

Neenah-Menasha Fire Rescue
Joint Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting
June 25, 2013 – 5:30 p.m.
3rd Floor Council Chambers – City of Menasha

Present: Ald. Stevenson, Langdon, Ahles, Englebert, Ramos and Benner.

Also Present: Chief Auxier, AC Green, Interim Treasurer Sassman and Office Manager Theisen.

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

There were no members of the public present.

Minutes: **MSC Langdon/Englebert to approve the meeting minutes of May 7, 2013, all voting aye.**

Monthly Budget Report: The Committee reviewed the May 2013 monthly budget report. Chief Auxier noted the Dive Team budget has been added to the monthly budget report. **MSC Englebert/Stevenson to approve the May 2013 budget report, all voting aye.**

Dive Team Budget: The Committee reviewed the Dive Team trust fund donations and the expenses that have been incurred since the approval to begin fundraising. Chief Auxier said we reached the \$90,000 fundraising goal and do anticipate some more donations to be given to us in the near future. Ald. Engelbert noted this spreadsheet doesn't reflect what the actual costs are for the year and inquired about a yearly budget. Chief Auxier noted a budget was created this year as we have reached our fundraising goal. Ald. Ramos asked if a yearly budget would continue. Chief Auxier confirmed this and it would be submitted to this Committee for review during budget season. Ald. Stevenson noted with the current trust/budget and what has been spent this year we have enough in the trust right to finance through the end of 2014. Ald. Ahles asked as we continue to move forward with this service that both City Council's will have to recognize this is now an expected service by the citizens and both Council's will have to make the commitment of funding this program in the future if donated funds do not continue or discontinue the service. The Dive Team doesn't cost a lot to operate, however, the capital equipment will have a larger financial impact as we move forward. Ald. Englebert said he concurs with Ald. Ahles and we do need to make sure we continue looking at this during budget preparation. Ald. Benner concurred and noted we need to continue to be proactive and asked we put together a presentation of what the Department has accomplished with this program and present this to both Councils. Chief Auxier noted we do have a presentation started and we will schedule time with both Councils this fall. Ald. Benner asked if there would be a pay adjustment for any of the divers. Chief Auxier said discussion with the potential dive team members, and Local 275 President, were held prior to NMFR moving forward with fundraising for the Dive Team. It was agreed divers would not receive a pay adjustment, however, there would be overtime funding for them to continue their training and maintain their skills. Ald. Ahles

asked if there is any formal agreement with the pay adjustment? Chief Auxier said there is no formal agreement and he will make both City Attorneys aware of this. Ald. Langdon does concur with Ald. Ahles and Ald. Benner and would like us to continue to make sure the public knows about our Dive Team. Ald. Ahles asked that we add the Squad to our vehicle inventory to the spreadsheet of future replacement. **MSC Stevenson/Langdon to accept the Dive Team budget/trust fund review and place on file, all voting aye.**

Monthly Activity Report: The Committee reviewed the May activity and automatic aid reports. **MSC Stevenson/Ramos to approve the May activity and automatic aid reports and place on file, all voting aye.**

Review of Station 36 Response Times: The Committee reviewed the memo from Chief Auxier on response times of Station 36. It was noted since Station 36 moved the response times have decreased to areas we struggled with in the past, especially in the eastern part of our district. Ald. Benner asked how this fits into the expected standards. Chief Auxier noted NFPA's best response time is an average of 4.5 minutes for 90% of calls and we fit into this. Ald. Stevenson asked if we have reviewed response time comparisons now that automatic aid is in place. Chief Auxier will work with Appleton Fire Department to review response times and will bring this information to a future meeting. **MSC Ramos/Stevenson to accept the report of Station 36 response times and place on file, all voting aye.**

Proposed Joint Emergency Response Plan: Chief Auxier noted NMFR is in charge of the Emergency Operations for both Communities and would be in charge if there were a major incident. Our goal is to have consistency in both communities. We have worked with the Mayors and Department Heads from both Communities and everyone has agreed with the changes we are proposing. Ald. Englebert asked if we have to submit this to the State for approval. Chief Auxier confirmed we do not. Ald. Stevenson asked if the Council members are expected to be a part of the emergency response. Chief Auxier explained the Mayors and Department Heads would be expected to respond. Ald. Stevenson asked if both Council Presidents would need additional training, as they would be in charge in the Mayor's absence. Chief Auxier said he does have the authority to activate the EOC in the Mayor's absence, as we are in charge of this program, but will check to see if additional training is needed for Council Presidents. **MSC Stevenson/Englebert recommends the City of Neenah Common Council and City of Menasha Common Council approve the Joint Emergency Response Plan, all voting aye.**

Proposed Ordinance for Inspections: Chief Auxier noted our Department is having an increased issue in gaining compliance with some property owners fixing life safety issues. In the past, we had issues with false alarms and once we put together a system for compliance, and attached a fee to it, the issues decreased. We would like to do something similar with our inspections to obtain a more timely compliance with property owners. This information has been sent to both Mayors and City Attorneys for review and we have not heard back from them yet. AC Green noted there a minority of specific

property owners that continue to work the current system and do not fix life safety issues in a timely manner. He explained our current process of inspections and the amount of time it takes to gain compliance. It was also noted other departments in our area that have adopted a fee schedule similar to this have seen a dramatic decrease with re-inspections. Our current method of compliance right now is through a citation and this is a lengthy process. This proposed ordinance would have a more immediate impact and we would gain compliance in a more efficient manner. He also noted having this ordinance give us flexibility to work with property owners who are communicating with us and are trying to resolve the issues they need to fix.

A lengthy discussion was held on what is an appropriate fee to attach to the re-inspections and to make sure we are covering the costs the Department incurs but also making an impact with property owners for them to understand they have to fix life safety issues in a timely manner. Ald. Stevenson felt the first re-inspection should be free, second should be \$200, third would be \$500 and the 4th would be \$1,000. Ald. Ahles agrees the fee structure should be greater than what is proposed as the citizens who are at risk are renting from landlords who are not complying. Ald. Langdon said he agrees with increasing re-inspection fees. Ald. Benner and Ald. Englebert both agree the amounts need to be higher to prevent people from taking advantage of the system and to ensure life safety issues are fixed in a timelier manner. Ald. Englebert asked how we justify the times between the re-inspections. Chief Auxier noted our primary goal is life safety and then property preservation and when we look at these violations this is how we base the priority of the re-inspection. Ald. Ahles asked if there is something similar to this where it is worked on a point system versus having a dollar amount attached to it. AC Green said there is nothing like that and he doesn't agree with a point system as it gives people the impression they can continue to put things off and our job is to make sure life safety issues are maintained right away. The Committee felt the fees should be changed to reflect a higher dollar amount. They also felt the ordinance language should be clear to state the re-inspection fees are assessed for each violation and re-inspection. **MSC Englebert/Stevenson directed the City Attorneys to draft an ordinance for re-inspections. There shall be language reflecting re-inspection fees are based on re-inspections for each individual violation and the fees in the ordinance shall reflect \$0 for the first re-inspection, \$200 for the second re-inspection, \$400 for the third re-inspection and \$800 for the fourth, and every additional re-inspection, all voting aye.**

Other: Ald. Stevenson asked Chief Auxier to express his gratitude for Local 275's Backdraft Bike tour and thank them for all of their hard work to raise money for this worthwhile cause and for keeping this event locally within the Communities NMFR services.

MSC Ramos/Langdon to adjourn at 7:00 p.m, all voting aye.

Respectfully Submitted,

Al Auxier
Chief

AA/tt