

Neenah-Menasha Fire Rescue
Joint Finance & Personnel Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 24, 2013 – 5:30 p.m.
Hauser Room – City of Neenah

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

Excused: Ald. Ahles.

Also Present: Chief Auxier, Director Easker, AC Green and Office Manager Theisen.

Members of the Public Present: Jamie Leonard, Al Wroblewski and Jim Dunbar.

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

Public Forum: No members of the public spoke.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: The Committee reviewed the meeting minutes of June 25, 2013. **MSC Englebert/Stevenson to approve the meeting minutes of June 25, 2013, all voting aye.**

Review of Monthly Budget Report: The Committee reviewed the August 2013 monthly budget. Ald. Stevenson asked about the decrease in the FLSA wages and why that line item budget is decreased. Chief Auxier explained the members accrue the wages based on them working a 56-hour work week versus a 40. This extra time is converted into FLSA time. We have more members who are taking time off and then the FLSA wages are not incurred. **MSC Langdon/Ramos to approve the August 2013 budget report and place on file, all voting aye.**

Review of Monthly Activity Reports: The Committee reviewed the August activity and automatic aid reports. Chief Auxier noted when comparing the call volume from this year to last year during the same time period the numbers are close. Ald. Englebert questioned why we are having a large number of runs to one specific address. Chief Auxier noted that this can happen due to medical issues and when this starts happening other outside agencies will become involved and then the calls will start going back down to that area. Ald. Stevenson asked about the false alarm reports and the difference between the different codes for the false alarms. Chief Auxier noted they are similar to each other and it's the code the Officer decides to use as what they feel best fits the type of the call. **MSC Ramos/Langdon to accept the monthly activity and automatic aid reports and place on file, all voting aye.**

Review of Automatic Aid Response Times: The Committee reviewed the information regarding the response times for automatic aid. Comparisons were shown using response times were before Station 36 moved, what they are with the current station location and with Appleton Fire Department's response. Discussion was held on response times and

how dispatching is done through a system where the engine that is closest to the call is dispatched versus the old system of having assigned beats for each engine company. The Committee thanked Chief Auxier for the information and was pleased with how well automatic aid is working between the two Departments.

Review of the Re-Inspection Ordinance: The Committee reviewed City of Neenah Ordinance #2013-17 Creating Code 7-34 relating to fees for fire re-inspection or missed appointments and City of Menasha Sec. 5-3-5 Re-inspections or missed appointments in Chapter 3 of the Fire Prevention Code. The Committee felt both met the intent of what the Department is looking for. Discussion was held on developing a departmental policy on how the re-inspection fees will be applied so if there are issues in the future we can show we are being fair and consistent with applying these fees. This would support the inspector's decision for scheduling a re-inspection for compliance.

Consideration of Re-inspection Fee Schedule: The Committee reviewed the fees the Committee can consider relating to actual costs. AC Green discussed how the costs for inspections were averaged and the time it takes for each inspection. Ald. Englebert felt with having to be governed by the actual costs it takes the punitive aspect of when the property owner ignores the requirement to fix the violation. Discussion was held on the costs incurred with the Department's time in trying to gain compliance.

MSC Englebert/Ramos directed Chief Auxier to review all actual costs the Department incurs for inspections and re-inspections, develop a suggested fee schedule for the re-inspections, develop a departmental policy on how re-inspection fees will be applied and bring the ordinance, department policy and suggested re-inspection fees for review at the next meeting, all voting aye.

Dive Team Update: Chief Auxier noted the Committee we did have one person withdraw himself from active status on the dive team due to a personal issue. He noted training continues with all members and we continue to seek ways to fund the dive team trust.

Review of 2014 Medical Evaluations Proposal: The Committee reviewed the 2014 medical evaluation proposal. Chief Auxier noted the EKG's would be completed on a bi-annual basis versus an every year basis. It was noted the 2013 budget had a savings due to not having the EKG's and Chief Auxier will ask the Committee next year for consideration of a carry forward of funds from 2013 to 2014 for the additional cost. The Committee asked that we look at some of the bi-annual testing to see if there is a way we can do half each year to save the money. **MSC Ramos/Englebert recommends the City of Neenah and the City of Menasha Common Council's accept the proposal from Affinity Occupational Health for a total of \$12,798.50 and all services, with the exception of the lab work, to be performed in 2014, all voting aye.**

2013 Cost Sharing Budget Formula: Chief Auxier noted Menasha's share for the cost distribution formula will increase by .9% and this is directly relating to the increase in service calls for the City. When the service calls for Menasha were reviewed the automatic aids Appleton Fire Department responded into the City of Menasha were

included in Menasha's total and not the calls our Department responded into Appleton Fire Department's jurisdiction. Director Easker noted that this part of the formula only weighs 20% for the overall cost formula. Ald. Englebert asked Chief Auxier to bring the average of run calls to the Menasha budget workshops. **MSC Englebert/Stevenson to accept the 2013 cost sharing budget formula and place on file, all voting aye.**

2014 Budget Review: The Committee reviewed the 2014 budget. Chief Auxier noted the budget only a proposal at this time. Mayor Scherck and Director Easker have reviewed this proposal. He will be meeting with Mayor Merkes in the near future. The overall increase for the proposed budget is .9%. Ald. Englebert asked about the budget requests for new engines. Chief Auxier said these vehicle replacements have been pushed back a few years already and are to the point where we need to start funding replacements. Director Easker has suggested both Cities meet to work on a plan for budgeting these bigger purchases. Ald. Stevenson asked about the telephone line item. Director Easker noted this is to pay back the City of Neenah for the Department's share of the phone system and the total payment will be divided over seven years. Director Easker discussed the fringe line item. He noted the WRS contribution rate historically included a percent of 6.6% to cover duty disability. This is for employees who were disabled in the line of service, prior to the 1980's and paid for the disability. The State of Wisconsin notified us they have more money in the fund of what is actually needed and significantly reduced the rate. The percentage has now dropped to .9% and this is why we have the decrease in this line item. The union employees will pay the same as non-union employee's share of the WRS contribution which will be 7% for 2014

Director Easker said there was a program brought over from the merger that allowed union members to be paid out 2/3 percentage of the excess of sick leave hours banked above 2,160. The excess percentage was used upon retirement towards health insurance premiums. It was noted this liability has doubled over the years for the two Cities. Due to employees not using their sick time there are more employees reaching the maximum sick leave bank accruals, therefore, the budget includes an increase of funding for this. Director Easker stated 2.5% of the savings from the duty disability payment would be utilized to offset the projected cost of the sick leave payout.

At 7:10 p.m. the meeting was moved to the Council Chambers due to the Hauser room being booked for another meeting at 7:00 p.m. Everyone present at the meeting moved to the Council Chambers.

Review of Stipend Request for Shift Mechanic: The Committee reviewed the memo from Chief Auxier for his stipend request for a fourth mechanic stipend. He noted he did discuss his request both Mayors. This request was posted within the Department to see if any union members were interested in this position. There was one employee meets the qualifications and has expressed interest in this position. Chief Auxier noted it saves the Department a lot of money having mechanics performs route maintenance, fix issues as they arise and/or trouble shoot issues versus sending work to outside vendors. Ald. Ramos asked for clarification on this. It was noted there are no mechanic positions within the Department and the current mechanics are performed by drivers that are paid a

stipend for performing these additional duties above the current driver's position. Ald. Langdon asked if we approve this additional stipend if it would decrease our need to send out work for repairs and Chief Auxier confirmed this. Ald. Stevenson asked if this fee is a contractual fee and Chief Auxier noted this rate is agreed upon in the contract. He asked if there is a process in place for making sure employees are qualified. Chief Auxier noted there is a process in place for qualifying individuals. Ald. Stevenson asked if we could review the number of stipends that are paid out to ensure the pay matches the amount of work that is being performed. Chief Auxier said this is evaluated and can be adjusted in the future. Ald. Stevenson asked we put in the City of Neenah's budget narrative that we are compensating stipends for mechanics and identifying the number of mechanics. **MSC Ramos/Englebert to approve a fourth mechanic stipend for the 2014 budget and directed Chief Auxier to assign this stipend to a qualified individual from Neenah-Menasha Fire Rescue, all voting aye.**

MSC Englebert/Stevenson to convene in closed session pursuant to Wis. Stats. Sec. 19.85(1)(g) for the purpose of conferring with legal counsel who will render oral or written advice regarding Claim 12-14, Gary & Kathy Skibba, Ald. Langdon, Stevenson, Benner and Englebert voting aye and Ald. Ramos abstained and excused himself from the meeting.

MSC Stevenson/Englebert to reconvene in open session at 8:00 p.m., all voting aye.

MSC Stevenson/ Langdon recommends the City of Neenah and City of Menasha Common Councils approve Claim 12-14, Gary & Kathy Skibba claim settlement for a total of \$11,000, as negotiated by City Attorney James Godlewski, all voting aye.

MSC Stevenson/Englebert to adjourn at 8:01 p.m., all voting aye.

Respectfully Submitted,

Al Auxier
Chief

AA/tt