

**LINKED MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE  
CITY OF CARLSBAD, NEW MEXICO, HELD IN THE JANELL WHITLOCK  
MUNICIPAL COMPLEX BUILDING ON MARCH 16, 2026, AT 5:30 P.M.**

Present:	Richard D. Lopez	Mayor
	Lisa A. Anaya Flores	Councilor
	Edward T. Rodriguez	Councilor
	Karla Niemeier	Councilor
	Anthony Foreman	Councilor
	Mark C. Walterscheid	Councilor
	Jason O. Chavez	Councilor
	Mary Garwood	Councilor
Absent:	Lisa A. Anaya Flores	Councilor
	Jeff Forrest	Councilor
Also Present:	Wendy Austin	City Manager
	Ken Ahrens	Deputy City Manager
	Barbara Hodgson	City Attorney
	Morgan Foster	Deputy City Attorney
	Naomi Castillo	Exec. Admin. Coordinator
	Nadine Mireles	City Clerk
	JoAnne Jaure	Deputy City Clerk
	Stephan Brown	Compliance Clerk
	Dina Navarrette	Community Services Director
	Mike Abell	Director of Utilities
	Melissa Salcido	Finance Director
	Tony Souza	Fire Chief
	John Majerus	Assistant Fire Chief
	Bradley Carlson	Assistant Fire Chief
	Kyla Gonzales	HR Director
	Wayne Hatfield	IT Director
	Jeff Patterson	Planning Director
	Jessie Rodriguez	Police Chief
	Randy Galindo	Safety and Compliance Director
	Patrick Brownfield	Police Officer
	Denise Madrid-Boyea	Attorney
	Anita Kelley	Attorney
	Matthew White	Defendant
	Caleb Shell	Fire Lieutenant
	Katelyn Rennie	Firefighter
	Michael Trujillo	Fire Lieutenant

Sam Soto  
Saul Ortiz

Fire Engineer  
Firefighter

Time Stamps and headings below correspond to recording of meeting and the recording is hereby made a part of the official record.

0:00:00      **Call Meeting to Order**

0:00:04      **Invocation - Pledge of Allegiance**

**1. DISCUSSION OF PERSONNEL MATTERS REGARDING MATTHEW WHITE'S APPEAL OF HIS TERMINATION**

Mrs. Madrid-Boyea, Attorney, said she is here to represent the City on the current proceeding. She said this proceeding has been requested by Matthew White to be an open meeting. She said Mr. White has been terminated for threatening to assault his superior. She said in his own words, Mr. White is confrontational, loud and aggressive. She said at his pre-determination hearing when asked if he had an anger issue, he responded yes, and it was no secret. Mrs. Madrid-Boyea said that the City will present eye-witness testimony that on November 7, 2025, while on duty, a crew received a call for a potential vehicle fire that was at Greene Street and James Street. She said at the time, Mr. White held a title of an Engineer/Paramedic and Mr. White was directed that the call went from a code 3 to a code 1. She said when Mr. White arrived on scene he veered off into a parking lot nearby to the scene. Mrs. Madrid-Boyea said the parking lot is unpaved, with potholes and uneven terrain, causing the fire engine to bounce and turn around in an aggressive and unsafe manner. She said the Assistant Chief proceeded to state that the vehicle arrived in a rush, and one of the Lieutenants informed him the driving was caused by Mr. White. She said the issue was addressed with Mr. White and explained to him that he pulled onto the scene fast and aggressively, and that someone could get hurt if that kind of driving continued. She said this statement upset Mr. White. Mrs. Madrid-Boyea said Mr. White and his crew went back to Fire Station 1 and he was so upset that his behavior had been corrected, he went and approached Chief Souza. She said that Mr. White proceeded to complain about Assistant Chief Carlson. She said Mr. White claims that when they were talking on scene, Assistant Chief Carlson shut the door and Mr. White stopped the door with his elbow and caught it on his leg. She said that Chief Souza listened to Mr. White about the situation, and Mr. White proceeded to make threats regarding Chief Carlson. She said Mr. White wanted to confront Chief Carlson, and Chief Souza de-escalated the situation. She said Mr. White proceeded to tell his Lieutenant, Caleb Shell, what happened and reiterated the threats to Lt. Shell. She said Lt. Shell and Chief Majerus were concerned with the threats of committing a violent act against Chief Carlson, and they went to speak to Chief Souza. Mrs. Madrid-Boyea said these threats are a violation of City Policy and Fire Department Policy. She said Chief Souza advised Chief Carlson of his options, which are to make a report about the situation or file a police report. Chief Carlson proceeded to report this incident to the Human Resources

Department (HR) because he felt threatened, unsafe, and he felt it was a hostile work environment. She said HR started their investigation, and because Chief Souza was one of the individuals who heard these threats, City Administration decided that there should be an independent investigation. She said the City of Carlsbad hired a private investigation firm, and they conducted their own investigation. She said at some point, Mr. White was informed that there were a number of violations of City of Carlsbad Policies and Fire Department Policy and his termination was recommended. She said a memorandum was prepared that recommended termination, and the matter was scheduled for a pre-determination hearing. She said this was conducted on December 23, 2025. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** said the City Manager, Wendy Austin, presided at the hearing, and Mr. White was given notice of the hearing, given an opportunity to attend, participate, bring witnesses, but did not have any Union representation although it was offered to him. **Mrs. Austin** listened to Mr. White and his differences and she considered the evidence and the investigation and she decided that termination was appropriate and he was terminated effective January 2026. She said the reason he was terminated was because he wanted to commit violent and criminal acts against his supervisor.

**Anita Kelley**, Attorney for Mr. White, said his version of events are different. She said on November 21, 2025, Mr. White disputes that he was driving erratically when he received the call for the car that was on fire. She said Mr. White pulled onto the scene and Chief Carlson was also on the scene. She said Mr. White got out of the fire truck and Chief Carlson slammed the door on Mr. White's leg. She said Katelyn Rennie, Firefighter, is an eye-witness and was at that call. She said Firefighter Rennie was interviewed and stated that Mr. White was not driving erratically but did witness Chief Carlson slam the car door on Mr. White's leg. **Ms. Kelley** said Mr. White did get upset when Chief Carlson slammed the door on his leg but did not confront Chief Carlson because there is a chain of command and he did not want to have an altercation. She said he spoke with Chief Souza to report that the door was slammed on his leg. She said Mr. White did try to make a report by reporting the incident to Chief Souza. She said Mr. White had previously reported discrimination and a hostile work environment to HR and never received any response. She said Mr. White thought that Chief Carlson was trying to get him to step out of his character. She said that Mr. White initially thought about getting out of the fire truck but closed the door. She said he was venting to Chief Souza and then Chief Carlson went and opened a violence in the workplace complaint against Mr. White. She said that this in the defendants view of ongoing retaliation which would be an illegal reason to terminate someone and which is why Mr. White was so upset and frustrated that day.

**Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked Lieutenant Shell if he and Mr. White were working on November 7, 2025, and if there was a call for a vehicle fire. **Lt. Shell** stated they both were on duty and did respond to the vehicle on fire. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked him what happened. **Lt. Shell** stated they responded from Fire Station 1 to a vehicle fire on James Street and Greene Street. He said Mr. White was the driver and Firefighter

Rennie was in the back of the fire truck. He said per policy, fire emergencies are code 3, which means to turn on the lights and sirens. He stated they left Station 1 and headed toward the scene but Chief Majerus and Chief Carlson, who were already on scene, stated the fire was out and they could downgrade to code 1, which means no lights or sirens and to adhere to all traffic laws. He said Mr. White turned the lights and sirens off and they proceeded to the call. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked where they were when they received the call to downgrade to code 1. **Lt. Shell** said they were coming up to the stop light on Canal Street and Greene Street. He said as they arrived on scene, they had seen the vehicle was no longer on fire and there was no smoke. He said Mr. White proceeded to turn onto James Street, and then turned left into the dirt parking lot where he accelerated through the dirt parking lot and potholes and stopped abruptly. He said he noticed Chief Carlson visually upset about the way they arrived on scene. **Lt. Shell** said he contacted Chief Carlson and told Firefighter Rennie that they did not need to do any distinguishing and that the fire was out. He said while speaking to Chief Carlson he stated that they arrived on scene hot. **Lt. Shell** said he confirmed that Mr. White was driving erratically. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked who knew that Chief Majerus and Chief Carlson were on scene. **Lt. Shell** said you could see both Chief Majerus and Chief Carlson on scene. He said once he spoke with the property owner of the vehicle, he started his way back to the passenger side of the engine to start taking off his equipment and at that time he lost sight of Mr. White. He said Firefighter Rennie was in the back of the engine taking her equipment off and getting ready to get in her seat. He said he got in the truck and they proceeded to clear the scene and headed back to Fire Station 1. He said on the way back he noticed that Mr. White was upset. He said Mr. White parked the engine and stated that he was going to have a conversation with Chief Carlson. **Lt. Shell** said that he told him that it was not a good idea but Mr. White proceeded to walk to Chief Carlson's office. He said at that time Mr. White saw Chief Souza in the wash bay, and contacted him and engaged in conversation. He said he went back to the apparatus bay and watched the interaction between Chief Souza and Mr. White. He said he could not hear what was said but he could tell that Mr. White was upset. He said once the conversation was over, Mr. White approached **Lt. Shell** and asked if **Lt. Shell** had seen the incident that happened with Mr. White and Chief Carlson. He said he told Mr. White that he did not and he asked what happened. **Lt. Shell** said that Mr. White stated that Chief Carlson slammed the door on his legs as he was getting into the engine. He said he told Mr. White that he needed to let the situation calm down and it wasn't a good idea to speak with him yet. He said Mr. White then proceeded to make violent threats toward Chief Carlson to him. He said Mr. White stated that he had told Chief Souza the same threats regarding Chief Carlson. **Lt. Shell** said after their conversation, he made the decision to go directly to Chief Carlson and inform him of the threats that were made. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked why he thought he needed to tell Chief Carlson. **Lt. Shell** said he took the threats serious and because of his position he needs to report any policies, procedures, or rules that have been broken. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if that was the extent of what happened. **Lt. Shell** said that was the extent of the incident until later, when he was asked to make a statement. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked where Firefighter Rennie was standing when

she was loading up. **Lt. Shell** stated that she was standing on the passenger side but she was inside the cab at that point. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if **Lt. Shell** had seen anything involving **Chief Carlson**, **Mr. White** and the fire engine door. **Lt. Shell** responded he did not.

**Ms. Kelley** asked **Lt. Shell** if he reported the incident involving **Mr. White's** safety. **Lt. Shell** said he did not see the situation with the fire engine door so there was not anything to report.

**Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked **Bradley Carlson** to come to the podium. She asked if he was working on November 7, 2025, if he recalls if **Mr. White** was working, and if there was a call that came in about a vehicle fire. **Chief Carlson** confirmed that all of this was true. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked why he responded, where he was, and all of the circumstances. **Chief Carlson** stated he and **Chief Majerus** were on the way to the Senior Center before it was set to be demolished. He said when the fire call came out, they were in close proximity, and it is not uncommon to stop by a scene to watch or downgrade a response. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if they planned on fighting the fire. **Chief Carlson** said no. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if the Assistant Chief would typically fight a fire unless required. **Chief Carlson** said no, typically they are not on firefighting operations unless other certain special operations. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if it was unusual that himself and **Chief Majerus** responded to this particular call. **Chief Carlson** said it is not required or in the response guidelines but if a Chief is in the area or feels compelled, they have the ability. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked who was on scene first. **Chief Carlson** said himself and **Chief Majerus**. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked what they saw while on scene. **Chief Carlson** said there was a vehicle with fire damage and a fire extinguisher next to the vehicle with no fire or smoke. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked what action was taken. **Chief Carlson** said **Chief Majerus** radioed to the incoming unit, which would be Engine 1, and told them they could downgrade their response since there is no fire. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if **Chief Carlson** knew who was a part of the crew responding. **Chief Carlson** said no. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if **Chief Carlson** went to the scene to harass or observe anyone in particular. **Chief Carlson** said no. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he noticed something unusual when the fire engine arrived. **Chief Carlson** said yes, they were coming at a fast rate and turned onto the gravel parking area. He said you could see the cab gyrating and bouncing over the uneven surface and it appeared aggressive and fast. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked **Chief Carlson** what happened after you observed the fire engine being driven in that manor. **Chief Carlson** said they parked the apparatus and got out. He said **Lt. Shell** began walking up and **Chief Carlson** addressed the issue about the engine coming in erratic and **Lt. Shell** confirmed. **Chief Carlson** said before the fire engine left the scene, he felt compelled to address the safety issue. He said they downgraded the response and **Mr. White** has a history of aggressive driving that he has witnessed before he was promoted to Assistant Chief. He said earlier that summer, **Chief Souza** sent out a directive to reiterate the policies and reinforce the driving safety. He said that while he was walking off he pushed the door but had no intention of shutting the door on **Mr. White**.

**Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked Chief Carlson when he did he find out about the threats and who told him. **Chief Carlson** said he got back to the Fire Station and Lt. Shell told him about the threats. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked Chief Carlson how hearing the threats that Mr. White was making made him feel. **Chief Carlson** said he was concerned because of his history with aggressiveness and this would not be his first act of violence on a superior. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked what the next step was after hearing those threats. **Chief Carlson** said he talked to Chief Souza with Chief Majerus and discussed his options. **Chief Carlson** said they all went and talked to the HR Director. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if they told the HR Director what happened. **Chief Carlson** said yes, he explained what happened and that he didn't feel safe around him. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he knew Mr. White was injured in any way from the alleged closing the door. **Chief Carlson** said no. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if Mr. White was a member of the Union. **Chief Carlson** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if the Union has a grievance procedure. **Chief Carlson** said yes.

**Ms. Kelley** asked if Chief Carlson was scared of Mr. White. **Chief Carlson** said yes. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Mr. White was ever violent with Chief Carlson. **Chief Carlson** said no. **Ms. Kelley** asked if he would typically respond to these types of calls. She said it's not required and there's no guidelines for Chief's to respond. **Chief Carlson** said they always have the option to respond. **Ms. Kelley** asked Chief Carlson why he responded to this call. **Chief Carlson** said they were in close proximity and it is their responsibility to go. **Ms. Kelley** asked if he knew that Mr. White was on the call. **Chief Carlson** said no. **Ms. Kelley** confirmed that Chief Carlson said the fire engine wobbled and the surface was uneven. **Chief Carlson** said yes. **Ms. Kelley** said sometimes you have to adjust the apparatus. She asked if there were any policy or procedures that prevent Mr. White from driving on that surface. **Chief Carlson** said no. **Ms. Kelley** asked if a Union member has a grievance against a non-Union member, do they still have to file through the Union. **Chief Carlson** said the point of having a Union is to file a grievance on a non-union member. **Ms. Kelley** asked if someone has an issue at work, are they meant to go to HR. **Chief Carlson** said yes.

**Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if Chief Carlson was a member of the Union. **Chief Carlson** said no. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he was familiar with the rules. **Chief Carlson** said when he was a Union member, he never required Union representation, so he is not familiar with the rules.

**Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked Tony Souza, Fire Chief, to come to the podium. She asked him if he was at work on November 7, 2025, and if there was a call for vehicle fire. **Chief Souza** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked Chief Souza to explain what his involvement was. **Chief Souza** said on the afternoon of November 7, 2025, he was completing office work and was washing his work vehicle in the wash bay at the fire station. He said he noticed the fire truck backing into the parking lot located in the back. He said Mr. White stepped out of the apparatus and requested to speak with him. **Chief Souza** said Mr. White stated they were recently on a call involving a vehicle fire

and while on scene, he was sitting at the fire engine waiting for instructions from his Lieutenant. He said Mr. White said that the fire had been put out and Chief Majerus and Chief Carlson had already arrived prior to their arrival and they were verifying the fire had been extinguished fully before returning to service. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if it was unusual for the Chiefs to respond to fires. **Chief Souza** said that is not an uncommon occurrence. He stated there were many times when he was the EMS Division Chief that he was not dispatched directly to a call but felt compelled to respond because of the vicinity. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he thought it was unsafe for an Assistant Chief to respond to a vehicle fire. **Chief Souza** said if there were active fire conditions he would expect them and their vehicle in a position where they could serve more as a command and control role rather than direct fire suppression. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he had concerns prior to this incident about how the staff was operating equipment and driving. **Chief Souza** said there was an accident involving an apparatus that was responding to a fire call. He said it was his opinion that there were some unsafe practices that were deployed during that response that compelled him to write an email memo to adjust their response in many ways. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if there was anything in policy about leaving a paved road way. **Chief Souza** said there is not anything specific, but would be appropriate if fire conditions and the scene layout dictated positioning an apparatus off a paved service. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked Chief Souza if Mr. White told him anything else during their conversation outside of Fire Station 1. **Chief Souza** said Mr. White explained what happened and then proceeded to tell him that Chief Carlson was going to make Mr. White lose his job because he was going to assault Chief Carlson. **Chief Souza** tried to deescalate the situation and advised Mr. White these actions were not appropriate and informed him he would speak with Chief Carlson. **Chief Souza** said as soon as he walked into the fire station Chief Majerus and Chief Carlson were already waiting in his office. He said they discussed Chief Carlson's options and Chief Carlson decided to speak with the HR Director. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if any other actions were taken at that time. **Chief Souza** said he spoke with Deputy City Manager, Ken Ahrens, who advised him to start investigating and gather statements. **Chief Souza** requested statements from Mr. White, Chief Carlson, Chief Majerus, Firefighter Rennie, and Lt. Shell. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked what other action was taken. **Chief Souza** said because he was a witness to the statements that Mr. White was making, there may be a perception that Chief Souza could not serve as a fair and unbiased investigator to an investigation. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he would have normally served in that capacity. **Chief Souza** said yes, but since the statement was made directly to him about another employee, he felt it best to have it independently investigated so that all parties had fair treatment. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if Mr. White ever indicated that he wanted to file a grievance or complaint when he was speaking to Chief Souza. **Chief Souza** said there was no specific expression of that desire. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** said it was determined that an independent investigation would be conducted and asked if it was scheduled. **Chief Souza** said yes, the investigation was scheduled. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if anything was received as a result of this investigation. **Chief Souza** said yes, he received a report from the investigator, which provided a summary of everyone's testimony and specific

findings of each of the City's Fire Department rules and regulations that were violated. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he was able to recall the rules and regulations that were violated. **Chief Souza** said no, but they had everything to do with professional conduct and work place hostility. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked Chief Souza what the next step was after the investigation was complete. **Chief Souza** said once the report came back, he was working with Mr. Ahrens on a progressive disciplinary model. He said Mr. White has shown this pattern of behavior and has been disciplined for it several times. He said the next step in Mr. White's disciplinary model would be termination. He said threatening another employee is a grievous action and this is why termination was sought as the best option. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked what happened next. **Chief Souza** said he drafted the paperwork and a meeting was scheduled with Mr. White. He said he stated to Mr. White that he would be providing him with all of the paperwork associated with the findings and he was going to recommend termination. **Chief Souza** said Mr. White expressed that he had questions and he told him that he would be given a pre-determination hearing where he would be able to state his case, ask any questions or seek any clarifications. **Chief Souza** said he offered Mr. White the opportunity to sign that he was acknowledging he would be receiving disciplinary action. He said Mr. White refused to sign. He said himself and Chief Majerus escorted him to the fire station where he turned in his assigned PPE and assigned gear. He said Mr. White was offered an opportunity to get any personal belongings out of the building at that time and then he was escorted off of the property. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he recalled when the meeting with Mr. White took place. **Chief Souza** said in November. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if a pre-determination hearing was scheduled. **Chief Souza** said yes, it was scheduled for December 23, 2025. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked what Mr. White's employment status was as a result of the meeting he had with him in November 2025. **Chief Souza** said it was unchanged. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if Mr. White continued to be on shift after that. **Chief Souza** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if Mr. White was placed on any type of leave. **Chief Souza** said no. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked Chief Souza if he was present at the time of Mr. White's predetermination hearing on December 23, 2025. **Chief Souza** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if Mr. White was afforded an opportunity to have a Union representative. **Chief Souza** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he unveiled himself with Union representation. **Chief Souza** said Mr. White declined Union representation. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if Mr. White had any witnesses. **Chief Souza** said there were two present and a third provided a written statement. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked what documentation was provided to Mr. White. **Chief Souza** said he was provided a notice of disciplinary action, which is the standard form, along with the exact copy of the investigator's findings and copies of his previous disciplinary actions in this regard that build the progressive disciplinary case. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if Mr. White participated in the pre-determination hearing. **Chief Souza** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked what the result was of the pre-determination hearing was by the City Manager, Wendy Austin. **Chief Souza** said Mrs. Austin upheld the recommendation of termination. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** provided eight exhibits and asked Chief Souza to verify and explain the exhibits to Council. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked Chief Souza to

tell his philosophy of progressive discipline and how it's handled at the Carlsbad Fire Department. **Chief Souza** said progressive discipline is an idea where you start with the least severe punishment or disciplinary action to correct a behavior and progress from there. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he was familiar with Mr. White's record. **Chief Souza** said yes.

**Ms. Kelley** asked Chief Souza if he was on scene on November 7, 2025. **Chief Souza** said no. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Mr. White was erratic or aggressive when he approached Chief Souza in the wash bay. **Chief Souza** said no, he was agitated but he didn't feel it was directed toward him. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Chief Souza threatened violence in front of him. **Chief Souza** said no. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Mr. White told him that Chief Carlson pushed the door. **Chief Souza** said yes. **Ms. Kelley** asked if he reported this to HR. **Chief Souza** said the information was passed to HR, and it was a part of the entire story that was shared with Mrs. Countryman. **Ms. Kelley** asked if progressive discipline was taken with Mr. White. **Chief Souza** said yes, it was used in this case. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Chief Souza was personally involved. **Chief Souza** said he was not personally involved but he can review personnel records at his discretion for the purpose of investigating personnel matters. **Ms. Kelley** asked who wanted the individuals to write statements, as shown in exhibit 6. **Chief Souza** said they were asked by him because personnel requested meetings with him to discuss concerns over Mr. White's behavior while at work. He said during the discussion, he requested them to provide written statements for clarification and documentation. **Ms. Kelley** asked Chief Souza if he asked anyone else for written statements. **Chief Souza** said he did not ask anyone to prepare a statement that didn't come to him with a concern.

**Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked Chief Souza to describe Mr. White's demeanor on the day of the incident. **Chief Souza** said he was agitated. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he knew who the private investigator was going to interview. **Chief Souza** said he acted as a witness on this matter. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if Firefighter Rennie's statement was given. **Chief Souza** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he had any decision about who was a part of the team who created the new mission statement for the Fire Department. **Chief Souza** said he directed the Battalion Chiefs to recommend the names of people whom they thought could help guide a discussion to formulate a mission, vision, and core value statement for the department.

**Ms. Kelley** said Mr. White stated that he told Chief Souza that he spoke with Battalion Chief (BC) Moreno. **Chief Souza** said Mr. White never stated that he spoke with BC Moreno.

**Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** called Wendy Austin to the podium. **Mrs. Austin** said she has worked for the City of Carlsbad for a total of 9 years, with over two years' experience as City Manager. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked Mrs. Austin if she conducts pre-determination hearings in her current role. **Mrs. Austin** said yes, for either a discharge, demotion or time off, which is referred to as an adverse decision. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea**

asked if the City of Carlsbad has a Fire Department Union. **Mrs. Austin** said yes and she has general knowledge of the Collective Bargaining Agreement. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if the pre-determination hearing was held. **Mrs. Austin** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked what date the pre-determination hearing was held. **Mrs. Austin** said December 23, 2025. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked who was present at the pre-determination hearing. **Mrs. Austin** said herself, Mr. White, Mr. Ahrens, Chief Souza, Mrs. Countryman, and Mr. White had two-character witnesses, a statement from another character witness, and the Union President. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked at what capacity was the Union President there. **Mrs. Austin** said they were there to ensure the process was fair. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if she could explain the process of these hearings. **Mrs. Austin** said the meetings take place in the City Hall Planning Room on the second floor. She said the meetings are recorded, therefore she begins the meetings by asking Administration to state their name and their position for the record, and then she asks the employee to state their name and their position for the record. She said after introductions, she allows the City to explain why they are there for the discipline, followed by the employee's side. She said it can be the employee's representative or the employee directly. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if the employee is allowed to decide who to question and when to question. **Mrs. Austin** said no there's a process, she runs the hearing and goes from both the City's side and then the employees. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if Mr. White's witnesses got an opportunity to be heard. **Mrs. Austin** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if everything was taken into consideration into making her final decision. **Mrs. Austin** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** played portions of Exhibit 11. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked as the hearing progressed, were there any concerns about any of the information. **Mrs. Austin** said at one point she had to remind Mr. White that she was the hearing officer and she was in control of the meeting. She said she believes Mr. White got aggressive towards Chief Souza. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked Mrs. Austin how she knew Mr. White was aggressive towards Chief Souza. **Mrs. Austin** said his tone. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked Mrs. Austin if she had been a part of any Special Council Meetings that have involved employees and that were public. **Mrs. Austin** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if she has observed any employee behave in a manner that Mr. White has displayed through this meeting. **Mrs. Austin** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked how she would describe his behavior throughout this proceeding today. **Mrs. Austin** said agitated. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked what has been done to make her believe that. **Mrs. Austin** said sidebar conversations, snide comments being made, and Mr. White continuously leaves and comes back into the hearing. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked after the pre-determination hearing, if an immediate decision was made or was it taken into consideration. **Mrs. Austin** said she took it under consideration for 7 days. She said after the 7 days, she decided to uphold the department recommendation for termination. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked what her decision was based on. **Mrs. Austin** said it was the totality of Mr. White's aggressive and unsafe driving of the fire engine, threats of violence against another employee, and previous discipline. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if she directed the independent investigator in anyway regarding who to interview and who not to interview. **Mrs. Austin** said no. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if Mrs. Austin saw the report from the

investigator prior to the pre-determination hearing. **Mrs. Austin** replied no. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked what is Mrs. Austin asking Council to do tonight. **Mrs. Austin** said she would ask for them to uphold the decision for termination.

**Ms. Kelley** asked Mrs. Austin why she stated that Mr. White was making snide comments. **Mrs. Austin** said she could hear the whispering and comments being made. **Ms. Kelley** said Mr. White left the room to go to the restroom. She asked Mrs. Austin if at the pre-determination hearing, if Mr. White was asking Chief Souza if he ever apologized to him. **Mrs. Austin** said yes, Mr. White was asking Chief Souza something to an extent of an apology. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Mrs. Austin was aware of Mr. White's coworkers gossiping about him and making comments insinuating that he was having an affair with another firefighter. **Mrs. Austin** said she is not aware of any comments. **Ms. Kelley** asked how Mr. White is characterized as aggressive if he was trying to state his side of the case and ask Chief Souza about his claim. **Mrs. Austin** said from her perspective, employees are not usually aggressive during pre-determination hearings. She said they are usually sad, melancholy, or scared. She said she rarely sees an employee aggressive, so that is what the opinion is based on. **Ms. Kelley** asked it would be fair to say Mr. White was being cut-off in the meeting. **Mrs. Austin** said no. **Ms. Kelley** asked if it would be fair to say her questions were hostile in the meeting. **Mrs. Austin** said no.

**Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if Mrs. Austin recalled asking Mr. White if he had an anger issue. **Mrs. Austin** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if she recalled his response. **Mrs. Austin** said not verbatim, but his response was something to the extent that he appreciates confrontation and feels that's how departments should be ran and disagreements should be handled. She said she got the feeling that Mr. White likes to confront people but it cannot be the other way around. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if Mr. White admitted to making those threats against Chief Carlson to Chief Souza. **Mrs. Austin** said yes.

**Ms. Kelley** asked if it is fair to say it is a feeling Mr. White had rather than a threat. **Mrs. Austin** said she is not sure that someone would say something like that if it was not a threat. **Ms. Kelley** asked if she heard Mr. White say he feels like he wants to hurt someone but he is not going to do it. **Mrs. Austin** said no. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Michael Trujillo was at the pre-determination hearing. **Mrs. Austin** said yes. **Ms. Kelley** asked what she remembered about his side. **Mrs. Austin** said he grieved on issues that he had personally but he got to the point where he recognized Mr. White for his capabilities, technical expertise, and being a good EMT. **Ms. Kelley** asked if she took Lt. Trujillo's testimony into consideration. **Mrs. Austin** said yes, she took all of Mr. White's witness testimonies into consideration.

**Ms. Kelley** called Mr. White to the podium. **Ms. Kelley** asked Mr. White if he worked for the Carlsbad Fire Department and in what capacity. He said at the time of his termination, he was a Paramedic. He said he started in August of 2015 as a rookie

firefighter. **Ms. Kelley** asked if he still worked for the Carlsbad Fire Department. **Mr. White** said no. **Ms. Kelley** asked when he was separated from employment. **Mr. White** said there was a pre-determination hearing on September 23, 2025, and he was officially separated on December 29, 2025. **Ms. Kelley** asked what the official reason was given for the termination. **Mr. White** said from his understanding, there were violations that pertained to not driving appropriately and also work-place environment. **Ms. Kelley** asked if there were specific dates that the violations stemmed from. **Mr. White** said from the call from November 7, 2025. **Ms. Kelley** asked him of his recollection of what happened that day. **Mr. White** said they were called out for a car fire. He said when he heard the initial tone out, he got on the radio and asked if anyone was still in the vehicle. He said dispatch responded by saying there was not anyone inside the vehicle. **Mr. White** said they were on the way, when Chief Majerus got on the radio and said the fire was out and they could downgrade. **Mr. White** said they turned the lights and sirens off and proceeded to the scene. He said his philosophy on driving is to position the apparatus at the most appropriate spot on the scene. He said in order to do that, he had to get off of the pavement, into the dirt lot behind the nearby hotel. He said he told the crew to hold on while he positioned the apparatus more appropriately, in order to fight the fire if the car fire reignites. He said nothing was needed and the car did not seem it was in danger of reigniting. **Mr. White** said Chief Carlson then approaches him in a hostile manner while expressing concern over his erratic driving. He said he took the reprimand because he believes the administration has been trying to get him to do something to step outside of his character in order for him to be fired. He said he has been targeted since April 2025. He told Chief Carlson that he understood and started to step back into the engine. He said Chief Carlson hit the door onto his leg. He said he then stepped back out of the engine but then wanted to avoid confrontation so he stepped back into the engine. He said he heard Chief Carlson mutter something under his breath. He said they get back to Station 1 and he saw Chief Souza's car in the wash bay. He said the wash bay is where he usually parks so he looked for another place to park the engine. He said he backed the engine in front of the training tower. He said he told Lt. Shell that he was going to Chief Carlson's office to have a conversation with him. He said himself and Chief Carlson were close and he felt like having a conversation wouldn't be an issue. He said he called his BC, Mark Moreno, and told him what happened and then told him he does not want to have a conversation right at that moment because emotions were high. **Mr. White** said he spoke to BC Moreno out of respect of the chain of command. He said after speaking with BC Moreno, he spoke with Chief Souza. He said BC Moreno told him to speak to Chief Souza. He said there has multiple conversations in the past with Chief Souza because there has been a hostile work environment, and Chief Souza said he wanted to earn Mr. White's trust. **Mr. White** said he spoke to Chief Souza and recounts the situation. He said he told Chief Souza that Chief Carlson is trying to get him fired by getting him to step out of his character. He said he never made threats against Chief Carlson to Chief Souza. He said Chief Souza told him he would speak to Chief Carlson. **Mr. White** said he then had a conversation with Lt. Shell, reiterating what he told Chief Souza. He said himself and Chief Carlson were meant to be kept separate. He said

when Mr. Ahrens hired an external investigator, he knew it was to substantiate the administration's claims. **Ms. Kelley** said Mr. White has been characterized as aggressive. She asked him how he would characterize himself at the pre-determination hearing. **Mr. White** said he was straightforward. He said confrontation does not have to be negative. He said that he holds his employees and department accountable. **Ms. Kelley** asked if the pre-determination hearing was a fair process for Mr. White. **Mr. White** said no. **Ms. Kelley** said he previously mentioned that he felt targeted by the administration since April. She asked him why he felt targeted. **Mr. White** said since April, the Fire Department Administration was targeting him and he heard that other employees were saying he was intimidating. He said if someone has an issue with him doing his job, that is a personal issue for that individual. He said he does not have time to be mindful of others feelings in high-stress situations. He said an HR investigation was conducted and Mrs. Countryman talked to him about his demeanor. He said Mrs. Countryman mentioned to him that she has received multiple complaints with no factual information. **Ms. Kelley** asked if he reported discrimination or harassment to the HR Director. **Mr. White** said yes, he filed a grievance in August 2025 against a non-Union member. **Ms. Kelley** handed out copies of Mr. White's grievance to Council members. **Mr. White** said the basis of the grievance was that the Fire Department created a hostile environment aimed at him. He said there was gossip, rumors, and inappropriate conversations. He said he has had zero compassion shown to him since April. **Ms. Kelley** asked why he reported discrimination in regards to gossip and rumors. **Mr. White** said because he felt like they were discriminating against him and claiming he was intimidating because of his size. **Ms. Kelley** asked him what the result was of people gossiping an alleged, inappropriate relationship. **Mr. White** said it led to an HR investigation, but it was a small portion of it. **Mr. White** said that it affected his personal life and his marriage. **Ms. Kelley** asked if there were any changes made in the Fire Department as a result of the allegations about the inappropriate relationship. He said that Firefighter Rennie was able to get switched to a different shift. He said he was not supposed to work with Firefighter Rennie during the duration of the investigation but they still worked overtime together. **Ms. Kelley** asked if the investigation or disciplinary action substantiate any allegations of inappropriateness. **Mr. White** said no. **Ms. Kelley** said Mr. White made a report to Mrs. Countryman. She asked if anything came of this report. **Mr. White** said no. He said he reached out to her on October 10, 2025, because he had not heard anything from her regarding any findings. He said according to Mrs. Countryman, the investigation was going to be closed. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Mrs. Countryman stated the result of the investigation. **Mr. White** said no. **Ms. Kelley** asked if he started working with Firefighter Rennie again. **Mr. White** said yes. **Ms. Kelley** asked if anything was done when patient safety issues was reported. **Mr. White** said no. **Ms. Kelley** asked Mr. White if he believes he was driving erratically or dangerously on November 7, 2025. **Mr. White** said no. **Ms. Kelley** asked why he drove up on the pavement. **Mr. White** said the path he took was for optimal apparatus placement.

**Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked **Mr. White** if he recalls writing out a statement dated November 7, 2025, regarding the incident that is the subject of these proceedings. **Mr. White** said he recognizes the statement and clarified that the document was not made on November 7, 2025. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked when he prepared the statement. **Mr. White** said it was a few days after the incident on November 7, 2025. **Mr. White** read parts of his statement to Council. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** said his testimony to Council members is different than the written statement made a few days after the incident. She asked **Mr. White** if he had an injury. **Mayor Lopez** said there was no injury reported. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked who else observed **Mr. White** allegedly having his elbow and his leg hit. **Mr. White** said anyone on the scene that saw it. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked who he has spoken with that said they had seen the interaction. **Mr. White** said he hasn't spoken with anyone who saw the encounter. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he told Chief Souza that he was unsure that what he heard Chief Carlson say was directed at him or his driving. **Mr. White** said no. He said it was directed at him and he was unsure of the exact words he said. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** said **Mr. White** characterized it as muttering words. **Mr. White** said the engine was running, so Chief Carlson and himself were the only two that heard the interaction. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if Chief Carlson was walking away when he touched the door. **Mr. White** said no. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** clarified if **Mr. White** is claiming that Chief Carlson was standing next to him and not walking. **Mr. White** said as he got into the engine, Chief Carlson backed away from the door and hit the door. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if Chief Carlson hit the door or attempted to shut the door. She said he first had said Chief Carlson attempted to shut the door. **Mr. White** said he did attempt to shut the door. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** said **Mr. White** described himself as an angry person. **Mr. White** said yes, he has anger issues. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** said in fact, his anger issues were what contributed to him telling a handcuffed patient that he would rip his heart out and pushed him. **Mr. White** said he does not recall that. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he was disciplined for it, even though he does not recall the incident. **Mr. White** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** said pertaining to the driving incident, **Mr. White** was aware that the call was downgraded from a code 3 to a code 1 when they were approximately at Canal Street and Greene Street. **Mr. White** said no, Greene Street and Canyon Street. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he know if Chief Carlson and Chief Majerus were already at the scene. **Mr. White** said he knew that Chief Majerus was there. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** said when **Mr. White** arrived close to the scene, he made the decision to drive off the pavement in an expensive, heavy, well-equipped apparatus piece of equipment that belongs to the City of Carlsbad, in a manner of where it caused the apparatus to hit potholes and to be unsafe. **Mr. White** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked **Mr. White** if he was aware of a directive that Chief Souza distributed in June 2025 addressing driving behaviors and operation of equipment. **Mr. White** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if everyone in the Fire Department was subject to that policy, including him. **Mr. White** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he heard Chief Souza say that this call was no longer an emergency. **Mr. White** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked **Mr. White** if he was unhappy that he got corrected by Chief Carlson. **Mr. White** said he was not upset until he tried to shut the door. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he spoke to Chief Souza when he

arrived back to the station and made definitive statements about what he was going to do. **Mr. White** said he did not say he was going to do anything. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** said when he spoke to Lt. Shell, he said he was going to assault Chief Carlson. **Mr. White** said no, he was rehashing the conversation he had with Chief Souza to Lt. Shell. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** said when he was asked about this in the pre-determination hearing, did he say these things. **Mr. White** asked if it is on the recording. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** said yes. **Mr. White** said to play it. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** said she is able to play it, although **Mr. White** does not run the proceedings. She asked if he said he believed in confrontation at the pre-determination hearing. **Mr. White** stated that was taken out of context. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he was a supervisor of his coworkers. **Mr. White** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he supervised Assistant Chief Carlson. **Mr. White** said yes, if he is not doing something appropriately. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if supervisor is in his title and part of his job description. **Mr. White** said people need to be held accountable. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he is familiar with the chain of command. **Mr. White** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he thinks he can jump the chain of command at his own discretion. **Mr. White** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** stated that **Mr. White** stated he did not trust the administration, the Union, or his coworkers. **Mr. White** said no but he trusts some of his coworkers. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** said that he is not a trusting person. **Mr. White** said no. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he was familiar with the Collective Bargaining Agreement. **Mr. White** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** said the filing of a grievance is not dependent upon who you file the grievance against, she said it is determined whether you are a member of the Union. **Mr. White** asked if **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** had this in writing. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** said yes, it is in the Collective Bargaining Agreement. **Mayor Lopez** said it is Article 12, page 35. **Mr. White** said **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea's** interpretation is not accurate. **Mayor Lopez** said the Union contract supersedes Personnel Policy, and only items not mentioned in the Union contract, does the Personnel Policy apply. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** played portions of the pre-determination hearing for **Mr. White**. She said **Mr. White** made statements regarding Assistant Chief Carlson to Chief Souza, and as a result of those statements, an HR investigation was conducted, and he was notified that he was going to be considered for discharge as a result of the investigation that was conducted, and he was terminated.

**Ms. Kelley** asked **Mr. White** when he was asked if he was conducting unsafe driving with the fire truck, if he admitted to unsafe behavior at any time. **Mr. White** said no.

**Ms. Kelley** called Katelyn Rennie, Firefighter, to the podium. **Ms. Kelley** asked Firefighter Rennie what is her position with the Carlsbad Fire Department. **Firefighter Rennie** said she is a Firefighter, Intermediate. **Ms. Kelley** asked how she knows **Mr. White**. **Firefighter Rennie** said she has worked with him since she started with the Carlsbad Fire Department. **Ms. Kelley** asked if at any point, did she make any grievance or complaint that had to do with **Mr. White**. **Firefighter Rennie** said she has never filed a grievance against **Mr. White**, the only grievance she filed was against Assistant Chief Carlson. **Ms. Kelley** asked if the grievance involved **Mr. White**.

**Firefighter Rennie** said yes. **Ms. Kelley** presented a formal statement made by Firefighter Rennie. **Firefighter Rennie** said she gave this statement to Chief Souza and Mrs. Countryman. She said she was reporting harassment from Chief Carlson. **Ms. Kelley** asked in what way was he harassing her. **Firefighter Rennie** said that during her duration with the Carlsbad Fire Department, there was allegations and rumors that were spread about hers and Mr. White's professional relationship. She said that she addressed the concerns with Chief Carlson and Chief Carlson said he addressed the allegations with Mr. White, but not with her, because he is of higher rank and she would not be addressed because she is new to the department. She said a few days later, a formal investigation was conducted with the HR Department. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Firefighter Rennie had a problem with Mr. White. **Firefighter Rennie** said no. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Firefighter Rennie and Mr. White had communicated about these allegations going on about them. **Firefighter Rennie** said yes. **Ms. Kelley** asked if she received anything about the investigation. **Firefighter Rennie** said she never received a conclusion. **Ms. Kelley** asked if she was present for the apology from Chief Souza to Mr. White. **Firefighter Rennie** said yes, she was. **Ms. Kelley** asked if she submitted her complaint to the Union. **Firefighter Rennie** said she submitted her grievance and formal statement to Chief Souza. She said Chief Souza told her it needed to go through the Union. She said she sent the grievance and formal statement to the Union, and they responded that they are not able to do anything because Chief Carlson is not a Union member. She said she was told it needed to be submitted to the HR Department. She said once she submitted it to HR, she never heard anything back. **Ms. Kelley** asked Firefighter Rennie if she was present for the incident that occurred on November 7, 2025. **Firefighter Rennie** said yes, she was the firefighter for that shift. **Ms. Kelley** asked what she observed as they were driving to the call. **Firefighter Rennie** said on the way to the call, someone came over the radio but she could not hear what they said. She said they slowed down and she was told the call was downgraded. She said when they arrived on scene, several vehicles were in the roadway and blocking the vehicle from where they could see it. She said Mr. White told them it was going to be a little rough and to hold on. She said they went through the dirt parking lot, she said it was not abrupt and the crew cab was not shaking or in an unsafe manner. She said she believed Mr. White parked the engine in the most appropriate manner in order for them to fight fire. She said the car was still smoking but there were no active flames. **Firefighter Rennie** said when they cleared the scene she was in the engine in the backseat when she saw Chief Carlson come up to the driver side door where Mr. White was. She said she witnessed a conversation happen between Mr. White and Chief Carlson. She said she could not hear the conversation, but did witness when Chief Carlson went to walk away, he slammed the door on Mr. White and Mr. White was still standing in the doorway so the door couldn't close. She said she saw Mr. White take a deep breath and noticed Chief Carlson walk in front of the engine and glare into the engine. She said when they arrived back to Station 1, Chief Souza was washing his vehicle. She said she heard Mr. White say to Lt. Shell that he needed to speak to Chief Carlson. She said she went inside and once she came back outside, she saw Mr. White and Chief Souza having a conversation. **Ms. Kelley** asked if she could hear what they

were saying. **Firefighter Rennie** said no. **Ms. Kelley** asked her to characterize how Chief Carlson shut the door. **Firefighter Rennie** said she could visibly see that Chief Carlson was upset. **Ms. Kelley** asked what level of force was used. **Firefighter Rennie** said he slammed the door as he was walking away. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Mr. White seemed aggressive at the time. **Firefighter Rennie** said she believed Mr. White controlled himself. She said Chief Carlson acted inappropriately. **Ms. Kelley** asked if she was interviewed by the independent investigator about this case. **Firefighter Rennie** said no, not until Mrs. Madrid-Boyea asked for an interview.

**Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if Firefighter Rennie made a written statement for the encounter that happened. **Firefighter Rennie** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if everyone was warned about unsafe driving practices in June 2025 by Chief Souza. **Firefighter Rennie** said they were given a memo about changes being made and upheld. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if Firefighter Rennie was aware that the call on November 7, 2025, was downgraded from a code 3 to a code 1. **Firefighter Rennie** said no, she was unable to hear the radio traffic because she was in the back. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if she used the word slammed in any part of her written statement. **Firefighter Rennie** said no, not in her written statement. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if she wrote in her written statement that Mr. White was visibly upset. **Firefighter Rennie** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** said that Firefighter Rennie had wrote in her statement that she was later informed of the details of the interaction that occurred on scene between Chief Carlson and Mr. White. She asked Firefighter Rennie how she was informed. **Firefighter Rennie** said she overheard Mr. White talking to Lt. Shell about what had happened. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if her statement in her grievance was created before the events of November 7, 2025. **Firefighter Rennie** said yes.

**Ms. Kelley** called Michael Trujillo, Lieutenant, to the podium. **Ms. Kelley** asked if he has any knowledge of the testimony that has been given about Mr. White feeling like he has been targeted by the Fire Department. **Lt. Trujillo** said he was not there on November 7, 2025. **Ms. Kelley** asked if he was part of an investigation for that call. **Lt. Trujillo** said he was interviewed by Mrs. Madrid-Boyea and that is the only time that he has been questioned. **Ms. Kelley** asked if he had any personal knowledge about the incident on November 7, 2025. **Lt. Trujillo** said the only knowledge he has was speaking with Mr. White and BC Moreno. **Ms. Kelley** asked what BC Moreno told him. **Lt. Trujillo** said Mr. White called BC Moreno, and BC Moreno told him to talk to Chief Souza. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Lt. Trujillo testified at the pre-determination hearing. He said yes, he gave a statement on the behavior of Chief Carlson and on Mr. White. **Lt. Trujillo** said he does believe that Chief Carlson was targeting Mr. White. He said they used to work well in the past, but once Chief Carlson became Assistant Chief, he had issues with Mr. White. He said no issue was ever brought to his attention as he is Mr. White's supervisor. He said there is rank but he expects his staff to hold him accountable. He said Mr. White has passion, not aggression. **Lt. Trujillo** said he worked closely with Mr. White. **Ms. Kelley** asked if he was scared of Mr. White. **Lt. Trujillo** said no. **Ms. Kelley** asked if there is anything that involves Mr. White and

these proceedings that Lt. Trujillo would like to add to. **Lt. Trujillo** said he has never had issues with Mr. White. He said if there was an issue with Mr. White it should have been brought to his attention.

**Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked Lt. Trujillo if he gets along with Mr. White. **Lt. Trujillo** said there has been issues but they handle them. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if Mr. White asked him to be a character witness at the pre-determination hearing. **Lt. Trujillo** said yes.

**Ms. Kelley** asked if Lt. Trujillo was given a chance to give his opinion on Mr. White's character. **Lt. Trujillo** said yes, to a certain point. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Mr. White's testimony and the process of his pre-determination hearing was fair. **Lt. Trujillo** said no because Chief Carlson has also threatened him. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Mr. White has ever shown aggression. **Lt. Trujillo** said no, Mr. White is passionate. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Lt. Trujillo was present during the meeting with Mrs. Countryman. **Lt. Trujillo** said he was not present for the meeting for the November 7, 2025, incident, but he was present for the meeting pertaining to Firefighter Rennie and Mr. White. **Ms. Kelley** asked Lt. Trujillo what Mrs. Countryman said. **Lt. Trujillo** said Mrs. Countryman said the allegations were unsubstantiated.

**Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked Lt. Trujillo if he is friends with Chief Carlson. **Lt. Trujillo** said no. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he respects him. **Lt. Trujillo** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked him if he is there to air his grievances against Chief Carlson. **Lt. Trujillo** said no, he is explaining the relevance and giving his own example for Chief Carlson's behavior. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he is directing most of his testimony to Chief Carlson. **Lt. Trujillo** said yes, his behavior. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he is a character witness for Mr. White. **Lt. Trujillo** said no, he is a character witness for both, Mr. White and Chief Carlson. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he was present during the November 7, 2025, incident. **Lt. Trujillo** said no.

**Ms. Kelley** asked Saul Ortiz, Firefighter, to come to the podium. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Firefighter Ortiz wrote a statement in regards to an investigation for Mr. White. **Firefighter Ortiz** said yes. He said Mr. White lives up to a high standard and tries to improve others. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Firefighter Ortiz was present during the pre-determination hearing. **Firefighter Ortiz** said no, he only wrote a letter. **Ms. Kelley** asked if his letter was considered at the meeting. **Firefighter Ortiz** said yes. **Ms. Kelley** passed out Firefighter Ortiz's statement to Council members. She asked if Firefighter Ortiz wrote anything in his statement regarding Chief Carlson targeting Mr. White. **Firefighter Ortiz** said yes. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Firefighter Ortiz wrote anything in his statement regarding Chief Carlson provoking Mr. White. **Firefighter Ortiz** said yes.

**Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked Firefighter Ortiz if he has referred to Mr. White as someone he has had disagreements with when he first started at the Fire Department. **Firefighter Ortiz** said yes. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if his statement references Mr.

White as abrasive and is unable to communicate in a civil manner. **Firefighter Ortiz** said that was his initial thought, but his opinion changed over time. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he was aware that Mr. White pushed and threatened a patient that he was serving. **Firefighter Ortiz** said no. **Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked if he was present for the events that took place on November 7, 2025. **Firefighter Ortiz** said no.

**Ms. Kelley** asked Sam Soto to come to the podium. **Engineer Soto** said he is an Engineer/ Paramedic with the Carlsbad Fire Department. **Ms. Kelley** asked if he has seen Mr. White being aggressive. **Engineer Soto** said he has seen Mr. White do things that others do not like. He said Mr. White is more abrasive than others. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Engineer Soto was present during that incident that occurred on November 7, 2025. **Engineer Soto** said no. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Engineer Soto was a part of the investigation or the pre-determination hearing. **Engineer Soto** said he was a character witness. **Ms. Kelley** asked Engineer Soto if the culture of the Fire Department is relevant to Mr. White's case. **Engineer Soto** said there was a double standard within the department. He said Mr. White was reprimanded for things that others were not. **Ms. Kelley** asked if Engineer Soto witnessed other employees being aggressive. **Engineer Soto** said yes. **Ms. Kelley** asked if he testified this at the pre-determination hearing. **Engineer Soto** said no, they were to only speak about Mr. White's case. **Ms. Kelley** asked Engineer Soto what he witnessed at the pre-determination hearing. **Engineer Soto** said Mr. White was given a fair opportunity at the pre-determination hearing. **Ms. Kelley** asked Engineer Soto if he has personal experience where he has had to drive onto pavement. **Engineer Soto** said he will drive in a manner that is appropriate to the nature of the response. He said he does not believe Mr. White was driving dangerously.

**Mrs. Madrid-Boyea** asked Engineer Soto if he was present on November 7, 2025, at the call that occurred on James and Greene St. **Engineer Soto** said no.

**Ms. Kelley** asked if additional people, that are not labeled as witnesses, are able to speak to Council members. **Mayor Lopez** said it is limited to the witnesses. **Ms. Kelley** thanked Council members and Mayor Lopez for their time.

## **2. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF AFFIRMANCE, MODIFICATION OR REVERSAL OF RECOMMENDATION TO DISCHARGE**

5:19:00        **MOTION**

The motion was made by Councilor Niemeier and seconded by Councilor Foreman to approve to go into Closed Session to discuss matters pursuant to the provision of NMSA 1978 Section 10-15-1(H)(2), Limited Personnel Matters.

5:19:33        **VOTE**

The vote was as follows: Yes - Chavez, Walterscheid, Niemeier, Garwood, Rodriguez, Foreman; No - None; Absent - Anaya-Flores, Forrest; the motion carried.

5:19:54      **City Council reconvened into Open Session at 11:56 PM.**

5:20:10      **MOTION**

Councilor Rodriguez stated that only matters discussed in the Closing motion, matters pursuant to the provision of NMSA 1978 Section 10-15-1(H)(2), Limited Personnel Matters, were the only matters discussed during the Closed Session.

The motion was made by Councilor Rodriguez and seconded by Councilor Chavez to Reconvene into Open Session.

5:20:38      **VOTE**

The vote was as follows: Yes - Chavez, Walterscheid, Niemeier, Garwood, Rodriguez, Foreman; No - None; Absent - Anaya-Flores, Forrest; the motion carried.

5:20:52      **2. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF AFFIRMANCE, MODIFICATION OR REVERSAL OF RECOMMENDATION TO DISCHARGE**

5:21:01      **MOTION**

The motion was made by Councilor Chavez and seconded by Councilor Rodriguez to approve the recommendation for affirmance of the discharge.

5:21:17      **VOTE**

The vote was as follows: Yes - Chavez, Walterscheid, Niemeier, Garwood, Rodriguez, Foreman; No - None; Absent - Anaya-Flores, Forrest; the motion carried.

5:21:30      **Adjourned**

**With no further business to discuss, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 11:57 PM.**



ATTEST:

  
Richard D. Lopez, Mayor

  
Nadine Mireles, City Clerk