

Fire Rescue Task Force

October 16, 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 at 6:35 p.m. by Chairman Ken Kidd. Present: Don Gregoire, Todd Lindert, Jan Bilgen, Ken Kidd, Phil Frawley, Cameron Clapper. Absent : None. Others present: Wally McDonell (City Attorney) and interested members of Fire & EMS.
2. **Discussion of Whitewater Volunteer Fire Department proposal for an organizational structure which would include the composition of the governing board, the duties and responsibilities of the governing board, the duties and responsibilities of the Fire Chief, the duties and responsibilities of Department officers (Fire & Rescue) and the duties and responsibilities of the city toward the Department.**

Whitewater Fire Department Board

- **3 Fire Members**
- **3 Rescue Members**
- **1 Whitewater Common Council**
 - *Alternate option, retiree selected by membership

Fire/Rescue Board Selection

- **3 year term**
 - **2 consecutive term max**
 - **1 year break to re-apply**
- **First Year Stagger**
 - **Member 1: 1 year**
 - **Member 2: 2 year**
 - **Member 3: 3 year**

Fire/Rescue Board Eligibility

- **Minimum 3 years on Dept (non consecutive)**
 - **Non probationary**
- **Member in good standing**
- **Chief, Assistant Chiefs and Captains are ineligible**

Voting Procedures

- **Annually, month of May**
 - **Fire & Rescue joint business meeting**
- **2 voting sessions**
 - **Member with Fire & Rescue has 1 vote Fire and 1 vote Rescue**
 - **Fire Board Member**
 - **Fire member vote**
 - **Rescue Board Member**
 - **Rescue member vote**
 - **Council Member**
 - **Fire & Rescue select and vote on Council Member**
 - **Alternate Selection**
 - **Fire & Rescue elects retired, non-active member of the department**
 - **Should council member decline, retired member becomes Alternate**
 - **Present to Council by Board president**

Whitewater Fire Department Command Structure Flow Chart Attached to Minutes

A large majority of Fire Department members voted for the proposal as presented. The Fire and Rescue Board will have open meetings and will vote for board members.

The organizational structure indicates that there will now be an Assistant Chief over EMS rather than a Captain and that the Captain for EMS would report directly to the Assistant Chief. It was noted that there may be another Captain. Bilgen stated that the break in service for a committee member in other public organizations and committees is usually for a full term rather than one year. Going with a full term break may be easier and allow for the periodic infusion of “new blood” into the Board.

The definition of “member in good standing” needs to be determined. Chief Gregoire confirmed that criteria would be established.

Kidd noted that the duties and roles of the Board need to be enumerated. These details, such as how the Fire Chief is appointed, do not exist yet. The role of the Board needs to be spelled out before approval can occur.

Clapper, Bilgen, and Kidd all stated that the procedure for appointing a Common Council member to the Board as provided in the proposal was a non-starter. The Common Council determines who will sit on which committee within the City. Appointments are made annually following the April election. This process also extends to the boards of other organizations that include a seat for the Common Council on their Board. One example would be the Whitewater Aquatic Center Board.

Kidd and Bilgen shared comments regarding the benefits of having a Common Council member on the Board. Clapper pointed out that as a quasi-governmental organization, the Fire Department would be expected to allow the Common Council to decide who from the Council would serve on the Board for the Fire Department.

Task Force Members clarified that parameters regarding the term of service for a Council member could be set, for example, the term limit for an individual Council member could be set for three years.

3. **Discussion of City and Whitewater Volunteer Fire Department agreement regarding fire and EMS services within the city of Whitewater.**

Discussion of this item was deferred until a future meeting.

4. **Next steps for the Fire Rescue Task Force.**

Task Force members agreed that, prior to the next meeting the Fire Department would need to flesh out additional details including the following.

- a. The appointment process for the Common Council appointee.
- b. Details regarding the role of the Board in the Fire Department organization.
- c. The process for the appointment of officers, specifically the chief and assistant chiefs, and how qualifications for those positions would be determined.

5. **Future meeting dates.** The next meeting of the task force was set for November 12 at 6:30 p.m..

6. **Adjourn.** The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m. by unanimous consent.

Whitewater Fire Department Command Structure

