

Neenah-Menasha Fire Rescue
Joint Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting
February 24, 2015 – 5:30 p.m.
3rd Floor Council Chambers – City of Menasha

Draft

Present: Ald. Benner, Ald. Kunz, Ald. Englebert, Ald. Bates, Ald. Taylor and Ald. Ramos.

Also Present: Chief Auxier, Director Steeno and Office Manager Theisen.

Members of the Public: Jamie Leonard.

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

Public Forum: No members of the public chose to speak.

Meeting Minutes: The Committee reviewed the meeting minutes of December 8, 2014. **MSC Kunz/Englebert to approve the December 8, 2014 meeting minutes, all voting aye.**

Budget Report: The Committee reviewed the preliminary year-to-date 2014 budget report. Chief Auxier said the City of Neenah Finance Department is in the process of finalizing the year-end budget expenses. Once the audit has been completed a final budget report will be ready for review. At this time, there are some monies left over and these will be returned to both Cities as outlined in the merger agreement. Ald. Kunz commended the Department for delaying purchase and use of certain budget line items to make sure we were not over budget due to the unexpected replacement of Quint 32. He asked if this would affect our 2015 budget with purchases and if there would be a need to have additional monies in certain line items. Chief Auxier said no.

The Committee reviewed the January 2015 month end budget report. It was noted almost the entire clothing allowance was spent and that is a contractual item for Local 275 firefighters that is paid out in January. **MSC Benner/Kunz to place the January 2015 monthly budget report and place on file, all voting aye.**

Activity and Automatic Aid Report: The Committee reviewed the 2014 year-to-date activity and automatic aid reports. Chief Auxier noted OM Theisen did a comparison of the overall calls for the past few years and included that information for everyone to review. There were no questions with the information provided.

The Committee reviewed the January 2015 activity and automatic aid reports. Ald. Kunz asked why the different codes for reports (i.e. materials on stove top, outside rubbish fire, etc.). Chief Auxier said these codes are set by NFIRS and we have to use their codes when completing reports. Ald. Benner asked if we have seen a difference with carbon monoxide detectors since the building codes changed and now requires these to be installed. Chief Auxier said we have the ability to make sure multi-family owners comply. However, we do not have the ability to make sure single-family dwellings have these but there is more awareness and many people are installing them. Ald. Taylor asked why we cannot check R1 and R2 dwellings. Chief Auxier said this set by State Statute. However, if we do receive a call from a renter and/or go to an EMS call we will make sure they have working alarms. Ald. Taylor asked if we could expand R2 into a local ordinance to enforce compliance. Chief Auxier said we cannot do this as this is a State statute. **MSC Benner/Bates to approve the 2014 and January 2015 activity and automatic aid reports and place on file, all voting aye.**

State Wide Structural Collapse Contract: The Committee reviewed the 2015 State of Wisconsin Structural Collapse Contract. Ald. Ramos noted this is a contract that we have reviewed every year for quite a few years. Chief Auxier discussed the training our firefighters receive and how these skills are used for potential calls in our communities (i.e. trench rescues, reinforcing collapsed structures, etc.). He received notice from the State that they would like to make this a two-year contract versus a one-year. Ald. Taylor asked where the REACT training facility is and where our territory is in the State. Chief Auxier said the training is at Volk Field and our area is in the central part of the State but we can be called to any part of the State if there is a need. He noted the contract reimburses us \$45 per hour for training hours but this doesn't include travel time. Ald. Taylor asked if the training causes overtime. Chief Auxier said there are times

when this happens. We try to schedule the training for when the members are on duty. If overtime is needed to backfill their positions the money we receive from the State does help offset these costs. Ald. Taylor asked what the costs are to cover backfill and overtime. Chief Auxier said the maximum the Department spends is \$2,000-\$3,000 per year. Ald. Bates asked if we have ever been called by the State for an incident. Chief Auxier said we have not but we came close when the tornado went through the Wautoma area. However, we have been called to other communities for help through mutual aid. Ald. Taylor asked how many people would be sent if there was a request from the State. Chief Auxier said eight. **MSC Bates/Benner recommends the City of Neenah and City of Menasha Common Councils approve the Extended Contract for Statewide Structural Collapse Team Members and amend the contract period for January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2016, all voting aye.**

Retirement Notifications: Chief Auxier said he received DC Steve DeLeeuw's retirement letter. He will retire on May 12, 2015 and has served 41 years in the fire service for the Cities of Neenah and Menasha. The Committee thanked him for his service and asked that they be notified of the when the Department will have his retirement gathering.

2014 Capital Computer Hardware Carry Forward Funds Request: The Committee reviewed the memo from Chief Auxier regarding the requesting to carry forward 2014 Capital Computer Hardware funds. This is for the conversion of the records management software, Firehouse, to sequel server computer programming. As noted in his memo, we do not know if we will need to purchase additional storage. However, there is the possibility and we want to be prepared if we find out we need this during the conversion. Ald. Kunz asked about the new software the City is looking to purchase for payroll and asked how this would work with Firehouse. Chief Auxier asked OM Theisen to explain this information. She noted the current process for payroll requires the Shift Commander to complete their schedule and payroll record at the end of their 24-hour shift. A report is run out of Firehouse that shows the payroll records for the shift. It is then manually transfer onto a paper timesheet. A time sheet is manually created for 63 line staff members. After the time sheets have been manually created the information is then re-data entered this into the City of Neenah Finance Department's payroll software. The timesheets are physically copied and taken over to the Payroll Department for review and further processing. The software Director Wenninger is requesting to purchase will eliminate the need to manually create paper time sheets. Firehouse has the ability to export the payroll data into the software program Director Wenninger is requesting to purchase and it can be done on a daily basis. Once the data is exported into the software, OM Theisen would review it for accuracy and assign the project codes for the pay to the appropriate budget line item.

Ald. Taylor asked how long the new ".Net" program has been in place. Chief Auxier said almost two years. Our conversion has been delayed due to the amount of data we have to convert. As Firehouse implemented the new ".NET" program, they did have some issues with converting data. These issues have been fixed and we anticipate a relatively smooth transition. Ald. Taylor asked Director Steeno if she was familiar with this program. She said no. Ald. Benner asked how long this software will be supported. Chief Auxier said the program has been around for over 20 years. Ald. Kunz said there would be a lot of changes and asked if we want to continue to move forward with this program. Chief Auxier said there is not guarantee we will spend this money and Director Wenninger is suggesting we have these funds available just in case we do need to purchase additional storage. OM Theisen explained Firehouse was used by both Departments prior to consolidation and since the merger. There is over 20 years of data that needs to be maintained. As the Department has moved forward with streamlining processes and reduce redundancies Firehouse has been used for this. In an effort to reduce the amount of data will be converted we did go through and clean up a lot of duplicate codes and data that is not needed.

Ald. Kunz said Neenah IS does have a charge back for their services to each Department and this is how their budget is funded. He asked if the additional time Neenah IS will be spending has been accounted for in our current budget. Chief Auxier said we worked with Director Wenninger on this and it has been accounted for. Ald. Bates asked how the current process affects OM Theisen's time and how it may change. OM Theisen noted the current process for payroll takes around 13-15 hours of time every two weeks. She is the only person who knows how to do payroll for our Department. Due to the amount of time it takes to process payroll and being the only person who knows how to do this, it requires her to schedule vacation around payroll and to come in on weekends and holidays to process payroll. In 2014, she worked on Christmas Day to process payroll so everyone was paid on time. This new software will have the ability to do payroll every single day and will free up time to be able to complete other things that either doesn't get done right away

or to be able to concentrate on things that we want to do but can't due to lack of time. Ald. Benner said it is ridiculous we require an employee to come in on weekends and holidays to do payroll and we should support the changes for both programs. Ald. Kunz asked about timing and how this works for the future. OM Theisen said she has been asking Director Wenninger to look at making changes in the way payroll is processed for almost four years. He's been very receptive and has been working to find a program that will meet both Police and Fire's needs. Ald. Taylor asked OM Theisen if she receives overtime. OM Theisen noted no overtime monies are paid but earns comp time and take off on a different day. **MSC Benner/Englebert recommends the City of Neenah and City of Menasha Common Councils approve the 2014 Capital Hardware Outlay Carry Forward Request of \$4,321.00 and place in the 2015 Capital Computer Hardware Outlay line item, account # 180-2301-712-81-15, for a total of \$9,521.00 in that line item for 2015, approve voting aye.**

Station 32 Apparatus Bay Cleaning: The Committee reviewed the apparatus bay cleaning request. Chief Auxier said per the merger agreement this is a City of Neenah only expense and was approved in the 2015 budget. **MSC Bates/Kunz recommends the City of Neenah Common Council approve the quote from Servpro to perform the Station 32 apparatus bay cleaning for a cost not to exceed \$7,500.00, all voting aye.**

Dive Team Funding: Chief Auxier said he did speak to Chief Kiesow regarding Dive Team Funding. Chief Kiesow said he didn't feel the Town of Menasha would participate providing monetary funding at this time. However, he would talk to the Town of Menasha officials regarding this request. He does understand the costs that are involved with maintaining our dive team. Ald. Bates asked how other Dive Teams are funded. Chief Auxier said Oshkosh Fire Department and Winnebago County Sheriff's Department each have their own dive team and are funded through their own budgets. In speaking with Chief Franz, Oshkosh Fire Department decided to fund their own dive team to help improve response times due to the amount of water area they have to cover. Their Department has even more water areas than ours.

Ald. Benner said he likes to put things in perspective. When should look at the amount of water areas we cover and figure out how much is in the Cities of Neenah and Menasha compared to the area townships. There is a value to the equipment that is provided to us by the County but there are still costs associated with maintaining the dive team. Chief Auxier said we are in a catch 22 position. The County is responsible for the water ways but we are closer to these areas and can respond faster. It was a community effort to raise the initial funds for the dive team. The majority of this money was provided by someone who lived in Outagamie County but passed away in our area.

Ald. Kunz said we do not respond to area townships to put out fires and asked at what point do we start applying this for water rescue calls? Chief Auxier Said regardless of what stance we take we can be called for mutual aid to the area townships due to the mutual aid agreement we have with Winnebago County. With this mutual aid agreement, every department agrees to send help if requested. Mutual aid is not like the automatic agreement we have with Appleton. Mutual aid calls come in after the responsible department is actually on scene and feels they need additional resources. Chief Auxier said he felt if the water rescue call is in the Town of Menasha the first agency that should be dispatched is Winnebago County Sheriff's Department. They can then request help through mutual aid.

Ald. Taylor asked if Chief Kiesow put anything in writing after the meeting. Chief Auxier said he doesn't have anything in writing. He also suggested the Cities should also look at charging additional boat launch fees and this money could be set aside in a specific fund for the dive team. Ald. Englebert said if we asked for a fundraising effort to start the dive team and if some of this money came from residents from the area townships, and then start charging them for this service, that may not sit well with them. Ald. Benner said no one is implying we will stop supplying services. We are looking for help in funding the services to keep this going.

All Committee Members agreed with Ald. Benner's idea and requested Chief Auxier to complete a shoreline analysis. This should include percentages of areas we cover for the area townships compared to the Cities of Neenah and Menasha. The Department should figure out what the costs are to maintain the current dive team, which is above the monies raised through fundraising. This will be brought back to the Committee to discuss and come up with possible suggestions for both Common Councils to review and move forward with to help cover these costs.

MSC Benner/Bates to adjourn at 6:35 p.m., all voting aye.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tara Theisen
Office Manager