Henry H

From: ED <EDIN2010@msn.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 16, 2014 4:38 PM
To: CityClerkHenry Heck
Cc: Alderman David Allaire
Subject: Public Safety Commmittee Report

Hello Henry: Can you print this out for Monday nights meeting and place one on each desk. Appreciate it. Thanks. Ed ..

Rutland City Board of Alderman---Public Safety Committee Report
Submitted by: Alderman Ed Larson---Chair 11/16/2014

The Public Safety Committee met on Thursday, November 13, 2014 at 5:30 p.m. in the downtowns conference room of Rutland City Hall.

Committee Members Present: Alderman Davis, Alderman Donahue, Alderman Brodowski, Alderman Larson

Others present: Alderman Siliski, Alderman Bloomer. Chief Schlacter R.F.D., Lt's Massores and Lovett R.F.D. Gordon Drischillo

First item on the agenda was the re-discussion of Fire Officers Overtime piggy backing the regular fire fighters union contract. Alderman Donahue asked the question why fire officers should receive overtime at all, stating that management in many private businesses do not receive overtime.

Chief Schlacter stated that the current manner of overtime allotment predates his becoming Chief and dates back to before 1996, when there was a three step pay scale which later at confirmation by the Board of Alderman became a pay scale that piggy backed the union contract.

Lt. Lovett stated that in 1978 there was officer frustration due to the manner in which overtime and benefits accrued and a decision was made then to move Fire Officers into overtime status. This being done with the approval of the City Council.

Alderman Donahue questioned the time and a half hourly pay for Fire Officers, and explanations of the current pay system were presented by both Chief Schlacter and Lt. Massores with Lt. Lovett advising that one large difference between the Officers and Union employees was that the Officers gave up the right to file grievances, and that Fire Officers went some time without pay raises, which union employees did receive raises.

It was requested that the Committee Chair check with the City Attorney to research when the City Council agreed to the various changes that placed the Fire Officers in their current overtime status and

as a result no motions came out of Committee on that matter, as when more information becomes available the Committee will meet again.

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The second matter of discussion before the Public Safety Committee was the equitable distribution of overtime to Fire Officers, as their was concern that this was not being accomplished. The Chair noted that an Executive Session would be asked for if specific employees were to be mentioned by name. Chief Schlacter was asked if he desired an Executive Session and stated he was satisfied with an open session as long as individual employees were not named.

The Chair pointed out to the Committee that at the April 21, 2014 meeting of the Board of Alderman, the Board voted to request that the City Treasurer provide the Board of Alderman with quarterly reports of Fire Officers overtime. It was pointed out that no policy directing exactly what type of breakdown of overtime was required and how it was to be reported. The Chair noted that the Treasurer had complied with the request to the best of their ability, and that the Fire Chief had also provided information to the Board but under the April 21, 2014 mandate was not required to do so.

Alderman Davis stated that she was not concerned about overtime for emergency situations, but whether there was favorable apportionment to certain fire officers by department management. Alderman Davis raised questions about the number of airport inspections and how those assignments were made and both Chief Schlacter and Lt. Massores spoke of the availability of personnel to take those missions. Also discussed was the overtime allocation for the traffic control signal tie ins relative to the Route 4 and 7 construction project and how certain fire officers were assigned to those details. It was explained that utilization of the Fire Departments bucket truck to assist the electrical contractors involved actually saved money from having to hire independent contractors.

Alderman Siliski requested of Chief Schlacter if the Chief had heard comments of employees being disgruntled about overtime appropriations. The Chief responded that he had not heard anything to that effect.

Discussion ranged from the types of alarms responses and when decisions are made to bring in additional Fire Officers, and an explanations of the R.F.D. alarm structure and call in was provided in detail, along with mutual aid responses and the Mendon as well as Airport Contract with the State of Vermont.

Alderman Davis stated that Chief Schlacter should designate someone to be acting Chief when he is absent and that designee should be in the station from 8 to 5 as Officer in Charge when the Chief is out. Alderman Davis stated that had been a practice in the past and that the Chief should consider returning to that practice in situations where the Chief may be away from two weeks or more.

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The discussion ranged from points that this would provide more accessibility to the public to contact the Fire Chiefs Office, as well as expediting the downsizing of a paperwork backlog and more accountability.

Lt. Massores stated that he favored changing the Officer Command Structure to that of a Chief and Assistant Chief who would both work 8 to 5, and then having three Captains and three Lieutenants.

The Chair noted that Lt. Massores suggestion may be for a future deliberations if savings could be achieved in that manner.

Discussion then reverted to the issue of the manner in which the Board of Alderman is informed of Fire Officer overtime. Chief Schlacter stated that if he were the person responsible to provide the information it would simplify and expedite the process considerably as he has access to pay slips and time sheets.

Alderman Davis then moved that the Board of Alderman change it's action of April 21, 2014 from mandating that the City Treasurer provide quarter Fire Officers Overtime reports to the Chief Engineer being the person responsible to do so.

The motion passed unanimously and I so move.

Respectfully submitted: Alderman Ed Larson
Chairman, Public Safety Committee