

**City of Whitewater
Fire/EMS Task Force Meeting
Whitewater Municipal Building-Community Room
January 20, 2016**

MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Meeting was called to order by Ken Kidd at 7:02 pm.

Present: Cameron Clapper, Ken Kidd, Don Gregoire, Todd Lindert, Jan Bilgen, Patrick Wellnitz, Wally McDonell and Doug Saubert. Also present: Mike Higgins, Bob Gabbey, and several members of the fire department.

2. Approval of minutes from 12-11-2015.

Motion to approve minutes by T.Lindert. Second by J. Bilgen. Motion passed. All-0.

3. Discussion of current status and next steps for the restructuring of the fire department. Including:

A. Status of constitution and by-laws development.

- i.** All members of the fire department received a copy of the By-laws by 1/15/16.
- ii.** Molly Parrish, Human Resource Coordinator for City, reviewed document and didn't see any human resource related issues. FD appreciated assistance from the City with human resource support.
- iii.** At a glance, Bilgen would like to see "Constitution" and "By-laws" added to the footer of each document to eliminate pages being misplaced.
- iv.** Bob Gabbey stated that the original intent of the re-writing of the by-laws as voiced and agreed upon by the Task Force was to
 - a.** Make administrative processes easier
 - b.** Eliminate voting
 - c.** Establish qualifications
- v.** Constitution 3.02 "In order" should be changed to "have"
- vi.** Constitution 4.03 Seven voting members should also include "non-voting", City Manager, and Chief. Include "e": No voting members Chief + Designee.
- vii.** Constitution 4.07: Election: Shall serve a 1 years term should be 2 years.
- viii.** Constitution 6.02 Meetings: Board of Director Meetings versus Membership Meetings needs to be clarified if quarterly/annual meetings and when.
- ix.** Constitution 6.03 Board of Director subject to open meetings law and record requests.
- x.** 6.04 (a): Voting Threshold: change wording from "simple majority" to "simple majority of those voting".

- xi.** Constitution 7.02: The terms of the officers are 3 years in length, except the appointed EMS Assistant Chief serving at the determination of the BOD. Shall be able to serve consecutive terms but must reapply.
- xii.** Constitution Section 8.02 Election Process: Election should be changed to Selection. Removal of items (e), (f), (g), (h) and then include an interview process.
- xiii.** Constitution Section 10.01 Amendments: 2/3 of those voting should be 2/3 of those present.
- xiv.** Constitution Section 11.03: Dissolution: Change Superior Court to Circuit Court
- xv.** By-laws Article II: Gabbey feels officer qualifications in the By-laws lack requirements and wants to see officer qualification more detailed. Gabbey reviewed existing By-laws in similar size departments and was able to not only find qualifications for each officer but also required certifications for officers which was lacking in the proposed By-laws.
- xvi.** (Officer Qualifications) Wellnitz recommends the By-laws stay vague and less specific so the pool of people applying for a position isn't minimal or restrictive.
- xvii.** Bilgen recommends grandfathering in existing officers but adding certain qualifications or certifications need to be obtained by a certain date.
- xviii.** Committee continues to discuss what "qualifications" they feel should be included under each job qualification with recommends from various members to include various experience and educational requirements with a grandfather clause for existing member. J. Bilgen and M. Higgins will draft up a new bylaw draft based on various conversations on what they feel will be acceptable to most.
- xix.** K. Kidd/ W. McDonnell summarizes by adding more specific qualifications the By-laws would be more of a qualification driven hierarchy and may limit the applications. The ultimate final approval of a candidate would rest with the board as to eliminate a popularity contest.
- xx.** By-laws Section 2.05(d): 1 term as EMS Lt Service or equivalent 2 years.
- xxi.** By-laws or constitution should contain a line allowing the Board to make exceptions on the qualifications when filling a position with a deadline to complete the qualifications. By-laws should also contain an exception for existing members.
- xxii.** By-laws Section 3.01(d): Remove the word "every"
- xxiii.** By-laws Section 3.06: Remove the Tech Rescue Captain position.
- xxiv.** By-laws Section 3.08: Lieutenants: Change Tech-Rescue and Lieutenants
- xxv.** By-laws Section 3.13(a): Department Standard Operating Guidelines, including EMS SOGs will be provided and accessible.
- xxvi.** By-laws Section 4.05: EMT's shall also attend 50% of membership meetings.
- xxvii.** By-laws Section 5.07: Pre-approved by Board of Directors for possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages.
- xxviii.** Elections/Boards: Chief and Assistant Chiefs would be selected by the Board. Captains and Lieutenants would be qualified/certified by board and then the

question is if the Chief is going to select or is the selection going to be by rank-and-file.

- xxix. Chief/Asst. Chief's interview and appoint by Board
- xxx. Officers would be qualified/certified by board
- xxxi. Option 1: all qualified by Board w/Chiefs appointed by board and all Lts.
- xxxii. Option 2: Capt and Lt. would be nominated by body and interview and/or appointed by board.
- xxxiii. Chief should not select all eleven officers for the board.
- xxxiv. Lt and Capt positions should differ by 2 years experience.
- xxxv. Personnel can work for fire department and rescue department. Exception needs to be spelled out.
- xxxvi. Section 3.01 (d) Remove the words "every" and "all", use language such as use effort to attend all.
- xxxvii. Article III title page 3 "Duties of Officers" contains Chiefs and other titles shall be relabeled to read "Duties of Members"
- xxxviii. Section 3.12 (c) Firefighters (Page 9) the chain of command should be followed by all members of the fire/rescue department, not just firefighters.
- xxxix. Constitution page 4 Section 4.07 Election: Bilgen recommends a 2 year term versus a 1 year term by staggering the members: 6 person board would have 3 people serving 1 year and 3 people serving 2 years, allowing board members to serve consecutively (no more than 3).
- xl. Constitution page 7 Article VI Meetings: There will be membership, board and training meetings. Memberships meetings will be the 2nd Thursday of every month at 7 pm.
- xli. By-laws page 10/11 Section 3.12 3.13(f) section in EMT's but not Firefighters and should be in both or section F should be removed all together.
- xlii. Committee agrees to move Section F to page 13 under Rules of Behavior.
- xliii. Bylaws Section 5.07 "unless of legal age to do so" should be changed to "unless the board approves".

B. Status and timeline for completion of new agreement with City

- i. Clapper updates the committee that the agreement is moving forward and W. McDonell is currently working on making the draft. Chief, Wally and Clapper will meet together in February to review a substantial draft and make changes.

C. Staffing needs and the recent hire of an EMS Chief

- i. Chief Gregoire didn't post the EMS Chief position to the public after several different discussions due to an in-house candidate. Position was offered to Tom Weidert who has extensive experience and qualifications. Weidert has been tasked with improving skills, scheduling, and improving morale. Bilgen questions if anyone from EMS had any input on selection and Gregoire advises several members from EMS were on board with selection.
- ii. Organizational chart needs to be added to both documents as an addendum.

4. Discuss sleeping quarters project and estimated date of completion

Clapper requests assistance from the Fire/EMS staff as more staff is needed to assist with moving boxes 50 lbs or more up to the 2nd floor. Records have been cleared out that need to be retained, furniture has been moved out and ready for auction. Gregoire advised \$25,000 will be fronted by the fire department for the fitness equipment and fundraisers will be held to raise the money back. All City employees will have access to the fitness room. Chief Otterbacher will be playing a vital role in this area.

5. Next Meetings

February 16 and February 29, 2016 at 7:00 pm.

6. Adjournment:

Motion by T.Lindert to adjourn. Second by P.Wellnitz, Motion, All-0 at 10:40 pm.