

SOMERSET FIRE/RESCUE COMMISSION
Minutes of the January 9, 2006 Meeting

Call to Order: Chairperson Roy called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. at the Town Hall.

Roll Call: Present - Shane Demulling, Rita Lawson, Gerry Mullenberg, Bartt Palmer, and Tom Roy. Absent - Dave Parnell. Also attending: Jerry Neumann, Jeff Johnson and many members of the Fire/Rescue Department.

Minutes from Previous Meeting: *Motion by Palmer, second by Demulling to approve the minutes of the December 19, 2005 meeting.*

Financial/Treasurer's Report: No report available. Brian Duggan, Fire/Rescue Department Secretary/Treasurer, reported the auditor is working on the 2004 audit and will start the 2005 audit. The 2004 audit was delayed due to the death of a partner in the audit firm.

Public Input: Brian Duggan recommended having someone outside the department do their financials, perhaps one of the municipal clerks or a contracted person, so a person with the training and skills did them. This would include monthly bills, quarterly payroll, annual W2's, preparing financial statements and budget information, and working with the auditor. This would not have to include his job of taking minutes at their monthly business meetings. The department also does not need to always have someone available to write checks because they have charge accounts at stores. He noted a need for better accountability on what members are charging to the department. *Motion by Palmer, second by Demulling to recommend the Village and Township boards consider at their next joint meeting having Fire/Rescue department clerk/treasurer responsibilities handled by a non-department person.*

Duggan asked to have physicals required for incoming firefighters to know whether any limitations were needed for that person's activities and to get a base line for the future. Discussion of drug testing procedures and things that could trigger a drug test. *Motion by Demulling, second by Palmer to recommend the Village and Town boards consider at their next joint meeting requiring physicals and drug tests for the existing firefighters and new members as they join.*

Old Business: Fire/Rescue Commission Bylaws -*Motion by Mullenberg, second by Palmer to table discussion of the bylaws.*

New Business: Reconsideration of Fire/Rescue Commission decision regarding Fire Chief appointment per ordinance requirements-Fire/Rescue Dept. members review/input, training records, experience and other qualifications -Discussion began about whether or not Chief Parnell had resigned and that only a written resignation was a legal one. Demulling noted the Commission had not gathered input from department members at its previous meeting per Ordinance 2002-01 and that the Commission wished to do that now. Bill Lawson suggested 1 or 2 Commission members interview department members individually in confidence to gather their ideas on the responsibilities of a chief, and on procedures and issues in the department. They would report back in closed session for the Commission to make a decision on appointment of a chief. The Commission decided to conduct interviews during a recess of the meeting and continue them the next evening at 6:30 p.m. before meeting at 7:00 p.m. to go into closed session to discuss appointment of a chief.

Chair Roy asked the Fire/Rescue members about chain of command at fires and rescues if the selection process for a chief were to take some time. Department members explained they

did not want to be without a chief but that the chain of command was well understood within the department in emergencies because they had to be prepared to respond at all times with whichever members were available.

Fire/Rescue members expressed concern about how fire inspections were being done recently, about updating fire and rescue protocols, about some payroll questions and whether Travis Belisle's suspension for 3 years from officer eligibility could be changed.

Motion by Mullenberg, second by Palmer to recess at 8:30 p.m. so that Town and Village Board representatives on the Commission could interview Fire/Rescue department members in confidence.

Chair Roy reconvened the meeting at 11:40 p.m. An agenda was set for the Tuesday, Jan 10, 2006 meeting to include a closed session as per Wis Stat sec 19.85 (1)(b) considering dismissal, demotion, or discipline of a Fire/Rescue employee, a closed session as per Wis Stat sec 19.85(1)(c) considering employment of a Fire chief and Assistant Fire Chief, and New Business items: cell phone policy, fire inspection procedures, complaint procedure, and payroll questions.

Adjourn: *Motion by Mullenberg, second by Demulling to adjourn.* Meeting adjourned at 12:00 midnight.

Respectfully submitted, Rita Lawson, Secretary

Next meetings: Fire Commission, Tuesday, January 10, 2006, 7:00 p.m. Town Hall.
 Joint Meeting, Monday, January 16, 2006, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall