

Neenah-Menasha Fire Rescue
Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting
Tuesday, March 24, 2009
2nd Floor Conference Room – City of Neenah

Ald. Stevenson called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Ald. Wisneski, Zelinski, Stevenson, Ahles, Hendricks and Lange.

Also Present: Chief Vander Wyst, Director Easker and Administrative Assistant Theisen.

Approval of Minutes: The Committee reviewed the minutes from February 24, 2009.
MSC Ahles/Hendricks to approve the minutes from February 24, 2009, all voting aye.

Month End Budget Report: The Committee reviewed the February 2009 month end budget report. Chief Vander Wyst reviewed the budget report. Ald. Wisneski asked about clothing allowance. Chief Vander Wyst noted it is paid out the beginning of the year and there was a \$50 increase due to contract negotiations and this was not budgeted for when the budget was set in August of 2008. Ald. Wisneski asked about the auto/physical damage insurance and why this was over budget. Director Easker said when the City of Neenah put values on each vehicle this year this included equipment that had not been included in the past. Therefore this increased the premiums. Other Facility Outlay was discussed and this is for the payment of the phone system. There is one more payment left for this system. **MSC Wisneski/Lange to accept and place on file the February 2009 month end budget report, all voting aye.**

Monthly End Activity Report: The Committee reviewed the February 2009 month end activity report. Chief Vander Wyst noted that there was a lot of training in February conducted by AC Sipin. **MSC Wisneski/Hendricks to accept the February 2009 activity report and place on file, all voting aye.**

Town of Menasha and Town of Clayton Discussions: Chief Vander Wyst noted that the Town of Menasha Town Board has decided not to proceed with full-time fire protection. He was told that it was due to financial concerns and there was not an outcry for full-time service.

Chief Vander Wyst noted that there is nothing new to report on the Town of Clayton proposal. He is trying to obtain more specific information regarding first responder calls before he proceeds further with the Town of Clayton's request.

Apparatus Doors at Station 32: Chief Vander Wyst noted the Neenah Common Council did approve the replacement of the doors and the vendor will be coming to look at the springs to see if there is a way to re-use them. The vendor also said he would give us four brown doors for no additional cost.

Regional Driver's Simulator Grant: Chief Vander Wyst noted both Common Councils have approved proceeding with the grant. Research is continuing on what simulator to purchase.

Purchase of a new staff vehicle: Information was reviewed on the memorandum on the staff vehicle and the additional information that was requested from the last meeting. Chief Vander Wyst said he feels comfortable with staying with a sedan/SUV and not exceeding the budgeted amount of \$15,000. After looking at trucks, we would not be able to get a decent truck with lower miles for our budgeted amount. Ald. Stevenson asked how much money employees are submitting for mileage reimbursement when they have to use their own vehicle due to the lack of a staff vehicle. Chief Vander Wyst said at this time staff members are not submitting mileage reimbursement. **MSC Wisneski/Lange recommend both Common Councils approve the request to purchase an additional staff vehicle not to exceed the budgeted amount of \$15,000, all voting aye.**

City of Neenah Open Burning Ordinance #1387 and City of Menasha Sec.5-2-7: Discussion was held on the open burning ordinances. There are errors that still exist with the Menasha Burning Ordinance that need to be corrected. It was decided to make the necessary corrections and review both ordinances again at our meeting in April for recommendation to both Common Councils in May.

Ald. Ahles asked about adequate fire suppression and why fire extinguishers were not brought up. Chief Vander Wyst explained there are too many times where people have extinguishers that are not working, up-to-date, or they do not know how to properly use them. It is up to the Fire Officer to use their best judgment when they are at the call to determine if there is adequate fire suppression. The Committee asked that language be changed to "Adequate fire suppression equipment shall be immediately available to control or extinguish the recreational fire. Adequate fire suppression shall consist of, but is not limited to, connected or charged garden hose or a large bucket of water within two feet of the fire." It was also asked that both City Attorneys be asked if the specification of the fee be included or just included on the fee list. The Committee thought both Cities now take out specific fees from ordinances in case there are changes in the future then the fee schedule is changed and not every ordinance.

Chief Vander Wyst said the changes will be made and both ordinances will be brought back to the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting in April to review and make a recommendation to both Councils.

Review of Vacation Time for AC Al Auxier: The memo from Chief Vander Wyst was reviewed regarding the request to increase vacation time for AC Auxier from three weeks to six weeks. Ald. Stevenson called CA Godlewski about Human Resources opinion on the additional vacation time that was requested. A memo was handed out from CA Godlewski regarding the support from Human Resources for the request for additional vacation time. Chief Vander Wyst explained when AC Auxier started in his current position in May of 2006; the benefits that were given to him were the same as the previous person. Committee members discussed many items on this subject including

Should this have been an issue resolved upon hire?; Does this impact retention of a good employee?; Are there other qualified NMFR employees to fill this position?; What are the cost/benefit issues?; Could this set a precedence?; Should there be a gradual increase instead of going from three to six weeks?; Can there be unpaid time off?; Can additional vacation time be justified? It was agreed upon that there should not be additional payout upon retirement above the three weeks in the original employment agreement.

Chief Vander Wyst stated that the added vacation time can be justified as presented in the memo and is warranted. He also stated that this proposal is something he initiated and was not done by AC Auxier. From a cost effective basis, Al is at the midpoint of the current salary plan and it would be very difficult to find someone to replace Al with the wealth of knowledge and experience he brings to the position. There is also a huge savings for the Cities with respect to WRS benefits. The Chief's goal is to retain a valued employee for as long as possible. **MSC Ahles/Lange to amend the original employment agreement and approve giving AC Auxier an additional week of vacation effective March 24, 2009 (for a total of four weeks paid vacation) and an option to take two weeks of unpaid time in 2009. Another additional week of vacation (five weeks total) on January 1, 2010 and the option of one week of unpaid time in 2010. A third week of vacation on January 1, 2011, with no additional unpaid time off, for a total of six weeks of paid vacation. Additionally, upon retirement AC Auxier will only be paid out up to three weeks of accumulated vacation time, as per the original employment agreement. All unpaid and paid vacation time is subject to the Chief's approval, all voting aye.**

MSC Wisneski/Hendricks o adjourn at 7:10 p.m. all voting aye.

Respectfully Submitted,

Len Vander Wyst
Chief

LV/tt



Memorandum

TO: Members of NMFR Joint Finance and Personnel Committee

FROM: Len Vander Wyst, Fire Chief

DATE: March 18, 2009

RE: Staff Vehicle – Request to Purchase

At the February 24, 2009, Joint Finance and Personnel Committee, a request was made for more information concerning the purchase of a staff vehicle for NMFR. Deputy Chief Steve DeLeeuw put together the Staff Vehicle Information sheet attached to this memo, which should answer the questions raised in February. If there is additional information needed prior to our meeting on Tuesday, March 24th, please let me know.

After reviewing the information attached and discussing vehicle issues with staff, it is my recommendation that NMFR proceeds with purchasing a used, low mileage sedan/suv, at or below the \$15,000 budgeted amount. While a used pickup truck would be nice to have for various reasons listed, it is not practical to purchase a good used truck with low mileage and remain somewhat close to the \$15,000 budget. Research has revealed most trucks in that price range to either have high miles, or were older in years. I cannot recommend to the committee to exceed the \$15,000 budget for a truck that we would most likely have to spend at least \$20,000 to get a slightly used low mileage truck. A good used low mileage vehicle/suv will suit our needs and remain within the \$15,000 budget.

Following research and meetings, I believe the current 2003 Chevy Impala which is used mainly by myself for all the reasons listed in the attachment can be transferred and used extensively in the inspection area as a staff vehicle. This will allow for a reliable used vehicle with roughly 55,000 miles on it to be available for out of town travel as well for conferences and meetings for staff and for all other activities listed as needed. The additional staff vehicle purchased, if approved by this committee and the city councils, would be a quality used low mileage vehicle/suv that would be utilized by myself for all the reasons listed in the attachment.

I would appreciate your support and recommend that the Joint Finance and Personnel Committee recommend to the respective city council's that NMFR be allowed to purchase a used vehicle/suv for up to \$15,000 currently budgeted and report back to the committee following the actual purchase.

Neenah Menasha Fire Rescue Staff Vehicle Information

We currently have three staff vehicles.

1. 2003 Chevrolet Impala
 - a. 6 years old and average mileage usage is 5,200 per year. Current mileage is a little over 54,000.
 - b. Used by Chief VanderWyst for numerous meetings that he is required to attend not only within Neenah and Menasha but all other outside agency committee meetings.
 - c. Used by Chief VanderWyst to respond to structure fires and haz-mat incidents.
 - d. Used by line personnel of NMFR to attend conference, seminars and meetings of which some require an over night stay. Otherwise, a vehicle would have to be rented or mileage pay would have to be given if an employee took their personal vehicle. It saves the department money by taking a staff vehicle.
 - e. Used by Chief VanderWyst for weekly station visits.
 - f. Used by DC DeLeeuw for committee meetings, station visits and conferences, meetings, seminars.
 - g. Used by Tara to attend meetings and conferences.
 - h. Used by AC's Sipin and Auxier in the event that either the 2008 Silverado or the 1994 Suburban are not available.

2. 1992 Chevrolet Suburban
 - a. 17 years old and average mileage usage is a little over 5,000 miles per year. Current mileage is 74,000.
 - b. Used to carry all fire investigation equipment.
 - c. Used by AC Auxier for on site inspections, plan review, sprinkler test, fire investigations.
 - d. Used by AC Sipin in the event that the 2008 Silverado is not available.
 - e. Used by DC DeLeeuw in the event that the 2003 Impala is not available for monthly station visits, meetings, errands etc.
 - f. Is taken to station 35 for mechanics to use for buildings maintenance projects or to run for parts for vehicle maintenance.
 - g. Used as a back up for Inspectors vehicles due to maintenance issues.

3. 2008 Chevrolet Silverado
 - a. Purchased in late 2007. Average mileage for the past 1-½ year is 5,450.
 - b. Used as back up for Command 32.
 - c. Used by AC Sipin for his response to structure fires and haz-mat incidents.
 - d. Used by AC Sipin for transporting training equipment to off site training locations. (i.e different stations, City Garage, Gibson's, etc.)

- e. Used by AC Sipin, AC Auxier and Dc DeLeeuw for numerous reasons as listed above in the event that another staff vehicle is not available.
- f. Used for transporting fire hose and equipment from fires. In the past it was just thrown on the hose beds of the trucks or tailboards. This practice is not only unsafe but with the new vehicles it is not possible due to vehicle design.

Needs for an additional staff vehicle:

1. The mechanics do not have a vehicle to make station visits to perform maintenance of vehicles, equipment and station repairs. Currently when minor work needs to be done on a vehicle it is driven to Station 35 because the mechanic has no way of getting to the station. It would make more sense to drive a smaller vehicle to a station for repair compared to a fire engine going to Station 35 for the maintenance. This will also allow engines to remain in district (31 & 32).
2. The administration staff currently uses their own personal vehicles when a staff vehicle is not available.
3. If the 2003 Impala is out of town due to a conference or seminar or the Chief is using it we are limited to what two vehicles for the remainder of the staff.

Realistically having another pick up truck would be ideal. We could then put the 1994 Suburban with the mechanics for all their needs. AC Sipin would have the 2008 Silverado for transporting his training equipment and all other reasons listed above and then AC Auxier would have a four-wheel drive vehicle when visiting sites. The four-wheel drive comes in handy during the spring and fall when job sites are less than favorable due to the weather.