat. Under the circumstances described, there would have been no reason for Capt. Andrews to direct Capt. Johnson to sit down if Capt. Johnson had already been compliant. It is undisputed that all other candidates were seated and prepared to begin the exam.

Finally, Capt. Johnson acknowledged that he refused to sign the Confidentiality Statement as drafted and that he did not take a seat to prepare for testing, instead

engaging Ms. Grace Matsui in a discussion regarding minimal participation in the written exercise. He was unable to provide specific recall regarding key aspects of the written exercise testing process, including how long he remained in the room, why Capt. Andrews instructed him to sit down, or his handling of other required forms.

Under a strict application of Rule 9.29(c), I find by a preponderance of the evidence that Capt. Johnson violated the rule by refusing to follow instructions to: (1) sign the Confidentiality Statement as drafted; (2) take a seat upon entering the written exercise room; and (3) sign the Written Exercise Instruction Sheet.

This concludes this summary of my investigation. Please feel free reach out with any questions or comments.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

SENTI LAW, PLLC

By:



Onik'a I. Gilliam-Cathcart

Exs.

## Budget Summary

Business Unit ID	Year	06/02/2026 Last Pay Period End Date	Tuesday, June 9, 2026 12:00 PM Pacific Daylight Time (PDT) Last Refreshed Date
VC0	2026		

<b>\$3,038,328.00</b>	<b>\$24,225.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$3,062,553.00</b>	<b>\$66,487.00</b>	<b>\$1,353,665.40</b>	<b>\$1,420,152.40</b>	<b>\$1,708,887.60</b>
Adopted Budget	Carryforward	Budget Revisions	Budget Transfers	Revised Budget	Encumbrances	Total Expenses	Committments	Remaining Legal Bu...

<b>1,708,887.60</b>	<b>1,642,400.60</b>	<b>44.20%</b>	<b>55.80%</b>
Available Balance Before Encumbrances	Available Balance After Encumbrances	Percent Spent Before Encumbrances	Percent Available Before Encumbrances

BSL ID And Name	Adopted Budget	Carryforward	Budget Revisions	Budget Transfers	Revised Budget	Encumbrances	Total Expenses	Total Committments	Remaining Legal Budget
☐ Revenue - Revenue	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
☐ BO-VC-V1CIV - Civil Service Commissions	\$3,038,328.00	\$24,225.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,062,553.00	\$66,487.00	\$1,353,665.40	\$1,420,152.40	\$1,708,887.60
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,038,328.00</b>	<b>\$24,225.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$3,062,553.00</b>	<b>\$66,487.00</b>	<b>\$1,353,665.40</b>	<b>\$1,420,152.40</b>	<b>\$1,708,887.60</b>

**PUBLIC SAFETY CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION  
CASE STATUS REPORT  
June 2026**

Type	CASE NUMBER	APPELLANT	OPEN APPEAL/EXAM PROTEST/REQUEST FOR DECISION/COMPLAINT				Register/Exam/ Position	Issue/Requested Outcome/Status	PRESIDING
			RESPONDENT DEPARTMENT	DATE FILED	ISSUE				
A	25-01-032A	Rigon	SPD	9-29-2025	Discharge		1 <sup>st</sup> Prehearing was held January 8, 2026. Hearing scheduled for October 27-29, 2026.	PSCSC	
A	24-01-004A	Hill	SPD	5-21-2024	Discharge		Hearing Continued. Hearing dates TBD.	PSCSC	
RCRM	26-07-020RCRM	Johnson	SFD	4-2-2026	Seeking to modify remedy: 2-year restriction exam development and administration participation.		Appellant filed a Request for Commission Review and Modification of the Executive Director's March 24, 2026, decision.	PSCSC	

Type	CASE NUMBER	APPELLANT/REQUESTOR	CLOSED APPEAL/EXAM PROTEST/REQUEST FOR DECISION				Issue/Requested Outcome/Status	PRESIDED
			RESPONDENT DEPARTMENT	DATE FILED	ISSUE	Register/Exam/Position		
A	25-07-052A	Johnson	SFD	12-29-2025	Assessor		Appellant filed an appeal regarding Firefighter Assessor selection. The appeal was dismissed on March 10, 2026, for lack of jurisdiction. Appellant timely filed a Request to Revise or Modify a Decision of the Executive Director (PSCSC Rule 2.13.b) At its April 17, 2026, meeting. The commission upheld the decision of the Executive Director.	Executive Director PSCSC

A=Appeal

RCRM = Request for Commission Review and Modification

REQUESTS FOR PROBATIONARY EXTENSION RPE= Request for Probationary Extension (PSCSC Rule 12.0)			
DEPT	DATE REQUESTED	POSITION/RANK	APPROVED/DENIED
SPD	1-5-2026	Officer	Approved
SPD	1-10-2026	Officer	Approved
SPD	1-10-2026	Officer	Approved
SPD	1-14-2026	Officer	Approved
SFD	2-9-2026	Firefighter-Recruit	Approved
SPD	3-3-2026	Officer	Approved
SPD	3-3-2026	Officer	Approved
SPD	3-12-2026	Officer	Rescinded
SPD	3-27-2026	Officer	Denied
SPD	3-27-2026	Officer	Rescinded
SPD	4-2-2026	Officer	Approved
SPD	4-16-2026	Officer	Approved
SPD	4-21-2026	Sergeant	Approved
SPD	4-29-2026	Officer	Approved
SPD	4-29-2026	Officer	Approved
SPD	5-7-2026	Officer	Approved
SPD	5-19-2026	Officer	Approved
SFD	5-19-2026	Firefighter	Approved
SFD	5-19-2026	Firefighter/EMT Paramedic	Approved
SFD	5-19-2026	Firefighter	Approved
SFD	5-19-2026	Firefighter	Approved

<b>REQUESTS FOR REINSTATEMENT TO ELIGIBLE REGISTER</b>				
RFR=Request for Reinstatement (PSCSC 10.03)				
<b>CASE NUMBER</b>	<b>DEPT</b>	<b>DATE REQUESTED</b>	<b>POSITION/RANK</b>	<b>DECISION</b>
26-05-002RFR	SFD	1-26-2026	Firefighter	Recommended
26-05-003RFR	SFD	1-23-2026	Firefighter	Not Recommended
26-05-004RFR	SPD	2-28-2026	Officer	Recommended
26-05-005RFR	SFD	2-26-2026	Firefighter	Not Recommended
26-05-006RFR	SFD	2-27-2026	Firefighter	Not Recommended
26-05-007RFR	SPD	3-12-2026	Officer	Recommended
26-05-008RFR	SFD	3-19-2026	Firefighter	TBD
26-05-010RFR	SPD	3-30-2026	Officer	TBD
26-05-011RFR	SFD	3-31-2026	Firefighter	TBD
26-05-012RFR	SFD	4-23-2026	Firefighter	Not Recommended
26-05-013RFR	SFD	4-20-2026	Firefighter	Recommended
26-05-014RFR	SFD	4-18-2026	Firefighter	Not Recommended
26-05-016RFR	SPD	3-30-2026	Officer	Not Recommended/Outside Lookback Period