

ROCKVILLE/SPRINGDALE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
SPECIAL MEETING
P.O. Box 159
Springdale, UT 84767
January 29, 2015
Rockville Community Center

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL** – Chair Luci Francis called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with the following members of the Rockville/Springdale Fire Protection District Board present: Adrian Player, John Callahan and Chuck Passek. Louise Excell was excused. District Clerk Elaine Harris recording.
2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA** – Adrian Player moved the agenda be approved. Chuck Passek seconded the motion and a roll call vote indicated all those present voting in favor of the motion.
3. **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE SALARY FOR, AND SUBSEQUENT HIRING OF, A TEMPORARY PART-TIME FIRE CHIEF** – Chair Francis defined the District’s intent relative to the definition of part time. We are not defining part time the same as the Fair Labor Laws. We are referring to a person who is doing the job of the Chief who also has other employment, whether it be full-time or part-time. When we refer to a full-time chief, we are referring to someone who is working strictly for the District as their only employment.

The Chair asked if any members of the Board had any questions relative to the information received prior regarding the current salary for the Chief and how that salary had come to be. In summary:

- The current annual salary for the Chief is approximately \$17,000. That was instituted in 2006.
- A full-time Chief, Jim Hansen, was hired in 2002 and his annual salary was \$21,896. When Chief Hansen resigned in 2006, his salary at that time was approximately \$27,000.
- Chief Hansen was also an EMS Coordinator and he performed the duties of Fire Marshal.
- Upon his resignation, all the duties performed by Chief Hansen were divided up among staff and duties were assigned to the various staff members.
- The positions were: part-time Fire Chief (\$15,000), EMS Captain (\$12,000), Fire Marshal/Fire Captain (\$12,000).

The plan for 2015 was to hire a full-time Chief and the budgeted amount for a total compensation package for this position was \$80,000. That was comprised of an annual base salary of \$55,000 and a compensation package of \$25,000. We are now faced with the need to hire a temporary, part-time person until such time as we can hire a full-time chief, which is still the Board’s intention.

It has been some time since the part-time salary of \$17,000 has changed. Chief Barker is currently being paid for both the Chief and the Fire Marshal positions for a total of \$23,909/yr.

Presently, Chief Barker has been doing plan reviews; he is not certified but his reviews have been accepted by the Town of Springdale. Springdale has indicated they would prefer to have a certified fire marshal doing plan reviews. Once the reviews are completed by a certified fire marshal, a report will be created that is comprised of a list and any fire chief can utilize that list to do follow up site inspections. That is where the additional \$6,800 comes from; not plan reviews, but the follow up inspections.

If you take 23,909 and begin to add in cost of living raises of 2½% over the last nine years, you arrive at a salary of \$25,585 for 2015. Chair Francis recommended the Fire Marshal salary be increased to this amount.

Another approach would be: The Board has decided to give a full-time chief a salary of \$60,000. Dividing that by half results in the amount of \$30,000. Or, the total compensation package of \$80,000 divided by two results in \$40,000.

There really isn't such a thing as a part-time chief; the Board knows from the people that have worked for us in the past that when they actually turned in their hours, it is apparent they are well over 30 hours/wk. When the current salary is divided by the actual hours worked, we are almost back to a volunteer chief.

The Chair proposed the consideration of raising the part-time chief salary to somewhere between \$25,585 and \$30,000 and a consideration be given to making that retroactive to January 1, 2015. That amount would include the fire marshal salary. It was noted that follow up site inspections are time consuming.

It was confirmed that presently Chief Barker is receiving \$23,909/yr. for fulfilling the Fire Chief and the Fire Marshal duties.

John Callahan moved the Board do not increase our part-time chief's salary. Adrian Player felt that before there was a second, there should be some discussion about the concept of we have a fiduciary responsibility as a board to continue the operation of the Fire District. Chief Barker will be leaving March 1. If Chief Barker had been willing to stay longer, we would not have given him a raise; we would just continue paying him the current amount(s). Adrian was reluctant to factor in cost of living increases or anything else to bring somebody else aboard when it is a part-time, temporary fix to the problems we have found ourselves in. Adrian Player then seconded the motion.

Chuck Passek stated the Board did research as to what a comparable salary was when they created the full-time chief position. What we are asking a part-time person to do is more than 50% of what we would request the full-time person to do. If the market rate salary was appropriate at \$55-\$60,000, not counting benefits, for the full-time person, Chuck felt \$30,000 was appropriate for the part-time person without even addressing the cost of living, etc.

John Callahan stated the salary was set aside for a person who had all the certifications; the temporaries that are being considered don't fulfill those qualifications, plus they have other employment. He doesn't approve of the rationale behind paying a part-time, less qualified person more or as much money as we are prepared to pay a full-time, qualified chief.

Chair Francis responded that we need to take into consideration what position we are in and what options we presently have.

Chuck stated that when the Board put out the announcement for the position, we did not specify the applicant was required to already have certifications, but that he was able to achieve them. He did not feel that was a factor.

The Chair stated that it was important to remember that the person being considered was one of the top candidates with the qualifications he currently has, with the understanding that he would pursue further qualifications within a certain period of time.

In response to Chuck's comment, John stated we are giving them a chance, which was never really specified that we were not going to pay for that training. That equates to additional training that would have cost us more. The Chair responded that there is no cost for the training, only the books, which we already have.

In view of what is pending with the Hurricane Valley Fire District and all the other unknowns we are facing, John is convinced that we should not implement an increase.

Discussion took place regarding a compromise somewhere between the current salary of \$23,909 and \$30,000. Adrian couldn't understand why we would consider increasing the current salary, from a fiscal responsibility standpoint, when this is to be only temporary. Chair Francis stated the Board decided on \$60,000 as a base salary plus a compensation package for a total of \$80,000 for a full-time chief. If that is what the Board feels a chief is worth, she feels it is worth bumping up that part-time salary, not as an enticement, but to make the hours of work worth what is really being done.

Chuck did not feel doing so was a frivolous use of funds; he felt the reason the salary has stayed at \$17,000 for the last eight years or more is just because the Board hasn't done a comparison. There wasn't a study done for a part-time.

The Chair stated we did not increase the firefighter wage in 2015, but we have increased their opportunity to fulfill shifts; we raised the emergency services personnel by \$1/hr. to \$1.50/hr. depending on their certification. She views the part-time chief salary as an oversight because in the preparation of the 2015 budget, every salary was reviewed and adjusted accordingly. Chief Barker's pay was not taken into consideration or any part-time chief as the goal was a full-time chief. We need to determine if the part-time chief salary is really fair.

John asked why we should pay more money for what we are happy with now. The work is getting done and our current part-time chief is doing a good job. He doesn't see a justification for increasing the salary.

A vote was taken on the motion to not increase the part-time salary for the present chief of \$23,909.

Adrian Player – Aye
Chuck Passek – No
Luci Francis – No
John Callahan – Yes

The motion did not carry.

Adrian Player moved the Board offer the candidate \$23,909 to come aboard as a part-time chief for six to nine months until we can get past this critical situation with the Hurricane Valley Fire District. John Callahan seconded the motion. The roll call vote indicated:

Adrian Player – Aye
Chuck Passek – No
Luci Francis – No
John Callahan – Aye

The motion did not carry.

In answer to Adrian Player's comment that he couldn't understand why the Board would be willing to pay a new part-time chief even one dollar more than the current salary, the Chair responded because it was fair.

Chuck didn't necessarily feel "fair" was the appropriate term, but he would go back to the fact that the Board made an assessment as to what a full-time chief would be paid. He firmly believe the part-time person will be doing more than 50% of what we were expecting the full-time person to do. He is making his determination on the Board's task to do due diligence in giving them half of what would be paid a full-time position. He felt that was the only hard fact out there; the fact that someone's been working and we have had a continuing salary of \$17,000 plus the fire marshal duties. That may be something that somebody would work for, but he felt what the Board is looking for is what is appropriate. We didn't attempt to hire a full-time chief at a low salary in hopes of getting the work for a lower amount. It is good to be fiscally prudent with the public's money, but we also want to look at the work to be done in the position because this is a responsible position; this is in charge of the fire and all the EMS. We are asking a lot on a short-term, part-time basis.

Adrian did not feel it was about fairness; it was about continuing on with a fire chief and it's about consuming the money in the district ultimately, however many months from now, whenever we are done with the HVFD thing, we are going to hire a full-time chief and it would be good to keep every penny in the coffers to make sure we can afford a full-time chief. We have determined that the \$80,000 originally budgeted may not get us a full-time chief, so we need to keep our money in our coffers.

Chair Francis stated if Chief Barker was willing to stay longer, she would be proposing an increase simply because of the value.

John stated that when the budget process began, the Board looked at all the salaries and determined it was too much of an expense to pay our firefighters more money. He feels this is the same thing. Chair Francis responded that instead of offering more money to the firefighters, they now have the opportunity to fulfill paid shifts.

Chair Francis felt the issue before the Board was to look again at this particular wage and ask themselves is this what they feel is the right amount for this position based on what the person does and has been doing. Adrian Player responded if the Board was making a decision to not hire a full-time fire chief at all and go with a part-time fire chief, then he would be willing to entertain the change in the pay. We are planning on hiring a full-time fire chief. We need to offer a job to somebody for six to eight months at \$23,900/yr.. If they take it, fine, if not, we have a problem we have to deal with. It sends a bad message to our citizens when we propose another \$6,000 - \$7,000 increase in our budget.

Adrian did not disagree with what the position was worth or the fairness, he only felt that we should propose the present pay for a part-time chief. He didn't feel we should send messages that we can, as a Board, say it is only \$6,000 or \$7,000 more, let's just do it. Neither Chuck nor Luci felt that was the intent.

At this time, it is not contemplated the salary for a full-time chief will be increased over the \$80,000 budgeted. Our budget was created and is tight. It would be difficult to find any extra funds for an increase.

Chuck stated we are at an impasse but need to fill the position as Joe Barker will be leaving. If the Board is available for possible special meetings in the near future, he would be open to making an offer to the candidate of \$23,900, but he doesn't want to find that the Board can't meet again for a couple of weeks and we are down to the deadline. If things don't happen with the \$23,900, we would have to have a meeting.

Chuck clarified the amount is closer to \$24,000 than \$23,000.

Chuck Passek moved to offer the candidate \$24,000 for the part time position as Fire Chief with a commitment for a minimum of six months with an opportunity to extend at the pleasure of the board. Adrian Player seconded the motion and a roll call vote indicated:

Adrian Player – Aye
Chuck Passek – Aye
Luci Francis – Aye
John Callahan – No

The motion passed three to one.

At the last meeting the Board directed Chair Francis and Chuck Passek to offer this temporary, part-time position to Ryan Ballard, which they did and Ryan accepted. There was no discussion relevant to salary as the candidate understood that was a subject for Board discussion.

Adrian Player moved that Chair Francis call Ryan Ballard and offer him the job at \$24,000 immediately following the meeting. Chuck Passek seconded the motion and a roll call vote indicated all those present voted in favor of the motion.

4. **ADJOURN** – Adrian Player moved the meeting be adjourned. John Callahan seconded the motion and a roll call vote indicated all those present voted in favor of the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Minutes typed by:

Elaine M. Harris
District Clerk

APPROVED:

Luci Francis