

**Revised NMFR Joint Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes**

**April 23, 2024 – 5:30 p.m.  
Room #132 – City of Menasha**

Present: Ald. Grade, Marshall, Boyette, Pollnow, Sevenich and Borchardt

Also Present: Chief Teesch, Director Sasman and MA Ellis

Public: No members of the public were present.

Ald. Sevenich called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Election of Chair: **MS Borchardt/Pollnow nominate Ald. Boyette as Chair. Motion made by Grade to elect Borchardt as Chair. Ald. Borchardt refused the position, therefore there wasn't a second. The Committee casted a unanimous vote to elect Ald. Boyette as Chair.**

**Ald. Boyette took over as Chair of the meeting.**

Election of Vice-Chair: **MSC Grade/Borchardt to elect Ald. Sevenich as Vice-Chair, all voting aye.**

Approval of Minutes: The Committee reviewed the March 26, 2024, meeting minutes. **MS Grade/Borchardt to approve the March 26, 2024 all voting aye and Ald. Pollnow abstained.**

Approval of Calls: The Committee reviewed the calls from March 2024. Chief Teesch noted over the past 10 years our overall volume has increased by 42%. Ald. Sevenich asked about the area where there are calls but not marked on the report. Chief Teesch noted these four calls were due to calls not completed and checked. Ald. Sevenich asked if we could have better communication when there are fires to let the Community Development Department in Menasha know. Chief Teesch will communicate that with his staff. Ald. Pollnow noted that Winnebago County Sheriff's Department said they will not respond to calls on Highway 41 and how this affects us. Chief Teesch said this change has not affected us and our responses as we need to respond to accidents on the highway. The local police department is responding versus the Sheriff's Department.

Ald. Borchardt asked for information on what types of calls are causing the increase over the past 10 years and where they are they coming from. He also asked if this is changing our job duties, how are we preparing for the future if there are changes. Ald. Boyette noted that over the past few years the medical calls are increasing. Chief Teesch said 65-68% of our calls are EMS only. He said it's low compared to departments who run an ambulance. This is due to us not running the non-emergent calls. These are handled by Gold Cross Ambulance. **MSC Borchardt/Pollnow to accept the March 2024 call report and place on file.**

Budget: The Committee reviewed the year-to-date through March 31, 2024. Ald. Sevenich asked about the Outside Services line item. There are two-line item in our budget with the same description. One is through Fire Commission's budget. This is for new hire physicals. The other one in the normal operating budget and is for existing employees to have their annual physicals which includes the OSHA respirator physical.

Ald. Pollnow said that he heard there was a deficit with our overall budget and asked how that came about. Director Sassman confirmed there was a deficit year for 2020, 2021 and 2022. Most of this was attributed to overtime caused by FMLA's. 2020 and 2021 was small and manageable. 2022 was the worst year with long term FMLA which created overtime and there were quite a few vehicle maintenance issues. Ald. Pollnow asked if this was overlooked. Director Sasman said there have been meetings with both Finance Directors, Mayors, and this Committee to review the budget and see what

our options are. We can't always control the unknown especially with long term FMLA's. There are current quarterly meetings with Chief Teesch and both Finance Directors to continue to monitor the budget and prepare for anything that may come up. Ald. Grade said this Committee reviews the budget quarterly. They will look at the line items not doing so well, what is happening and what the overall budget is. Chief Teesch noted our staff is good at letting us know when retirements are. We have been allowed to hire ahead to fill retirement positions. Right now, we have one extra person as the last retirement this year is in June. Hiring ahead is helping us as we now have someone on a long-term FMLA and since we have the extra person, there is no overtime to backfill this spot. We do have more processes in place, but we also must look at how we budget. We currently have four people who retired this year, and nothing was built into the budget to ensure staffing levels are maintained and the budget reflects this. Director Sasman said things are discussed and it does get tricky when there are two communities funding the department and what each City can afford. Ald. Sevenich said we do address this in a way as we do hire earlier and have them trained before waiting until the person leaves and then hire after they are gone. **MSC Pollnow/Grade to approve the quarterly budget and place on file, all voting aye.**

2025-2028 CIP Budget Review: The Committee reviewed the 2025-2028 CIP budget. Discussion was held on budget and the process between two Cities. Director Sasman said there are things on our budget that is not in the City of Menasha's budget such as the training tower and the swap of the medium to heavy duty vehicle and the mobile hoist was in a different year. Both Cities review CIP different times of the year. However, during the upcoming quarterly meeting with Chief Teesch, both finance directors and both mayors they will review what is being asked, what has been approved and how funding these projects will work between both Cities.

Ald. Borchardt asked if we knew what we are getting back from the insurance company for the training grounds. Chief Teesch said we are getting back \$86,314.42 for the tower and the \$39,420 for the burn pods. They removed 40% from the burn pod bringing the reimbursement down to \$23,602.00. However, if we get the new training tower, and build it with the burn pods, we will get the 40% back for the burn pods. There is a \$50,000 deductible so we received a check for \$59,966.42. Chief Teesch noted he was told that when the check is cashed it will be held to apply this towards the project when it started.

Chief Teesch noted we did receive another \$5,000 bill for our Quint. Ald. Pollnow asked for the vehicle replacement for next meeting has the mileage, age, repair costs for the life of the vehicle until year to date. **MSC Pollnow/Borchardt recommends Chief Teesch, both Finance Directors and both Mayors meet to review for each City's budget funding capabilities for each year in the CIP Budget, all voting aye.**

Back Pay Funding: The Committee reviewed the memo regarding the back pay. Chief Teesch noted in the Labor Agreement there is a provision for higher pay for lateral transfers. There was someone who was hired whose full time job in the military was firefighting. This was not noted when he was hired. Therefore, it was reviewed by Human Resources and the City Attorney who confirmed that he should have started at a higher wage. Discussion was held on the lateral transfer language in the labor agreement and how this affects higher pay. Ald. Sevenich asked if there was a difference between military and full-time departments. He would have liked more information on duties in the military. Chief Teesch said they must be working full time. This person was paid as a full-time firefighter as his job while he was in the military. Director Sassman said they are looking for approval for a budget adjustment as this is a standard procedure. It was asked of Chief Teesch to look at their year end spending to see if there is a way to try to cover these funds with the current operating budget. However, they will do the budget transfer if this doesn't happen. **MSC Pollnow/Borchart recommends the City of Neenah Common Council approve the back pay and budget adjustment for the employee as outlined in the memo for a total of \$23,624.24 with the City of Neenah's share being \$14,262.56 and the City of Menasha's share of \$9,362.98 and budget adjustment through the general fund if this amount is not able to be absorbed into the 2024 budget, all voting aye.**

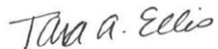
**MSC Sevenich/Grade approve the back pay and budget adjustment for the employee as outlined in the memo for a total of \$23,624.24 with the City of Neenah's share being \$14,262.56 and the City of Menasha's share of \$9,362.98 and budget adjustment through the general fund if this amount is not able to be absorbed into the 2024 budget, all voting aye.**

Automatic Aid Agreement: The Committee reviewed the updated automatic aid agreement with the City of Appleton. Ald. Pollow asked if there is no impact with this agreement how much more square footage is there is between each City. Chief Teesch said he didn't know what the exact amount is. It's not an apples-to-apples comparison with square miles. Instead, we need to look at response time areas. There are areas that we can reach faster than Appleton in our area and vice versa in Menasha. This agreement allows us to simultaneously dispatch departments faster to structure fires. If we wait to go through the Mabas system, there will be delays in this process and response times will be slower. It was noted this was just for fires and not EMS and fire. In the end, this agreement has been working well and is also needed to continue to maintain our ISO 1 status. Ald. Sevenich asked if we will be doing every fire call as he doesn't want to do every call and it takes us way out of district. Chief Teesch said we will not go to the far north side of Appleton unless it is a very large call and then there would be several departments responding. Ald. Pollow requested to table this item until next meeting until he could obtain, he information on square miles for each City. Discussion was held on tabling this versus acting on it. Ald. Borchardt said he trusts the process and staff to make these decisions. The other members said they felt comfortable approving this and have Chief Teesch bring back more information at the next meeting. **MS Sevenich/Borchardt recommends the City of Neenah and City of Menasha Common Councils approve the agreement for Automatic Aid Assistance for structure fires with the Cit of Appleton, pending approval by both City Attorneys, all voting aye and Ald. Pollnow voting nay. Motion carried 5-1.**

Future Meeting Times: A request was made to move the meeting time to 4:00 p.m. on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month. The Committee agreed to change future meetings to 4:00 p.m.

**MSC Borchardt/Pollnow to adjourn at 6:30 p.m., all voting aye.**

Respectfully submitted,



Tara Ellis

Management Assistant