

## Fire Rescue Task Force

April 1, 2014

6:30 p.m.

City Manager Conference Room  
City of Whitewater Municipal Building  
312 W Whitewater Street, Whitewater, Wisconsin

### MINUTES

1. **Call to order and roll call.** The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ken Kidd at 6:30 p.m. Present: Don Gregoire (Fire Chief), Todd Lindert (Rescue), Jan Bilgen (Police Commission), Ken Kidd (Council), Phil Frawley (Council), Cameron Clapper (City Manager). Absent: Phil Frawley (Council).
2. **Approve minutes for the February 13 and February 27, 2014 meetings.** It was moved by Lindert, seconded by Bilgen to approve minutes for the February 13 and February meetings. Ayes: Kidd, Gregoire, Lindert, Bilgen, Clapper. Noes: None. Absent: Frawley.
3. **Follow-up on any changes to previously discussed items.** No items were discussed.
4. **Discussion of details pertaining to the organizational structure of the Whitewater Fire Department including composition of the governing body/board, duties and responsibilities of the governing body/board, duties and responsibilities of the fire chief, duties and responsibilities of Fire Department officers (including EMS) and duties and responsibilities of the city toward the proposed newly organized department.**

Fire Chief Don Gregoire provided the task force with a handout which contained a list of direct quotes taken from a conversation with the fire department's attorney at a meeting with the attorney held on Friday, March 28.

#### Private Entity versus Municipal Discussion Notes

- "Hybrids don't work; it is all private entity or all Municipal"
- "Private Entity with a city employed Fire Chief is a bad idea"
- "In WI, 50 FD's are private entity, 800 FD's are municipal"

#### Municipal

- "Longevity is Municipal."
- "FD loses all control over hiring, firing, and budget."
- "FD can keep current and/or fund raiser FD monies up to X amount through 501 (c)(3) or a city ordinance".
- "FD keeps most operational controls for firefighting doesn't have to manage a business, you just run calls, training." "What you signed up for."
- "FD doesn't have to negotiate with Townships and the City".
- "Falls under state regulations-DSPS."

- “Rural trucks become city property even though they are now technically.”

Private Entity

- “All 100 members vote on Board of Directors then Board Members vote on positions, President, Vice Pres., Secretary, and Treasurer.”
- “FD will be assuming all financial risk and control.”
- “Must have one set of bylaws and be one department with EMS.”
- “FD has to manage business, hiring, firing, human resources. Best to hire your own employee to do billing, payroll, etc.”
- “FD receives all EMS transport, city contract, and township funds.”
- “Transparent Finances-must show city what finances you have to end secrecy.”
- “Keep public in the loop as far as the budget, be transparent.”
- “Will City of Whitewater donate city trucks to the FD?” Remember increased Maintenance costs of city trucks when contract written?
- “Liability is not a problem, \$25,000 max against Corporation.”
- “Falls under OSHA regulations.”
- “City assurance through minimum qualifications for officers, i.e. FF 1, Fire Officer and 5 years experience for Lieutenant, FF1, FF2, Fire Officer, and 10 years for Captain, etc. all the way up to Chiefs is written in contract to insure city, townships that officers are qualified for the position.”
- “Truck replacement in budget not contract.”
- “Could have “Advisory Committee” made of townspeople but just advisory.”

“What if FD and city, townships can’t come to terms on new contract, have clause that states if can’t come to terms then automatic increase in budget of X% percent will kick in until new contract signed.”

5. **Propose future meeting dates.** The next meeting of the Fire Rescue Task Force will be April 10 at 6:00 p.m. This meeting will include a conference call with fire department attorney Phil Stittleburg to discuss organizational options (hybrid, municipal or private) and make a final recommendation for consideration by Fire Rescue Task Force membership and City Council.
6. **Adjourn.** It was moved by Lindert, seconded by Kidd to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous approval at 8:30pm