

ABSTRACT/SYNOPSIS OF THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE OFFICIAL ACTIONS OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WHITEWATER, WALWORTH AND JEFFERSON COUNTY, WISCONSIN.

July 25, 2013

The special meeting of the Common Council was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Council President Singer. MEMBERS PRESENT: Frawley, Abbott, Winship, Binnie, Bregant, Kidd (arrived late), Singer. MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

Kent Green, representative of ESCI, the firm the City has contracted with to complete a Fire and Rescue Task Force study, indicated that their firm is here to evaluate current conditions and to benchmark Whitewater's system with industry standards and best practices. Green indicated that the current Fire Department and Rescue Squad are functioning as two separate entities. ESCI will review the organizational structure, evaluate staffing, and review response time and Department performance. Once reviewed, ESCI will present several strategies to address issues and will build a Master Plan. Green indicated that their firm does not include space needs analyses in their report, but will look at space from a usefulness standard. Green did note the situation in Whitewater where a closet has been turned into a bunk room.

Green also complimented the Whitewater Fire Department for their ISO Class 3 rating, something commendable for a Fire Department of Whitewater's size. Green indicated that ISO ratings are based on training and staffing more so than Fire Department facilities.

Councilmember Binnie indicated that the Rescue Squad has done a commendable job, but he has concerns about how much longer the City can expect volunteers to keep up with all of the expectations. He noted that this is a difficult area for a volunteer force.

It was also questioned whether some cooperative efforts could be done. Having a paramedic staffed Rescue Squad was mentioned. Also mentioned was that some surrounding communities contract with private Ambulance services. It was also noted that there are separate vehicles for rural and City fires. Could some of those consolidations be considered?

In response to Kent's discovery that some citizens did not even know we had a volunteer-staffed Fire Department and Rescue Squad, it was stated that better public education would be beneficial. Kent stated that the public needs to know what they are paying for and what services the City offers.

Councilmember Kidd, a member of the Rescue Squad – Fire Department Task Force, indicated they have been working on ideas at the Task Force level, but need some guidance and expertise to assist with options and direction on how to make the plans come together. Kidd indicated that performance objectives, accountability and oversight would be beneficial.

Kent Green indicated that questions or comments can be referred to him. It is anticipated that a draft report will be ready in approximately three months.

Being no further discussion, it was moved by Winship and seconded by Binnie to adjourn the meeting. AYES: Frawley, Abbott, Winship, Binnie, Singer, Bregant, Kidd. NOES: None. ABSENT: None. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele R. Smith,
City Clerk