



City of Ypsilanti
Office of the City Clerk

APPROVED

City of Ypsilanti
Civil Service Commission Minutes
Monday, January 14, 2013
4:00 p.m.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Commissioner Jones	Present
Commissioner McMillan	Present
Commissioner Vincent	Present

III. Introductions

The following persons were present:

City Manager Ralph Lange
Human Resources Representative Judi Smith
City Clerk Frances McMullan
Inter Fire Chief Max Anthouard
Former Fire Chief Jon Ichescio
Firefighter Ken Hobbs
Firefighter Roe

IV. Approval of Minutes

Approval of December 13, 2012 minutes

Commissioner Vincent moved, supported by Commissioner McMillan to approve the minutes. On a voice vote the motion carried and the minutes were approved as submitted.

V. Audience Participation

Firefighter Ken Hobbs commented that he was not noticed of the meeting.

City Clerk Frances McMullan indicated she emailed Mr. Hobbs the notice of the meeting as well as posted it on the email list serve and at city hall.

VI. Discussion/Actions by the Commission

Evaluation and Selection of Temporary Fire Marshal

Interim Chief Max Anthouard explained past practices of the Fire Chief doing the duties of Fire Marshal. He indicated that one person, Firefighter Mike Kouba is interested and stated he has been doing the duties since he was promoted to Interim Chief. He said he would like to discuss the testing process for filling the position permanently.

Mr. Hobbs agreed that Chief Ichesco held dual positions to save the city money. He said there is a need for the Fire Marshal position for code enforcement and building inspections.

City Manager Lange added that the Fire Marshal position is important but combining it with the Fire Chief's position is really too much for one person. He said he would prefer if the duties were split up. He recommended utilizing Firefighter Kouba on an interim basis until the permanent chief is selected. He mentioned that he could also contact Ypsilanti Township for coverage until the city settles things. He added that the position is not a permanent one until negotiations have occurred.

Commissioner McMillan asked if a firefighter is being taken out of the office in order to do the Fire Marshal duties.

City Manager Lange answered yes.

Firefighter Hobbs added that it would take a firefighter out of the office and would result in another temporary position of Lieutenant needing to be filled.

Commissioner Vincent said there must be an urgent reason for filling the Fire Marshal position. He suggested using former Fire Chief John Ichesco until things are worked out.

City Manager Lange said he would love to use Mr. Ichesco if he would agree to it, or use Ypsilanti Township in the meantime.

Commissioner Vincent asked why is it urgent to have the position filled. He asked if Mr. Ichesco is available.

Former Fire Chief John Ichesco stated that he is available but there is a question of double dipping. He said under PA 345 he cannot draw wages.

Firefighter Roe indicated that he can do the Fire Marshal duties but has not been asked to.

Mr. Lange stated that none of the firefighters meet all of the qualifications. He said he doesn't mind negotiating it.

Commissioner Vincent asked if former Chief Ichesco could volunteer. He said it appears that there are two other persons who are qualified and could do it on a temporary basis. He added that it seems expensive and complicated to contract with Ypsilanti Township and he would like to know how the union feels about it.

Commissioner McMillan said any new persons would need training and he is concerned about what would happen after two months are over, and questioned if the person would be demoted.

Commissioner Vincent said he is not prepared to place a stamp of approval on this. He said John Roe did the job under Ichesco and if two people are qualified, he can see liability issues ahead. He said he is not willing to approve an untrained person.

Mr. Lange stated he believes this is a union issue not a civil service issue.

Commissioner Vincent clarified that according to state statute, the Civil Service Commission has to appoint a temporary Fire Marshal.

Mr. Ichesco said this process is a non-competitive test. He said individuals must answer questions to eliminate nepotism and the good old boy system.

Interim Chief Anthouard stated that Firefighter Kouba was picked first because he is following the model that says Captains are first. He said there is an urgency to fill the position because businesses are coming into the city and they are awaiting inspections to be completed and currently there are not enough people on duty to perform them.

Commissioner McMillan said he is concerned about Firefighter Kouba's inexperience.

Commissioner Jones said he would like to see a basic job description, a list of who is qualified and a list of who wants the position.

Interim Chief Anthouard said Mr. Roe did a great job but is not as qualified as Kouba.

Firefighter John Roe stated he has Fire Inspection 1, 2 and 3 credentials.

Mr. Ichesco stated that rank is done in the event of testing.

Commissioner Vincent stated that issue the Commission faces is to do nothing or use Ypsilanti Township.

Firefighter Hobbs said it is up to the city to decide to contract or not, and if so it would only be temporary.

Commissioner Vincent asked if a temporary contract with Ypsilanti Township would be one that is less than 3 months.

Mr. Hobbs asked if Ypsilanti Township is willing to contract with the city. He said before making a decision, the Commission needs to make sure the Township is on board.

Mr. Lange said Township Chief Copeland is providing him with a list of services this week.

Commissioner Vincent suggested the Commission adjourn and come back in a week with answers regarding if the Township will agree to temporarily do the services.

Mr. Hobbs indicated that there is a clause in the contract that makes the City's Fire Department the sole provider of certain things and negotiation must occur for them.

Commissioner Vincent stated in the case of an emergency where things need to get done as soon as possible, the Commission can address them temporarily. He said he would like to see the documents that state what is required or not.

Interim Chief Anthouard said if the Township is used for 2-3 months, the City will still face problems afterwards. He said he prefers dealing with the issue now.

Commissioner Vincent said the Commission is not prepared at this time because there still remains confusion regarding the qualifications. He said since it is a non-competitive exam he would like to see resumes, etc. He said he would also like to know the Commission's stance on whether to make a permanent position or not. He suggested another meeting be set and that these items be placed on the agenda and addressed at that time.

Mr. Lange said he has had a hard time meeting with the Firefighter's Union because they have been unavailable. He said there are two components in this issue and one is approved by the Commission and the other by the Union.

Commissioner Vincent asked if it is possible to hire Mr. Ichesco while things are being cleared up.

Commissioner McMillan said he needs more information in order to make a decision.

Commissioner Vincent suggested that a future meeting be held to discuss how positions are filled with non-competitive exam, subcontracting and testing for permanent fire Marshal.

VII. Adjournment

Commissioner Vincent moved, supported by Commissioner McMillan to adjourn the meeting. On a voice vote the motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 4:48 p.m.