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Presentation Type

- Informational: in anticipation of Civil Service Board's proposed personnel rules (TMC 1.24) being transmitted to Council
- Civil Service Board anticipates May 7, 2026 transmission to City Clerk for delivery to Council for Council action pursuant to Charter Section 6.14

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Background

What is the Civil Service Board (“CSB”)?

- Authorized by Charter Section 6.11
- Civil Service Board is a 5-member body made up of:
 - Three board members who are residents of City of Tacoma elected in the general election
 - One board member (not a City employee) elected by the City classified civil service employees
 - One board member appointed by the City Manager and the Director of Public Utilities



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Background

What are the powers and duties of the Civil Service Board?

- Found in Charter Section 6.12 and 6.14
- To investigate all matters relating to conditions of employment
- To carry out and enforce the provisions of the City Charter relating to the Civil Service through the promulgation of personnel rule ordinances, which require the approval of at least four members of the City Council
- To hear appeals concerning, among other things, the suspension of employees for more than thirty (30) days, the termination of an employee, and on all other matters arising out of or in connection with the Civil Service



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Background

CSB Conducted Investigation Regarding Classification of Employees

- CSB reaches conclusion of improper classification
- CSB proposes personnel rules to address
- Proposed amendment to TMC 1.24.290 and new provision TMC 1.24.295



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Background

Classified vs. Unclassified (Charter Sections 6.1 and 6.2)

- Classified employees:
 - Covered by merit system (testing, competitive hiring, just cause discipline)
 - Protected by Civil Service Board hearings
- Unclassified employees:
 - Limited group (e.g. elected officials, department heads, confidential assistants, special project staff, City Attorney staff)
 - Not protected by merit system or just cause



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ISSUES

CSB'S conclusions following investigation:

- HR Department has improperly designated ~1/3 of workforce as unclassified
- Violates Sections 6.1 & 6.2 of City Charter
- Examples of wrongly unclassified positions:
 - Nurses, Engineers, Data Analysts, Case Managers, Budget Officer



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ISSUES

Potential Risks and Impacts:

- Employee Morale: unfair treatment, low trust, lower productivity
- Legal Liability: Section 1983 lawsuits → damages, back pay, attorney fees
- Public Trust: risk of nepotism, cronyism in hiring/promotion
- Service Quality: unfair employment practices = weaker public services



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CSB Proposed Personnel Rules

CSB proposed personnel rules under Charter Section 6.14 address CSB's identified risks and impacts:

Amend TMC 1.24.290 to:

- Define "principal officers" & "assistants"
- Clarify "special inquiry, investigation, or examination"
- Reaffirm all others as classified

New TMC 1.24.295:

- CSB must approve classification decisions
- Quarterly reporting by HR
- CSB authority to reclassify positions

Complete Text of proposed personnel rules is found in Exhibit A to Memo to GPFC



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Benefits of Reform by Proposed Rules

- Ensures compliance with Charter
- Restores fair treatment & merit-based hiring
- Protects City from litigation & liability
- Improves employee morale and performance
- Strengthens public trust



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Next Steps per Charter Section 6.14

- CSB Proposed Rules delivered to City Clerk the first business day following CSB's May 7, 2026 meeting.
- City Clerk will present Proposed Rules to Council at next regular Council meeting.
- Council has 45 days to either adopt proposed rules or by 2/3 vote may change, alter, amend, add to or reject proposed rules.



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CLOSING

- Not a critique HR's broader work
- Proposed Rules offered as a correction and as essential to uphold:
 - Merit system
 - Fair and equitable treatment
 - Public confidence in City governance
- CSB urges Council adoption of Proposed Rules
- Members of CSB will be available for questions if desired by Council.



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