



WWW.JEFFPARISH.NET

JOHN F. YOUNG, JR.
PARISH PRESIDENT

JEFFERSON PARISH
DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL

May 30, 2012



BEVERLY WILLIAMS, SPHR
DIRECTOR

PERSONNEL BOARD

JOHN C. COMBE, JR.
TERRIE T. RODRIGUE
ALFRED E. STACEY, IV

TO: All Classified Employees of Jefferson Parish Government

On May 24, 2012, the Jefferson Parish Administration issued a news release that contained erroneous information that was later repeated by print and broadcast media. The news release incorrectly stated that the Personnel Department has been/is now under the supervision of the Parish President through a member of his staff.

This letter is for the purpose of correction and clarification.

The Personnel (Civil Service) Department was not and is not supervised or controlled by the Parish Administration or any other political individual or entity. The Personnel Department is a non-partisan, non-politicized, unique department established in the Jefferson Parish Home Rule Charter. The Charter established the personnel (civil service) system to ensure the citizens of Jefferson Parish benefit from a non-partisan, non-politicized, efficient, and effective public workforce, a workforce that is hired and employed based on merit and not on politics. To that end, the Charter placed the administration of the personnel system under the authority of the Personnel Department. This system, free of corruption and scandal, has functioned well as the guardian of the taxpayers for over half a century.

The intent of the Jefferson Parish Charter is clear with regard to the Personnel Department. Section 4.03 of the Charter states in part: "There shall be a personnel department consisting of a Personnel Director, who shall be the executive head of the department, and a Personnel Board, which shall be policy making and quasi-judicial in nature... The Personnel Director shall be appointed by the Personnel Board... and shall be responsible to the Board for the administration of the personnel system for the parish, including all parish departments, offices, agencies, and special districts in accordance with personnel rules adopted pursuant to this section." The Personnel Department is made up not only of the Personnel Director and staff, but the Personnel Department is made up of the Personnel Board *and* the Personnel Director *and* department staff. *The Personnel Board cannot be separated from the Personnel Department.* The Personnel Department is a single entity, as created by the Charter.

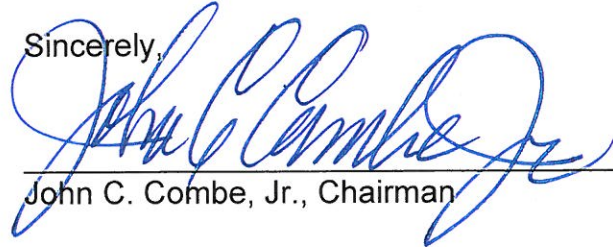
May 30, 2012

Page 2

While the Personnel Department interacts with the Administration in the routing of ordinances from the Personnel Board to the Parish Council and in discussions regarding the budget, it is clear that to avoid a conflict of interest and in order to properly and fairly carry out its Charter-mandated responsibilities – including but not limited to the Board’s hearing of classified employees’ appeals from dismissals, demotions, and other disciplinary actions taken by appointing authorities responsible to the Parish President – the Personnel Department must be and is, in fact, independent of the supervision or control of the Parish President or any other political individual or entity. However, it is not enough that the Personnel Department actually be independent; the Personnel Department also must be perceived to be independent by all those it serves.

To all classified employees, all applicants for Parish employment, and all citizens of Jefferson Parish: Be assured that the Personnel Department, which includes the Personnel Board, Personnel Director, and department staff, is not under the supervision or control of the Parish President or any other political entity. You can be confident that the Personnel Department is unbiased, independent and fair in its decision-making and application of the Personnel Rules and the law. Anything that gives the impression otherwise is simply incorrect.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John C. Combe, Jr.", written over a horizontal line.

John C. Combe, Jr., Chairman

Cc: Parish President
Chief Operating Officer
Deputy Chief Operating Officer
Chief Administrative Assistants
Councilmembers
Directors