



CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

DEPARTMENT OF CITY CIVIL SERVICE
SUITE 900 – 1340 POYDRAS ST.
NEW ORLEANS LA 70112
(504) 658-3500 FAX NO. (504) 658-3598

CITY CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

MICHELLE D. CRAIG, CHAIRPERSON
CLIFTON J. MOORE, JR. VICE-
CHAIRPERSON
BRITTNEY RICHARDSON
JOHN H. KORN
MARK SURPRENANT

LATOYA CANTRELL
MAYOR

Tuesday, October 27, 2020

LISA M. HUDSON
DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL

Mr. Eddie Williams Jr.

Re: **Eddie Williams Jr. VS.
Sewerage & Water Board
Docket Number: 9097**

Dear Mr. Williams:

Attached is the decision of the City Civil Service Commission in the matter of your appeal.

This is to notify you that, in accordance with the rules of the Court of Appeal, Fourth Circuit, State of Louisiana, the decision for the above captioned matter is this date - 10/27/2020 - filed in the Office of the Civil Service Commission at 1340 Poydras St. Suite 900, Orleans Tower, New Orleans, Louisiana.

If you choose to appeal this decision, such appeal must conform to the deadlines established by the Commission's Rules and Article X, Sec.12(B) of the Louisiana Constitution. Further, any such appeal shall be taken in accordance with Article 2121 et. seq. of the Louisiana Code of Civil Procedure.

For the Commission,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Doddie K. Smith".

Doddie K. Smith
Chief, Management Services Division

cc: Ghassan Korban
Joseph Zanetti
Christina Carroll
file

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

EDDIE WILLIAMS
Appellant

vs.

DOCKET NO. 9097

SEWERAGE & WATER BOARD
Appointing Authority

DECISION

Appellant, Eddie Williams (hereinafter "Appellant"), brings the instant appeal pursuant to Article X, §8(A) of the Louisiana Constitution and this Commission's Rule II, §4.1, asking this Commission to find that the Sewerage & Water Board (hereinafter "Appointing Authority") did not have sufficient cause to issue a written reprimand to him on October 9, 2019. At all times relevant to the instant appeal, Appellant had permanent status as a classified employee.

The below Commissioners have reviewed the transcript from the December 4, 2019, hearing, all exhibits introduced into the record and proffered, and the May 6, 2020 attached report from the Hearing Examiner, which is advisory in nature. After reviewing this record, we DENY Appellant's appeal for the reasons set forth by the Hearing Examiner.

Judgment rendered this 27th day of October, 2020.

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

WRITER:

Mark C. Surprenant

Mark C. Surprenant (Oct 21, 2020 17:29 EDT)

MARK SURPRENANT, COMMISSIONER

CONCUR:

BRW

Brittney Richardson (Oct 26, 2020 15:54 CDT)

BRITTNEY RICHARDSON, COMMISSIONER

J H Korn

J H Korn (Oct 27, 2020 07:52 CDT)

JOHN KORN, COMMISSIONER

**CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
CITY OF NEW ORLEANS**

EDDIE WILLIAMS, JR.

VERSUS

DOCKET NUMBER 9097

SEWAGE & WATER BOARD

HEARING OFFICER'S REPORT

This appeal concerns an appeal by a permanent employee of a written reprimand. This appeal was heard on December 4, 2019. The Appellant, Eddie Williams, Jr., appeared *pro se*. The Appointing Authority offered exhibits B-1 to B-5 into evidence. After the Hearing Officer refused to admit a notebook of documents into evidence about events unrelated to the written reprimand offered by Mr. Williams, Mr. Williams proffered these documents, and these documents are available.

FACTS

The Sewerage & Water Board issued a written reprimand to Eddie Williams, Jr., on October 9, 2019 (Exhibit B-5) after Mr. Williams left a verbal counseling session on September 30, 2019, concerning a violation of the internet usage policy. (Exhibit B-2). The sample of the emails entered into evidence included a statement to his superiors that his supervisor was “lying through her teeth.” (Exhibit B-1). Mr. Williams also made derogatory statements by email about Mr. Tharp, the Chief of Networks for the Sewerage & Water Board, in emails. (Exhibit B-1, Tr. at 8-9). The Sewerage & Water Board viewed these emails, sent to the “top leadership” of the Sewerage & Water Board as offensive and disruptive. (Tr. at 10-13). Mr. Williams sent emails of

this nature to Ghasan Korban, the Executive Director, Robert Turner, the General Superintendent, and Lisa Hudson, the Personnel Director, (Tr. at 9).

At the direction of David Callahan, the CAO, Mr. Tharp and Mr. Turner asked Mr. Williams to attend a counseling session on September 30, 2019, during which the Sewerage & Water Board intended to give Williams verbal counseling to cease making disparaging remarks about his co-workers in emails and to cease sending repeated emails to the highest-ranking members of the organization. (Tr. at 14-16, Exhibit B-3). Mr. Tharp and Turner were in attendance. (Tr. at 15). After Turner refused to allow Williams to make an audio recording of the meeting, Williams left the meeting. (Tr. at 15-17. Mr. Turner informed Williams that Williams would be disciplined if Williams left the meeting. (Tr. at 16) Williams responded, "I'll take my chances," and left. (Tr. at 16-17).

Mr. Williams testified he asked if he could record the meeting, and when Mr. Turner informed Mr. Williams he was not allowed to record the meeting, Mr. Williams refused to attend the counseling session. (Tr. at 58-59). Mr. Williams testified that he told Turner and Tharp that "I'd gladly take whatever disciplinary action they would heap on me . . ." (Tr. at 59).

RECOMMENDATION

I recommend that the Commission deny the appeal. Mr. Williams' admitted refusal to attend a verbal counseling session was insubordinate, and the Sewerage & Water Board had cause to issue Mr. Williams a written reprimand. Insubordination disrupts efficient operation of the Sewerage & Water Board. (Tr. at 18-19).

Williams v. S&WB Docket #9097
May 6, 2020

This the 6th day of May, 2020

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christina Carroll", written in a cursive style.

CHRISTINA CARROLL
HEARING OFFICER