



Memorandum

TO: NMFR Joint Finance & Personnel Members

FROM: Chief Al Auxier

DATE: August 23, 2012

RE: Filling Vacant Firefighter Position

As a result of meetings and conversations with both Mayor Scherck and Mayor Merkes on allowing Neenah-Menasha Fire Rescue, NMFR, to fill the vacant Firefighter position when Shift Commander Mike Flunker retires, Mayor Merkes has requested that NMFR look into options available in providing a level of service that is expected and possible costs savings if the position is left vacant. Consideration for any options that could possibly arise stem from the implementation of the Automatic Aid Agreement between the Appleton Fire Department and Neenah-Menasha Fire Rescue.

Existing staffing levels at Station 36 in Menasha were established when the Cities of Neenah and Menasha merged the Neenah and Menasha Fire Departments. It was decided to staff Station 36 with four Firefighters shown in Attachment #1 under Station 36/Engine 36. Mainly because, as Engine 36 and the crew moved east and away from Station 36 they would be left on their own to attack fires and handle emergencies for an extended period(s) of time as it would take additional time for other NMFR engines and crews to get on scene to assist them. The secondary reason to have four Firefighters was to utilize one of the Firefighter positions to fill the position of Shift Inspector. Shift Inspectors are a specialized position within NMFR and accomplish many tasks associated with inspections and prevention in Menasha for NMFR.

With the implementation of the Automatic Aid Agreement it meant that there would be a responding unit from the Appleton Fire Department that would now be responding to assist Engine 36 as they responded east. Thus, creating an opportunity to review staffing levels at Station 36. The key position that would change if any changes are made would have to involve the Shift Inspector position at Station 36. Three options exist as to how staffing would be accomplished at Station 36 and those options are:

Option #1:

Leave staffing as it currently is with four Firefighters at Station 36 as shown in Attachment #1, line 1, with staffing at 17. During discussions to merge the two departments it was determined that both the Cities of Neenah and Menasha would not decrease the minimum number line Firefighters on duty in either city. The number of Firefighters for Neenah was ten and the number for Menasha was seven. This was accomplished by reducing the number of Administrative Staff to the number we currently have which is five, including an Administrative Assistant.

By creating and utilizing a Firefighter at Station 36 to fill a Shift Inspector position it allows NMFR to complete required fire prevention activities. First and foremost, is that during the workday, 7:00 am to around 4:00 pm, the Shift Inspector completes building inspections required by State statute. There are 620 properties that need to be inspected in Menasha, some annual but most semi annual inspections.

The Shift Inspector is also responsible for completing numerous fire prevention activities that occur throughout the entire 24 hours that he/she is on duty. The Shift Inspector assists with inspection and witnessing testing of fire prevention systems and appurtenances, answers calls with question and concerns involving the fire codes, deals with responding to calls that require his/her expertise many of which are outside the normal workday to accommodate businesses, citizens, organizations and contractors that need their assistance.

Finally, the Shift Inspector is responsible for doing investigations, some small that require just a limited amount of time but there are large ones also that require intensive amounts of time. These investigations handle everything from digging through large amounts of fire debris to interviewing witnesses. These require extensive amounts of time to do reports and usually are done outside the normal workday usually in the evening or at night.

Option #2:

Adjust overtime budget to account for possible changes in staffing at Station 36 with the net effect of reducing overtime budget. To meet the Shift Inspector responsibilities NMFR would call in overtime for the initial 8 hours, 7:00 am to 3:00 pm, of the workday thus allowing the Shift Inspector conduct building inspections during those 8 hours. For the remaining 16 hours of the day, 3:00 pm to 7:00 am the next day, the Shift Inspector would fill the role of the third Firefighter on Engine 36 as shown in Attachment #1, lines 2 & 3 for staffing levels at Station 36/Engine 36.

In trying to establish an appropriate amount that NMFR could expect to reduce overtime I took the short shift overtime that was paid out for 2009, 2010 & 2011, the amounts are shown on Attachment #2, and created an average for those three years, \$83,039.40. I then took that average and multiplied by 33%, 8 hours or a third of the 24 hour day, and found that it would cost NMFR \$27,403.00 for overtime that would be paid out to fill the third position at Station 36 while the Shift Inspector does the required inspections, see Attachment #3, first section.

The net result of subtracting the overtime that NMFR would pay out from the three-year average would be a reduction of the overtime budget for 2013 of \$55,636.40. This would result in a reduction of \$33,665.58 (60.51% per the 2013 cost sharing formula) for Neenah and a reduction of \$21,970.81 (39.49% per the cost sharing formula) for Menasha; see Attachment #3, first section.

Option #3:

Leave the projected vacant Firefighter position in the department unfilled. This is an extreme case and would involve some necessary restructuring of NMFR in the future if this position(s) would continue to be left unfilled. If you look at Attachment #2, Firefighter Position Cost(s), you will see that projected savings for starting Firefighter wage with benefits would cost or save around \$50,399.70. This would result in a reduction of \$30,496.86 (60.51% per the 2013 cost sharing formula) for Neenah and a reduction of \$19,902.84 (39.49% per the cost sharing formula) for Menasha.

Should we continue to not fill future vacant positions and get to a point where there are three Shift Inspector positions left unfilled it would be necessary to restructure. NMFR would need to add one-day person to fill the need for inspections to be completed in Menasha. NMFR currently only has one person working a day position, Monday through Friday, in Fire Prevention/Inspection Bureau, that person is Assistant Chief Vernon Green. With the current duties and responsibilities AC Green would not be able to complete the Menasha building inspections. There is nothing in the wage table(s) that spells out what to pay but even if NMFR is able to fill that Inspector position with a project wage and benefit cost of \$65,000.00, shown on Attachment #2 and I am not sure if that would be the accurate amount or not.

Additionally, if three firefighter positions were left unfilled we would need to maintain the current level budgeted for overtime and reinstate the money saved in Option #2, \$55,636.40. The net result of this option as NMFR moves forward would be approximate savings of one starting Firefighter's wage and benefit amount shown on Attachment #2, \$50,399.70.

There are many other variables to Option #3 that would be pure speculation on my behalf. This is the best analysis I can give for the immediate future. So, if you have any question or concerns please feel free to contact me and I will try to do my best in giving you correct and accurate answers.

Thank you for taking time to review and consider the items mentioned in this lengthy memo.

Attachment #1

Neeah-Menasha Fire Rescue Staffing Assignments

Administration: Chief, Deputy Chief, Assistant Chief/Training & Assistant Chief/Fire Marshall

Staffing	Station 32/ Command 32	Station 32/ Engine 32	Station 32/ Quint 32	Station 35/ Engine 35	Station 36/ Engine 36	Station 31/ Engine 31
17	Shift Commander	Officer Driver Firefighter	Officer Driver	Officer Driver Firefighter	Officer Driver Firefighter Shift Inspector	Officer Driver Firefighter Shift Inspector
17 0700 to 1500 hours	Shift Commander	Officer Driver Firefighter	Officer Driver	Officer Driver Firefighter	Officer Driver Firefighter Shift Inspector	Officer Driver Firefighter Shift Inspector
16 1500 to 0700 hours	Shift Commander	Officer Driver Firefighter	Officer Driver	Officer Driver Firefighter	Officer Driver SI/Firefighter	Officer Driver Firefighter Shift Inspector

Attachment #2

Firefighter Position Cost(s)

Starting Firefighter Wage 2013	\$38,769.00
Increase for fringe benefits	30%
Total compensation	\$50,399.70
Neenah's Cost (60.51%)	\$30,496.86
Menasha's Cost (39.49%)	\$19,902.84

Short Shift Overtime for 2009, 2010 & 2011

Short shift overtime 2009	\$82,322.11
Short shift overtime 2010	\$88,787.27
Short shift overtime 2011	\$78,008.83
Total	\$249,118.21
Average short shift overtime for years 2009, 2010 & 2011	\$83,039.40

Shift Inspector Position Cost(s)

Starting Shift Inspector Wage 2013	\$50,000.00
Increase for fringe benefits	30%
Total compensation	\$65,000.00
Neenah's Cost (60.51%)	\$39,331.50
Menasha's Cost (39.49%)	\$25,668.50

Attachment #3

Options for Shift Inspector/Firefighter Working 8, 9 or 10 hours

Shift Inspector working 8 hours & filling with 8 hours of overtime

3 year average for overtime \$83,039.40
Percent of day (8 hours = 33%) 33%
Overtime costs \$27,403.00
Proposed reduction in overtime \$55,636.40
Neenah's Share (60.51%) \$33,665.58
Menasha's Share (39.49%) \$21,970.81

Shift Inspector working 9 hours & filling 9 hours overtime

3 year average for overtime \$83,039.40
Percent of day (9 hours = 37%) 37%
Overtime costs \$30,724.58
Proposed reduction in overtime \$52,314.82
Neenah's Share (60.51%) \$31,655.70
Menasha's Share (39.49%) \$20,659.12

Shift Inspector working 10 hours & filling 10 hours overtime

3 year average for overtime \$83,039.40
Percent of day (10 hours = 42%) 42%
Overtime costs \$34,876.55
Proposed reduction in overtime \$48,162.85
Neenah's Share (60.51%) \$29,143.34
Menasha's Share (39.49%) \$19,019.51