Civil Service Commission

Meeting Minutes

1/09/2023

Members Present: Amber Deibel, Corey Chrisman, Gary Giddings

Applicant: Dave Brandt

Others: Chief Les Thomas, Administrative Assistant Marguerite Alexander

The meeting was called to order at 10:18 a.m.

Replacement of Gary Giddings

* Gary is to be sworn into office on the fire board on 1/10/23.
* Dave Brandt has applied to fill the position. Approved by the Civil Service Commission provisionally.
* **The Commission voted unanimously to accept the resignation of Gay Giddings and nominated David Brandt to fill the vacancy on the Civil Service Commission.**
* Chief Thomas recognized Gary for his long Di
* **New Chair: Amber nominated Corey to be the new chair. Amber and Dave voted in favor; Corey abstained.**

Old Business:

1. Meetings:

* Last meeting was in August.
* Meetings need to be held every 90 days
* Plan to schedule next meeting for March 6

1. Review of last meeting

* Chief Examiner: Jason Crowe. Chief meeting with him today. Must be approved by the Board with the knowledge of the Civil Service Commission.
* Oversight Committee: To ensure transparency
* Civil Service required by state law. “You guys make or break our organization,” Chief Thomas.

1. Next meeting

* Certified salaries
* Updated employment list – full time

1. Full-time employees

* We promoted three. The union approved.
* “We ran out of time,” Thomas said. We can only designate someone as temporary for a maximum of 6 months, he explained.
* We are scheduling 5 per shift but will run with 4. This eliminates overtime.
* We will have a 12-hour daytime ambulance at Station 97 (Buell)
* One year ago, volunteers made up 40% of our crews and is down significantly from 20 years ago. That number has dropped even more.

1. Volunteers

* Yamhill County holds a fire academy for volunteers twice a year. It involves 160 hours of training.
* Sheridan High School to offer a program in the fall. Hopefully it will bring in more volunteers.
* Need for exit interviews

1. Officers Test

* Testing examination rules. “We need to change it,” Chief said.

New Business

1. Recruitment of career staff

* It’s difficult to find people to apply. (Salem starts out at 91K for FF. Lots of openings: Salem, McMinnville, Dallas, the Tribe.)
* Administrative changes: Division Chief Phill Riggs has 20 years experience as a battalion chief for McMinnville. As admin, he is now exempt. Donna, our longest tenured employee is now a daytime employee doing analytic data and working on OSHA standards. (Had been working with Bryce Ingram until we found out from Jeff Griffin that our WHA insurance through SDA) will do the evaluation free of charge.)
* We need to hire three additional EMTs.
* We have two PT EMTs enrolled in paramedic school
* We have 5 people in line. Can’t afford to pay them FT right now. (FT Temp for 6 months or less receive sick time and workers comp.

1. Staffing at Buell

* The Board has requested staffing at Buell
* Could put Donna and a PT EMT at St. 97 without affecting staffing at the main station/

1. Move-ups and ASAs

* Corey noted the hinderance of having the bridge between Sheridan and Amity out for another year.
* McMinnville still holds the ASA for Amity and Perrydale but has co-contracted with SW Polk for the outlying areas. (The arrangement is not working out.
* Sheridan has been called to move up to McMinnville 400 times and has taken 100 calls for them.
* Chief estimates that it costs us $20,000/year for move-ups to Pine Tree Patio.
* The budget did not factor in a big increase in fuel costs and the increase in maintenance costs due to deferred maintenance and non-DOT compliant apparatus. (6 months into the fiscal year and we have spent $60,000 to $65,000 of our $75,000 vehicle maintenance budget.)

1. Ambulance status

* We have three ambulances: a 2021, a 2018 and a 2012.
* We have made plans to remount the 2012 ambulance on a new F450 Chassis. That should buy us 5-7 years until we need to replace it.

1. Other vehicles

* We sold Rescue 9
* We are working to trim down our fleet from single-use vehicles to Type 3s (They look like a fire engine but work as a brush truck as well.

1. Chief’s goal: to be frugal but proactive with a successive plan for personnel and the development of an apparatus plan.
2. Need for volunteers

* Availability is an issue. 5 of our volunteers work at FCI; 2 work elsewhere.
* Chief applied for a grant to pay for a volunteer retention coordinator. We didn’t get it.

1. Need to amend our current testing/hiring rules

* Need to change the rules, setting our baseline lower to meet our needs while complying with state laws.
* Our current rules require 3 people to test to establish a hiring list. Anytime we hire one from the list, it becomes void and we must start over. Two years ago we could have a list of 20 people that remained open for up to 30 months – as long as it had 3 names on it.
* Proposal: to change the list of 3 qualified people on the list to 1. The union is okay with the change.

**Corey made a motion to change the number of applicants on the list from three to 1. Amber seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

1. Current line staff status

* We have two openings right now. We need to open up hiring
* Jose Chavez has been offered a job provisionally.
* NTN, a testing company, charges $200+ to test someone. Chief recommends testing in house.
* Fire Districts cannot drop their Civil Service Commission. Municipalities can.
* We have three captain positions that need to be filled. (Who? Eval? How we rated them.)
* We only have three line staff certified to fill those position.
* We start line staff at $62K per year; we have excellent benefits; our 48/96 schedule is a perk. (If you take 2 days off, you get 10 days off straight.)

1. Chief’s concerns

* Need for a new identity. We have changed our patch.
* Executive Fire Officers (EFO) typically last 9 to 11 years. Our length of service is much lower for fire chiefs.

1. When Chief Thomas took over, there were only two employees. We are now up to 18. 64% of our budget is salaries.
2. The CTGR took over the Willamina Fire Station on Jan. 1. We have a good working relationship with them. The Tribe staffs 2 EMTs in Willamina.
3. The CAD will be going to AVL computers that use GPS to dispatch the nearest unit. Once the switch is flipped on the nearest ALS unit will be dispatched to Charlie, Delta, and Echo level calls. Lower urgency calls – Alpha and Bravo – will continue to be dispatched as usual.

Next Meeting: Chief Thomas suggested Monday, March 6 at 9 a.m. It must be posted 48 hours ahead of time on the website.

**Corey moved to adjourn the meeting. Amber seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

Respectfully Submitted:

Marguerite Alexander, Administrative Assistant