



MICHIGAN CITY FIRE MERIT COMMISSION

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RICKY JACKSON, PRESIDENT
CHARLES WILLIAMS, VICE PRESIDENT
ROBERT POLLOCK, COMMISSIONER
GREG DEUTSCHER, COMMISSIONER
MICHAEL NEULIEB, COMMISSIONER

Michigan City Fire Merit Commission Meeting Minutes: July 12, 2021

President Jackson called the meeting to order at 5:00pm. At this time, President Jackson called all in attendance to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. A quorum was noted with Commissioner Williams, Commissioner Neulieb, and Commissioner Pollock all in attendance. Commissioner Deutscher was absent. Also in attendance was Commission Attorney Cory Shoffner, Fire Chief Doug Legault.

Approval of Minutes- President Jackson noted that the minutes from last month's meeting were written correctly, however the motions will need to be specified in the future. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Williams. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pollock. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Communications/Claims- Discussion ensues regarding June's approval due to being a month behind. Commissioner Pollock states that it is \$150/month per commissioner, as well as \$500/month for the attorney fees. A motion was made by Commissioner Pollock to pay these fees. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neulieb. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Commissioner Pollock states that the budget for 2022 was reviewed by the mayor and the controller last month. According to Commissioner Pollock, the total will come out to \$47,383, however because the Commission did not have a secretary, \$3,733 was subtracted from that total to reach \$43,650 total. A motion to approve the budget report was made by Commissioner Pollock. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Williams. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Report from City Council Representative- No report.

Report from Commission Attorney- Ms. Shoffner reminded those present that last month she discussed the residency requirement changes for firefighters. She states that Amber Lapaich drafted an ordinance that has received some sponsors, and should be approved by the City Council within the coming weeks.

Report from Union Local 475- Union representative Joe Zerbes reminded those present that there would be a fish fry held on July 30th, 2021 from 4:30pm to 7:30pm at Queen of All Saints School cafeteria. He also stated that it would be \$12/plate, and that it would benefit the scholarship fund.

Report from Fire Chief Doug Legault- Chief Legault began his report by congratulating Commissioner Neulieb on joining the commission, as well as Lieutenant Tom Frontcakas on retirement. He states that due to Lt. Frontcakas' retirement, he would like for a motion to be made to promote the next name on the Lieutenant list. A motion to approve the Chief's request for the next name on the Lieutenant list was made by Commissioner Pollock. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neulieb. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Chief Legault then states that due to the promotion that was just approved by the commission, he also asked that the commission create a motion to approve the next name on the Driver/Operator list. A motion to approve the Chief's request for the next name on the Driver/Operator list was made by Commissioner Pollock. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Williams. **Motion carried 4-0.**

The Chief discusses recent retirements and states that, due to said retirements, the current staffing number is at 78. Chief Legault asked the commission for a motion to start the hiring process for the next three individuals to reach the staffing number of 81. President Jackson noted that there was only one name left on the current hiring list, to which he suggested that a motion be made to take the last name off of the hiring list and base the hiring process off of that. A motion to take the last name from the current hiring list was made by Commissioner Pollock. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Williams. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Commissioner Williams reminded Chief Legault that once the Commission receives the new hiring list, they will give him the other two names that would be considered next on the list. President Jackson also stated that once the list is created, he will ask the Commission to have a special meeting within the next week to ask for those names. Discussion ensues regarding submitting the list ahead of time before the names are cleared by perf. Commissioner Neulieb suggests that the Commission makes a motion to take the first two names from the new list. A motion was made by Commissioner Neulieb to take the first and second names from the new hiring list so that he can start the hiring process as soon as possible. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pollock. **Motion carried 4-0.**

Chief Legault stated that on July 18th, 2021, another firefighter would be retiring. Due to this retirement, the Chief requested that a motion be made to start a hiring process to replace this firefighter as of July 18th, 2021, putting the hiring number up to four. Commissioner Pollock states that there were only three hires planned in the budget, and because of this, he will have to know when the new hires will be sent to the Fire Academy immediately so he can write a letter to the mayor regarding the situation in order to get it cleared. A motion was made by Commissioner Pollock to approve the Chief's request of hiring another firefighter as of July 18th, 2021. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Williams. **Motion carried 4-0.**

July Department Anniversaries:

Firefighter Dave Teeters	31 years
Captain John Mellen	27 years
Lieutenant Craig Krivak	21 years
Lieutenant Barrett Taylor	18 years
Lieutenant Christian Bietry	12 years
Driver/Operator Nick Pabon	6 years
Driver/Operator William Sonntag	6 years
Firefighter Jenna Tepavcevic	6 years
Firefighter Chris Blake	4 years
Firefighter Kevin Vahst	2 years
Executive Secretary Jenny Clouse	4 years

Old Business- President Jackson stated that the Physical Agility Test was held on Saturday, July 11th, 2021, in which 13 applicants were eligible. Out of the 13, three did not show up, ten took the test, and one did not pass. In total, there are nine individuals that will make the new hiring list.

New Business- Commissioner Pollock stated that due to the rapid hires from the new list, he states that the Commission may have to conduct another written test and Physical Agility Test in late 2021 or early 2022 depending on how the hiring list holds up. Commissioner Williams and President Jackson took the time to thank the firefighters that helped with the testing on July 11th, 2021.

Public Comment- Chief Legault stated that the department is working with the Washington Park Water Safety Event on Thursday, July 22nd, 2021 from 9:00am to 11:00am. This event is free to everyone and goes over general water safety, how to identify a drowning, and much more.

Commission Comment- Commissioner Pollock stated that, due to how important the beach is to Michigan City, it is imperative to make the beach as safe as possible for visitors. He also stated that the Fire Department may start to see more requirements regarding providing for water safety. President Jackson recalled an incident where he and his wife were talking to a Michigan City resident and at this time, a firefighter on beach rescue took care of hot coals that were disposed of in the middle of the beach. The resident pointed this firefighter out and stated that, even though he had only been down there for about 30 minutes, he had been picking up garbage on the beach. President Jackson wanted to take the time to name the individual, Battalion Chief James Young, and commend him on voluntarily cleaning up the beach. In regards to beach safety, Chief Legault then stated that during next month's Commission meeting, some lifesaving awards will be provided.

With no other business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Pollock. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Williams at 5:24pm.

Next meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 2nd, 2021 at 5:00pm.