

## **MICHIGAN CITY FIRE MERIT COMMISSION**

100 EAST MICHIGAN BOULEVARD  
MICHIGAN CITY, INDIANA 46360  
219-873-1570  
KEITH HARRIS, PRESIDENT  
JOHN SKIERKOWSKI, VICE PRESIDENT  
LOUISE MOCK, SECRETARY  
ROBERT POLLOCK, COMMISSIONER  
GEOFF PLUMMER, COMMISSIONER



Michigan City Fire Merit Commission Meeting Minutes: July 1, 2013

President Harris called the meeting to order at 5:00p.m. A quorum was noted with Commissioners Keith Harris, Geoff Plummer, John Skierkowski, and Louise Mock. Absent Commissioner Robert Pollock. Others present, Chief Martin, and Councilman Schwanke.

Commissioner Harris asked for an approval of Agenda. Motion for approval of agenda by Commissioner Skierkowski, and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Plummer; **Ayes 4 Nays 0; motion carries**

Commissioner Harris asked for an approval of June 3, 2013 minutes. Motion for approval of minutes by Commissioner Skierkowski, and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Plummer; **Ayes 4 Nays 0; motion carries**

No communication or claims.

### **Reports from City Council Liaison**

Nothing to report at this time

**No reports from Fire Merit Commission Attorney Krause, absent.**

### **New Business**

No new business.

### **Old Business**

Proposed ordinance changes:

Commissioner Harris stated that he received an email from commission attorney stating that she emailed the city attorney, Amber LaPaige regarding the changes. The question Amber LaPaige wanted to know was why the commission wanted to make the changes. Commissioner Harris stated that she was invited to the 1<sup>st</sup> workshop but was unable to attend. She also recommended that everyone has a sit down with the mayor about the changes.

City Council attorney Mr. Meyer joins the meeting.

Commissioner Harris stated an example, that the state statute requires you to be on the job(department) for 5 years to be considered for chief and one change the commission wants to make is to move it to 10 years. Commissioner Harris asked Attorney Jim Meyer his thoughts or suggestions. Mr. Meyer commented that he had no recommendations on the changes but agrees with Amber LaPaige about having a meeting with the mayor and to have a sponsor from the city council. He suggested to talk with the people involved in this decision ahead of time so they have a better understanding of what the changes are and why the change. Commissioner Harris asked if they should address to a committee. Councilman Schwanke said he could mention it to a committee and he thanked Mr. Meyer for attending in his request. He also said that he spoke with the mayor and he stated that he had some concerns with

some of the changes. He said that the council as a whole has to make the changes, we have to make sure everyone is on board with it, and that the changes to the ordinance are for the better. He stated the draft seemed incomplete. Commissioner Harris stated it was suggestions of the requested changes and he wanted the attorneys to review and give their suggestions on wording and how it should properly read in the ordinance. Commissioner Harris asked permission from the commission to sit down with the mayor. He stated Commissioner John Skierkowski, commission attorney, city attorney and asked if Councilman Schwanke and council attorney Jim Meyer would like to be present. Councilman Schwanke suggested a round table discussion in one of the conference rooms. Commissioner Harris said that he would contact the mayor's office for a date and time and would let everyone know. The commission and councilman Schwanke thank Mr. Meyer for his presence.

Report from Chief Martin: Chief stated that he would like to have a moment of silence for the 19 firefighters that lost their life in the forest fires in Arizona. He said that he was watching this tragedy, and said we often forget that we are in a dangerous profession.

Chief stated that one of their retired firefighters passed on June 15, 2013, fireman Raymond Silke. He was thankful for the pictures Commissioner Skierkowski brought for the service. He stated that we should have a memorial for every passing of the firefighters that have lost their life.

The fire department is preparing for the summer festivals activities, next one is July 14<sup>th</sup> fireworks. We will have 9 EMT firefighters participating. He stated that as of 2009 you have to be an EMT once you came on the department, and over half the department are E.M.T.s, which is something for us to be proud of.

Chief stated they are continuing on the inspections that started late April, early May, and will continue till October. Public will take over at that point.

S.I.D.S. training, defensive driving courses and med flight training will start by Public Education. Lt. Baker is present and he is in charge of the Public Education. He has different tour schedules for July with Safe Harbor and Wee Daycare.

Firefighter Scott Kaletha will be conducting firefighter PE classes at Barker Middle School July 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. Scott is a national fitness instructor.

Recruit Marcus Thompkins is expected to graduate out of the fire part of the academy July 8<sup>th</sup>.

Chief officially requested the next name on the hire list.

Chief is proud of the firemen that formed the awards committee. They have come up with a name, "The Protection Award", which is named after the departments 1<sup>st</sup> steam pump. A few firefighters have been selected for the award this month and will be receiving them at the next meeting.

Reminder that July 20<sup>th</sup> is the burn camp. The kids come in and spend the weekend here. Chief Darren Westphal, in conjunction with Lt. Baker and Captain Wright have put together an itinerary for the kids. Much support by Pat Perry.

Chief thanks his brothers in blue for all their support on calls. Such example was when a car went off into an embankment, Officer Samuelson and Hazel were there to assist in the accident.

He said that in the am he received a text from Angie Nelson, a rep from NIPSCO, and their generous donation for their new fire safety pup costume. He turns it over to Lt. Baker and thanks Miss Angie Nelson for her generosity. Lt Baker showed an example to Miss Nelson, who was also present, the fire safety pup. It was developed in 1998. He states that it is a very small representation of the actual costume. It actually fits a full size man. Total cost of costume is \$2,900 and after the donation they are only short \$400.00. He thanks Miss Nelson on behalf of the fire department. Miss Nelson said that on behalf of NIPSCO, that she knew this was an important program for the elementary school kids. The \$1,000 donation is just a small token of what the fire department does. She stated she thinks she can come up with the difference for the costume to fulfill what is needed. Thank you.

Councilman Schwanke thanks Miss Nelson for stepping up to the plate with the request he made for the donation and the appreciation the city has for the works of NIPSCO in the community. The fire safety pup does make a difference to the kids. Thanks again.

Commissioner Harris thanks Miss Nelson, and NIPSCO on behalf of the commission for making this happen.

Commissioner Harris addresses the Chief's request for a name on the hiring list. He stated that before making a motion for the next name, the ordinance should be read. In the ordinance Section 54-157 Eligible List, Paragraph B reads, "eligible applicants from the minority list should be given preference and selected by the commission for two out of every three open positions on the department", and so on. The last name given to the Chief was second off the minority list but as he reads it, he stated he believes

the position is still open because it wasn't filled. He asks the commission for their thoughts whether the name given is off the minority list or the non-minority list? After discussion the commission makes a motion. Commissioner Skierkowski makes a motion to give the name off the minority list, Commissioner Mock seconds. Commissioner Harris asks for roll call; Commissioner Plummer, Naye, Commissioner Skierkowski, Aye, Commissioner Harris, Aye and Commissioner Mock, Aye. **Ayes 3 Nays 1; motion carries.**

Public Comments: Lt. Steinborn asked if the name requested last month by Chief Rose is that name. Commissioner Harris stated that it was.

Commissioner Comments: None.

**Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Plummer and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Skierkowski Commission voted 45) Ayes – (0) Nays motion carries. 5:36 p.m.**

**Next meeting August 5, 2013 @ 5 p.m.**