

**Neenah-Menasha Fire Rescue
Joint Fire Commission Meeting Minutes
May 29, 2015 – 9:00 a.m.
Hauser Room – City of Neenah**

Present: Commissioners Kubiak, Liebhauser, McCann, Keating and Lewis.

Excused: Commissioner John

Also Present: Chief Auxier, Director Barber and OM Theisen.

Members of the Public: Mayor Merkes, Mayor Kaufert, L275 President Jamie Leonard, Al Wroblewski, Jim Dunbar and Mike Sipin.

Commissioner Liebhauser called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Public Forum: L275 President Jamie Leonard said in reviewing the Deputy Chief's job description there were a couple of changes that he would like to see. One is being addressed by Director Barber and Chief Auxier. He asked for consideration to have this position responsible for writing grants. There is a lot of Federal money available and with budget constraints it would be helpful to have someone responsible for this. In reviewing the minimum training and experience required for this position, he commended the Commission for making the adjustments to the job description to have the person in the Deputy Chief's position have the same education and training as the people this person will supervise. As they review this again today, he asked the Commissioners what would happen if the minimum training and experience for the Deputy Chief, and possibly the future Chief job descriptions were changed to be less than what is required of the current staff would these changes be made to be consistent with the line personnel? Currently, if a line staff member wants a promotion within the department they have to have specific training and qualifications for a promotion (i.e. firefighter wants the driver promotion), if the requirements change for the Deputy Chief and Chief will there be consistency for line staff when they want a promotion?

Mayor Merkes said we have a very professional fire department and we have set expectations for them with training and education so they can provide a high level of professional service to the Cities. It is very important to maintain professional standards as this is what separates us from paid on call departments. When we look at filling the Deputy Chief's position it's possible this person could be our next Chief. If we keep the education requirements limited to only an associations degree it will spill down to other positions. The City of Menasha Police Department requires their Captain's to have a bachelor's degree and is looking at changing it to a master's degree for the Police Chief. The Deputy Chief's position has a lot of management responsibilities and feels we need to change the education requirements to a bachelor's degree.

Mayor Kaufert said he felt the current qualifications, as a minimum, for this position are fine. Midpoint for this position is around \$78,000.00 and it's reasonable to expect a two year degree for this salary level. We do have a responsibility to our citizens to keep the current minimum standards.

Election of Chair: **MSC Keating/Kubiak to elect Commissioner Pat Lewis as the Chair of NMFR's Joint Fire Commission, all voting aye.**

Commissioner Lewis took over as Chair of the meeting.

Election of Vice-Chair: **MSC Liebhauser/McCann to elect Commissioner Kubiak as Vice-Chair of NMFR's Joint Fire Commission, all voting aye.**

Minutes: The Committee reviewed the April 1, 2015 meeting minutes. **MSC Keating/McCann to approve the April 1, 2015 meeting minutes and place on file, all voting aye.**

Monthly Reports: The Commission reviewed the April activity and automatic aid reports. This is informational only and no action is required.

Budget Report: The Commission reviewed the April 2015 budget report. This is informational only and no action is required.

Deputy Chief's Job Description: Director Barber handed out some language changes that needed to be made to the job description. There was one item stricken from the job description as this was in direct violation of the union contract. She noted job descriptions are crafted by the Department Head. Chief Auxier did a good job of putting together a job description of duties. After a Department Heads puts together the job description she reviews it for grammar and to make sure there is nothing that will violate any laws. The job duties for the position were reviewed and nothing was changed by the Commissioners.

Director Barber handed out updated language changes for the "minimum training and experience required for the job description. She said the Commission reviewed these requirements at their meeting in the December and was trying to clean up some of the language to have it make more sense. She noted Chief Auxier asked for a few changes to the requirements to include Chief Fire Certification and/or Emergency Fire Office (EFO) Certification from the National fire Academy preferred. Director Barber cleared up some of the language to make this more sense. She feels the minimum standards for this position should be the same as the people they are supervise.

Director Barber said the Driver/Operator qualification needed to be reviewed. There are some employees who do not have this and if someone wants to get this they can obtain but will need time to do this.

A very lengthy discussion was held on minimum education requirements for this position. Members present felt it was appropriate to keep the minimum education requirements to what they are. This will not excluded a majority of department members. The union contract has language in it that gives members incentive to further their education if they desire to attain a bachelor's degree. Once they complete their bachelor's degree, they receive a monthly stipend. In 1998, a degree program for fire science was created and people hired after this date were required to have this degree. The union contract language had incentive for people hired prior to 1998, who didn't have a degree, to go back and attain this through reimbursement of classes, books and receive a monthly stipend after they had an associate's degree. **MSC Keating/Kubiak to change the minimum training and experience required to perform the essential job functions to Associates' Degree in Fire Science or Bachelor's or Master's in relevant field required. Five years progressively responsible fire service supervisory experience (move-up Fire Officer or higher) required. Fire Officer I, Wisconsin Firefighter I, Wisconsin Firefighter II, Driver/Operator-Pumper certifications and valid driver's license required. Chief Fire Officer Certification and/or Emergency Fire Officer (EFO) Certification from the National Fire Academy preferred. Employees with equivalent out of state certifications must receive the Wisconsin certifications within 12 months of hire. NIMS 100, 200, 300, 400, and 700 certification must be completed within 30 days of hire, all voting no.**

Discussion was held on cleaning up the language for bachelor's and masters language. **MSC Keating/Liebhauser to change the minimum training and experience required to perform the essential job functions to Associates' Degree in Fire Science or advanced degree in relevant field required. Five years progressively responsible fire service supervisory experience (move-up Fire Officer or higher) required. Fire Officer I, Wisconsin Firefighter I, Wisconsin Firefighter II, Driver/Operator-Pumper certifications and valid driver's license required. Chief Fire Officer Certification and/or Emergency Fire Officer (EFO) Certification from the National Fire Academy preferred. Employees with equivalent out of state certifications must receive the Wisconsin certifications within 12 months of hire. NIMS 100, 200, 300, 400, and 700 certification must be completed within 30 days of hire, all aye**

AC Sipin noted NIMS 300 and 400 classes are not offered online. They are held in a traditional classroom and not on a regular basis due to Federal funding. It may be hard for someone to attain these certificates within 30 days of hire. It was also noted it is a Fire Executive Fire Officer program and not a Fire Emergency Officer Program.

Chief Auxier said he understands Mayor Merkes comments regarding the education for this position. However, he feels this is something that should be re-addressed this for this position in the future.

MSC Liebhauser/McCann to change Emergency Fire Officer (EFO) Certification from the National Fire Academy preferred to Executive Fire Officer (EFO) Certification from the National Fire Academy preferred and change completion of NIMS 100, 200, 300, 400 & 700 certification within six months of hiring, all voting aye.

MSC Keating/Liebhauser to add the duty of grant writing and grant applications to the essential duties of the job description, all voting aye.

Discussion was held on future meeting times. It was decided to keep meetings the 4th Wednesday of each month at 12:00 p.m.

Commissioner Keating addressed the firefighters and thanked them for the work they did during the Trestle Trail incident. He appreciates what they do for our two Cities.

MSC Liebhauser/Kubiak to adjourn at 10:20 a.m., all voting aye.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tara Theisen
Office Manager