



WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

WESTFIELD FIRE COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING MEETING MINUTES



Date: January 9, 2017

Fire Commissioner Albert Masciadrelli called the meeting of the Westfield Fire Commission (hereinafter "WFC") of January 9, 2017 to order.

Location: Westfield City Hall
59 Court Street, Room 201
Westfield, Massachusetts

Date: January 9, 2017

Time: 1800 hours

All Commissioners are present:



Chairman's announcement:

The Chairman of the WFC, Commissioner Albert Masciadrelli in accordance with the Open Meeting Law Changes (Reference Memorandum dated June 18, 2010 'Open Meeting Law Changes' from the Office of the City Solicitor) made the following announcement to all participants and attendees that the WFC Regular Schedule meeting of January 9, 2017 is being audio recorded and if the WFC meeting at any time goes into executive session all audio equipment will be turned off to include all recording devices of audio and video and any transmission of video and or audio..

The Chairman of the WFC, Commissioner Albert Masciadrelli also made the following inquiry that if there is anyone making a video or audio recording of the meeting please indicate this to the Chair, and also announced that this WFC meeting of January 9, 2017 is not being electronically transmitted via TV or via the internet by the City of Westfield.

READING OF THE RECORDS OF:

Fire Commissioner Albert Masciadrelli ascertained a motion to approve the Fire Commission Minutes of December 5, 2016.

Fire Commissioner Patrick Olearcek motioned to accept the December 5, 2016 Regular Session Meeting Minutes.

Fire Commissioner Carlo Bonavita seconded the motion.

Motion Passed

PRESENT:

Westfield Fire Commissioner Albert Masciadrelli, Westfield Fire Commissioner Carlo Bonavita and Westfield Fire Commissioner Patrick Olearcek. Westfield Fire Chief Mary Regan, Deputy Fire Chief Eric Bishop and Deputy Fire Chief Patrick Egloff. Fire Captain Christopher Kane and Temporary Fire Captain Christopher King, Firefighter Niles LaValley. City Personnel Director Ms. Jane Sakiewicz Assistance Personnel Director Joanne Lemelin, City Solicitor Jeff Krok and Dan Desrochers. from the Westfield News Paper.

MINUTES TAKEN:

Ms Patricia Breton, Westfield Fire Department (hereinafter "WFD") Head Clerk

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None

ROUTINE BUSINESS:

- a. Introduction -- Commissioner Masciadrelli, on behalf of the Commission, expressed thanks to all members of the Fire Department, for their service since the last meeting was held. He receives many excellent supportive comments from the Community as he travels throughout and wants to pass that along to the members.
- b. Late Communications – Chief Regan received a probationary evaluation for firefighters that had been missing from the last time around. There are three sets for each person. Chief has met with the Officers and there was a concern with the new hires that with the time at the Academy and then time out of the building, and when changing of groups, they are inquiring as to whether, they could extend the probationary period. Chief gave the Commission communication that she received from the Personnel Director about the probation period. Chief would like the Commission to let her make the decision and go through Personnel relative to the probation, if the probationary period should be extended from one year. The Chief and the WFD Officers thought it was very important to have the ability to extend that period when they think it's necessary. The Commissioners agreed with the Fire Chief. Union President Captain Christopher Kane asked if this would be for everyone or a case by case basis. Chief stated that if evaluations are coming in good from the Fire Academy and everything is good no, but if there are some problems that are identified by the Fire Captains or Deputy Fire Chiefs then we would have the ability to extend. This would only be two months according to Mass General Law. This would be just enough, due to the ten weeks that they are gone.

Commissioner Albert Masciadrelli ascertained a motion to extend the probation period on a case by case basis for probationary employees.

Commissioner Patrick Olearcek made a motion to give permission to the Fire Chief to extend the probationary period for performance evaluation on a case by case basis.

Commissioner Carlo Bonavita seconded the motion.

Motion Passed

City Solicitor Mr. Jeff Krok Esq. said to reference Chapter 31 Section 34 Probationary Periods.

- c. Letters & Communications -- None

SPECIAL BUSINESS:

- a. Grievance Number 11172016 {Hearing Fire Commission –

Name & Rank of Employee: Temporary Fire Captain Christopher King

- 1) **Step 2:** Copy of the "original only" 'sent' to WFC {Received 12.05.2016, 1800 hours.

Union President Captain Christopher Kane requested the Commission go into Executive Session at the end of the meeting. The Commissioners agreed to this request without any objections.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a. WFC "procedural (Process) Guidelines for Vacancy Appointments" document for the purpose {Configuration Management Control, of addressing a 'work version' error. - Commissioner Masciadrelli stated "this has been done.

In addition a document was submitted titled "Recommended Hiring Process Modifications" {Medical Control authorization process from the orientation phase to the hiring phase. was sent to the City Solicitor Mr. Jeff Krok Esq. on December 9th, 2017 for Mr. Jeff Krok Esq. opinion in which he said he was not familiar with this. Mr. Jeff Krok Esq. said will take a look into it.

Fire Chief Regan was saying that they are in the process of interviewing and that they will go forward with the protocol exam.

b. Departmental Promotional Exam 2017 discussion -

1. HRD Civil Service Unit changes – Title: 2017 Fire Chief Series exam – The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Civil Service Unit (Promotional Exam testing) has decided not to give the Chiefs part of this series exam.

The Fire Commission via the Chairman and Personnel Director have been looking into the assessment centers as promulgated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Civil Service Unit; the Chairman and Personnel Director have found it is very expensive between eight and ten thousand dollars and in some cases more.

Commissioner Masciadrelli said that they are proposing to take the WFD Fire Chief position out of Civil Service for the purpose of being more productive as well as an extreme cost saving to the Municipality.

The Chairman added that right now there is only one person interested in taking the exam and the WFD has not budgeted for this expense process.

Personnel Director Ms. Jane Sakiewicz said that she has looked into the assessment centers, they only do an assessment of employee not a test.

Personnel Director Ms. Jane Sakiewicz followed up by saying; this would be a one day to two day assessment with a possible take home essay that has to be done. The centers would set up the assessments according to Westfield standards.

Mr. Jeff Krok Esq., of the City Solicitors Office, explained that there will be different avenues that may need to be taken if the Fire Chief's position is taken out of Civil Service. Mr. Jeff Krok Esq. said that the WFC may need to go to the City Council. He also said; that the Unions may not have a say in what is done, because the Fire Chiefs position is a nonunion position. Mr. Jeff Krok Esq. said; the WFC cannot take this out of Civil Service now, that there is a lot more that needs to be involved. Mr. Jeff Krok Esq. said; he would look into the procedures of which to distract the Fire Chief's position from Civil Service. Mr. Jeff Krok Esq. said he would look into all ways of doing this and get back to the WFC.

Mr. Jeff Krok Esq. said he would look into all ways of doing this and get back to the Commission.

- **Note:** Commissioner Masciadrelli was hinted/advised that this maybe the last time for the Deputy Fire Chief component not to

be given Commonwealth of Massachusetts HRD Civil Service Unit. The Chairman asked that it would be cost effective to look at taking both the Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief positions out of Civil Service since we are reviewing our options on the Fire Chief as being more productive and cost effective.

"WFD Little River Fire Station 2"-

Fire Chief Regan stated "everything is going on schedule". The drywall and painting should be done in February. They will come back in April 2017 to do the outside landscaping. Training Fire Captain Seth Ellis is working with the

firefighters from Station 2 and looking into furniture. Fire Chief thinks we should have enough money to get all the furnishings needed.

The Fire Chief believes we will be in the building in March. She would like to do a soft open house with WFC and Firefighters prior to a full open house for the community possibly a small cookout. Then have a full open house similar to what we do at Headquarters, with the hazmat tents, safe house and a side by side burn.

c. Certification List 04255 Firefighter status -

Commissioner Masciadrelli stated the pre interviews have been completed. He stated we are ready to pick a date to complete the interviews. The Commissioner's agreed that January 18, 2017 at 1800 hours for the interviews.

There will be five interviewed.

NEW BUSINESS: - NONE

REPORTS FROM THE WFD & WFC:

a. Apparatus/Ambulance/Vehicle Integrity, Support Equipment, Facility & Communications Integrity Status/Report:

Fire Chief Regan said; nothing new. The new ambulance will be in late April or May of 2017. They just finished the insulation in the ceiling at Headquarters.

Chief Regan is working on a sick time report, this should be ready soon and she will send it to the Commission.

Chief said the overtime money is holding up, she stated that we should see a significant dollar drop over the next few months. We are about \$36,000.00

lower than we were last year at this time. Since we have hired the three new positions we are \$166,000.00 lower, this is just for the first half of the year.

b. 'Personnel out of Work Report':

Fire Chief Regan said we still have two open positions and one out sick long term.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

MOTION:

The Fire Commission Chairman Albert Masciadrelli ascertained a motion to go into executive session at the request of Firefighters Union Local 1111.

Westfield Fire Commissioner Carlo Bonavita made a motion to go into executive session at the request of Local 1111 to discuss (Grievance Number 11172016) the discipline and complaints and charges brought against a Firefighter and not to reconvene into open session.

Fire Commissioner Patrick Olearcek seconded the motion.

Is there any discussion, seeing non roll call vote please.

Roll Call Vote

| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Commissioner Masciadrelli | YES |
| Commissioner Bonavita | YES |
| Commissioner Olearcek | YES |

Motion pass

TIME: 18:40hours

Respectfully submitted,


Patrick Olearcek
Secretary, Westfield Fire Commission
PO/ajm/pab