

October 17, 2013

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners was held on the above date, commencing at 5:32 P.M.

PRESENT: Commissioners: Sarah W. Morgan, Chair
Kathryn A. Hein
Paoi X. Lor
Michael M. O'Hear
Ann Wilson
Marisabel Cabrera

ALSO PRESENT: Gerard Washington, Assistant Chief, representing the Milwaukee Fire Department and James Harpole, Assistant Chief, representing the Milwaukee Police Department

SWEARING IN OF COMMISSIONER KATHRYN HEIN:

The Director administered the oath of office to reappoint Commissioner Kathryn Hein.

The Director presented for adoption minutes of the Regular Meetings of September 19, 2013 and October 3, 2013. Commissioner O'Hear moved approval of the minutes as presented, seconded by Commissioner Hein. The motion carried unanimously.

1. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

a) The Director presented correspondence dated October 7, 2013 from staff regarding Police Officer Matthew Bongard's status update for his hardship residency exemption. Commissioner Hein moved to approve the exemption for one (1) year, seconded by Commissioner O'Hear. The motion carried unanimously.

b) The Director presented correspondence dated October 7, 2013 from staff regarding Heavy Equipment Operator Nate Valley's status update for his hardship residency exemption. Commissioner O'Hear moved to approve the exemption for one (1) year, seconded by Commissioner Hein. The motion carried unanimously.

c) The Director presented correspondence dated October 7, 2013 from staff regarding Firefighter Jeremy Gumm's request for a residency exemption extension. Commissioner O'Hear moved to approve the exemption for six (6) months, seconded by Commissioner Wilson. The motion carried unanimously.

d) The Director presented correspondence dated October 7, 2013 from staff regarding Firefighter David Jauch's request for a residency exemption extension. Commissioner Wilson moved to approve the exemption for six (6) months, seconded by Commissioner O'Hear. The motion carried unanimously.

2. EXAMINATIONS:

a) The Director presented for adoption an eligible list for the position of Police Records Manager in the Police Department, consisting of five (5) names. Commissioner O'Hear moved approval of the list, seconded by Commissioner Lor. The motion carried unanimously.

3. FIRE DEPARTMENT:

a) The Director presented correspondence dated October 7, 2013 from Chief Rohlfing, wherein he notifies the Board that probationary Firefighter Nathan Fager has been terminated, effective October 7, 2013.

b) The Director presented correspondence dated October 8, 2013 from Chief Rohlfing, wherein he notifies the Board that probationary Firefighter Joseph Siegert has been terminated, effective October 8, 2013.

c) The Director presented correspondence dated October 3, 2013 from Chief Rohlfing, wherein he notifies the Board that Firefighter Jason Leistiko has returned from his unpaid military leave of absence which commenced on July 5, 2013, effective October 3, 2013.

4. POLICE DEPARTMENT:

a) The following promotions, as presented by Chief Flynn, were approved by the Board:

TO POLICE LIEUTENANT, on a waiver basis, from eligible list established January 17, 2013, contingent upon successful completion of drug screening, effective October 27, 2013:

#29 – AARON BERKEN.

TO LEAD POLICE TELECOMMUNICATOR, from Police Telecommunicator, effective October 27, 2013:

PATRICIA R. HUDSON.

b) The following appointments, as presented by Chief Flynn, were approved by the Board:

TO POLICE FLEET SUPERVISOR, from eligible list established February 7, 2013, contingent upon successful completion of a medical examination and drug screening, effective October 28, 2013:

#1 – TODD AHNERT.

TO ELECTRONIC TECHNICIAN SUPERVISOR, from eligible list established May 2, 2013, contingent upon successful completion of a medical examination and drug screening, effective October 28, 2013:

#4 – ANTONIO WEBSTER.

c) The Director presented correspondence dated October 3, 2013, from Chief Flynn, wherein he notifies the Board that Lieutenant Phillip M. Henschel will serve as the Temporary Holding Facility Administrator, effective September 16, 2013.

d) The Director presented correspondence dated October 8, 2013, from Chief Flynn, requesting the Board to extend the probationary period for Police Telecommunicator Jessica R. Klos for 43 consecutive days to accommodate a leave of absence she took. Commissioner O'Hear moved to approve the extension of the probationary period, seconded by Commissioner Hein. The motion carried unanimously.

e) The Director presented correspondence dated October 8, 2013, from Chief Flynn, wherein he notifies the Board that Police Officer Maria Devorse returned from an unpaid medical leave of absence, which commenced on February 3, 2013, effective September 24, 2013; Police Officer Daniel Carrillo was granted an unpaid military leave of absence extension until September 20, 2014, effective September 12, 2010; Police Services Specialist Edgar Bullock was granted an unpaid medical leave of absence until October 31, 2013, effective September 16, 2013; Police District Office Assistant Luann Scott was granted an unpaid medical leave of absence until December 15, 2013, effective May 21, 2013; and Police Telecommunicator Gina Sellers was granted an unpaid medical leave of absence until November 5, 2013, effective December 30, 2012.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Rod Masarik spoke on behalf of Nathan Fager, who was recently terminated from the Milwaukee Fire Department. Mr. Masarik informed the Board that many members of Mr. Fager's family and friends were in the audience to support Mr. Fager. He stated that Mr. Fager has always wanted to be a firefighter and asks the Board to re-evaluate Mr. Fager's termination.

Jim Rosemeyer came from Platteville with his wife, Lori, to speak on behalf of Joseph Siegert, who was also recently terminated from the Milwaukee Fire Department. Mr. Rosemeyer informed the Board that Mr. Siegert has shown his intention to become a firefighter since high school. He has the in-born integrity and generosity to be a firefighter. Mr. Rosemeyer asks that Mr. Siegert be reinstated.

Brad Polaske spoke on behalf of his friend, Nathan Fager. Mr. Polaske informed the Board that Mr. Fager graduated from the fire academy with high honors and was hand-selected to work on Ladder 9, one of the busiest ladder companies in Milwaukee. He questioned the Administration why probationary firefighters were working at Ladder 9 when they have had issues at this location in the past, most recently within the past month. He stated probationary firefighters were questioned regarding incidents at Ladder 9 and placed right back in. He asked why there were no progress reports, official write-ups, or disciplinary forms that reflected negatively on Mr. Fager's performance for him to be terminated. He further stated that prior to Mr. Fager becoming a firefighter he was a decorated police officer with the Milwaukee Police Department.

Milwaukee Fire Department Heavy Equipment Operator Scott Vilter spoke on behalf of Nathan Fager and Joseph Siegert. He stated that he has heard nothing but good things about these individuals and the instructors would not have put them out into the field unless they could be a tremendous contribution to the Fire Department and the City. He asks the Board to speak with the Chief and to use any other form of discipline other than dismissal.

Rob Teel spoke on behalf of Nathan Fager. He stated he was Mr. Fager's supervisor when he was a police officer. He further stated that Mr. Fager has the highest ethical standards. Mr. Teel requests a proper investigation be conducted and he wishes the Fire Chief would reconsider his decision.

Phillip Fager spoke on behalf of his son, Nathan Fager. He stated he has known Nathan all of his life and that he is a very honest and true person. Mr. Fager is very disappointed that the Fire Department put a mark on the family name.

Anthony Malone spoke on behalf of Nathan Fager. He stated he was a police officer with Mr. Fager, who was an exceptional police officer and that being a firefighter was his dream job. He feels that being terminated is unacceptable. Mr. Fager is an asset to the City and it would be a mistake to lose him.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner O'Hear moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Lor. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting concluded at 5:58 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,


Michael G. Tobin
Executive Director

MGT:cj