

JOHNSTOWN CIVIL SERVICE  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
Monday, March 16, 2026

Johnstown Civil Service Board met in a stated session for the general transaction of business. Bruce Newkirk, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The following Board members were present:

Bruce Newkirk, Chair; Michael Allen (2)

Sue Bopp was absent from the meeting.

Captain Dan Price, Chief Mark Britton, and Chief Jim McCann were also present.

**MINUTES**

Mr. Allen made a motion to approve the Minutes from February 2, 2025. The motion was seconded by Mr. Newkirk and unanimously approved.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Captain Dan Price noted the Police Department conducted their civil service examination period and had a certified list with four names. An offer of employment was extended to Jeffrey Barr, Jr., who accepted the offer. His starting date was March 16, 2026. Captain Price stated the staffing level is full with 37 officers.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Chief Jim McCann introduced himself. He apologized for not attending previous meetings and noted either he or a department representative would be present going forward. He reported the Fire Department has a hire list approved by Civil Service on December 16, 2024. He noted the list is for both full-time and part-time firefighters. The department follows Civil Service guidelines for hiring off of the list. Keeping within the two-year time frame set by Civil Service, Chief McCann anticipates starting in the fall with the new testing procedure for firefighters.

Chief McCann commented, while other cities do not follow Civil Service guidelines and only test when the old list is exhausted, his department tests for new hires every two years following the guidelines along with the collective bargaining agreement. His only issue with the guidelines document is there are no adoption dates from City Council.

Chief McCann shared there is an upcoming promotional exam for Captain and Assistant Chief. He explained the process followed for the exam following past practices and the collective bargaining agreement. The start of the process was for Chief McCann to send out an email to eligible individuals. The email contained the steps the individual needed to follow. Step one was acknowledgement of receiving the email. Step two was to submit a written letter requesting to sit for the examination. If a letter is not received, the individual will not be permitted to sit for the test.

Regarding the exam, Chief McCann contracted with Bucks County Community College for the written tests to be held on April 23, 2026. He noted Bucks County has administered the tests for all over the Commonwealth including Altoona. He explained the testing procedure. He noted there is an oral interview as part of the procedure. The interviewers will be signed off on by the union to ensure there are no conflicts of interest. He reported possible interviewers but noted interviewees are not permitted to have the information prior to their interview. Anyone who passes the written exam with at least a 70 percent will be invited to do the oral interview.

Chief McCann stated he should have a promotional list for Civil Service to approve by the May meeting. Chief McCann also shared the department had recently hired a new firefighter from the currently established list. He stressed the importance of following both Civil Service rules and the collective bargaining agreement. He noted he has complete faith in his firefighters to move into new roles. He added he was glad to see the oral interview process put in place several years ago as some people are not strong test takers.

Chief McCann mentioned, in the future, he might have potential changes to rules and regulations for Civil Service to consider to keep current. He requested to potentially address language around part-time employees, noting there are existing contradictions in the language.

Mr. Allen asked when the last changes were made. Chief McCann replied the last draft was dated 2019. He noted the document is solid, but there are other third-class cities that do not follow civil service rules.

Mr. Allen asked how many firefighters the City had. Chief McCann stated there were 29 full-time, including himself. There are five part-time; however, the contract states the department can have up to six part-time. He shared there are issues with the part-time hours. Mr. Allen asked if eliminating part-time and adding two or three fulltime firefighters would be a better option.

Chief McCann stated he had considered the same question. He explained how the system worked in the past with a full-time guy called a gypsy, who would fill in for vacations, so overtime was not needed. He explained how current staffing works, noting anytime there is an injury, vacation, or call-off, the time is usually covered by overtime. He added it may pay off in the long run to have more full-time people even when considering sick time, vacation time, and health insurance. He also noted the new collective bargaining agreement was signed on January 1, 2026.

Chief Mark Britton stated the Police Department might be able to hire another officer in the next couple of months.

Chief Britton noted the Civil Service Commission may want to consider having an alternate for the Board in case of illness or someone was just unable to make the meeting. Mr. Newkirk noted they have tried to look for another person. Chief Britton acknowledged the qualifications make finding a person tough.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Allen made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Newkirk.

There being no further business, the stated meeting concluded at 10:32 a.m.