

*Sycamore Fire and Police Commission  
Regular Meeting Minutes*

*October 1, 2008*

**ROLL CALL**

Chairman Petersen called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. Present at the meeting were: Commissioner Samantha Dailey, Commissioner Ronald Short, Fire Chief Bill Riddle, Police Chief Don Thomas and City Attorney Kevin Buick.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chairman Petersen suggested that Items B and C under New Business be switched so that Fire Chief Riddle can present any new business that he may have before the discussion on hiring new Police Officers takes place, as this item will require that the Commissioners go into a closed session to discuss the candidates.

**Motion**

Commissioner Short moved to approve the agenda, as amended, and Commissioner Dailey seconded the motion.

**Vote**

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**Motion**

Commissioner Dailey moved to approve the minutes from the September 24, 2008, meeting, as written, and Commissioner Short seconded the motion.

**Vote**

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

**A. Payment of Bills**

Chairman Petersen reported that the Commission had received two invoices for payment: the first one was for a case of copy paper totaling \$50.00 and the second one was from I/O Solutions totaling \$451.36 for the administration of the entry-level Firefighter written exam.

**Motion**

Commissioner Short moved to approve the payment of the bills totaling \$501.36 and Commissioner Dailey seconded the motion.

**Vote**

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

**B. End of Probationary Period for Firefighter Andrew Powers**

Chairman Petersen reported that a letter had been received from Chief Riddle acknowledging that Firefighter Andrew Powers had successfully completed his probationary period on September 4, 2008. Chairman Petersen asked Recording Secretary Tritle to send a congratulatory letter on behalf of the Commission to Firefighter Powers. Chief Riddle added that Firefighter Powers was performing his job duties well.

## NEW BUSINESS

### A. Presentation by Braden Counseling Center regarding Testing Services

Dr. Jayne Braden and her assistant Judy attended the meeting in order to present a summary of the psychological testing services they offer in regards to pre-employment and fitness-for-duty examinations. Dr. Braden explained that she uses a bifurcated testing process, which consists of three steps. The first two steps are done pre-employment, in conjunction with the background examination conducted by the Police Department. The third step is completed after the applicant is tendered a conditional offer of employment. Dr. Braden stated that bifurcated process weeds out the unsuccessful candidates early in the process, which will save the municipality the cost of the medical examination and the third step of the psychological evaluation. She explained that the test she uses for Steps 1 and 2 (CPI Form 434) was designed specifically to be used as a pre-employment tool and contains no medical questions. She was not aware if the use of the exam has been tested in the Courts. She said that she currently provides psychological testing services to Mt. Morris.

Dr. Braden explained that she would be able to give the Commission an oral report immediately after testing a candidate and would follow-up with a written report in about 10 days, after she receives the results back from the agency that scores the test. She said that she can report the results as either "pass/fail" or "pass/fail with a qualified answer".

Dr. Braden said that she works with Trotsky Investigative Polygraph, Inc. Mr. Trotsky will come to her Sycamore office to perform the polygraph test. She explained that she just started to offer these services and, therefore, has no pass or fail rates that she can share with the Commission at this time. She added that she lives in Sycamore and would like to be involved in getting the best Police and Fire candidates into these positions.

Chief Thomas stated that both Dr. Braden and Mr. Trotsky have excellent reputations, adding that he has used Mr. Trotsky's services in criminal cases. He would like to retain their services and utilize Dr. Braden's bifurcated testing process. Chief Riddle agreed, adding that he would like to receive the results in the form of "pass/fail with qualifications". Chief Thomas agreed.

#### **Motion**

Commissioner Dailey moved to retain the services of Braden Counseling and Trotsky Investigative Polygraph for the testing of Police and Fire candidates. Commissioner Short seconded the motion.

#### **Vote**

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

### B. Fire Chief

Chief Riddle reported that Firefighter candidate Ian Wheeler was in the process of completing his medical and psychological examinations. If he passes them both, he could be sworn in next week.

#### **Motion**

Commissioner Short moved to approve the hiring of Ian Wheeler for the position of Firefighter/Paramedic in the Sycamore Fire Department, contingent upon his passing the medical and psychological examinations. Commissioner Dailey seconded the motion.

#### **Vote**

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

Commissioner Dailey asked Chief Riddle if he had received any feedback regarding the oral exams for the position of Fire Lieutenant. Chief Riddle answered that he had not, adding this is probably due to the fact that the oral exam is only worth 15% of the total score. Chairman Petersen asked if this could be changed; Chief Riddle answered that it could not as it was set by State statute and the collective bargaining agreement.

**C. Discussion on the Hiring of New Police Officers**

Chairman Petersen read a letter from City Manager Bill Nicklas in which he authorizes the Commissioners to hire two Police Officers – one to replace Lt. Thomas Scott who will be retiring on October 31, 2008 and one to replace Officer Dan Wojick, who will now be performing the duties of the School Resource Officer. Due to budgetary considerations, the appointment of the two new Officers would not occur until December 15, 2008.

Bradley Kummer is the next candidate on the eligibility list; the candidate after him, Zachary Thoms, had asked that his name be removed from the list, as he had recently accepted employment with a municipality in Milwaukee. The next candidate after Mr. Thoms is Christie Haas. Chief Thomas indicated that the background examinations had been completed on both candidates and they had both passed this element. He asked that the Commissioners send the conditional offers of employment to Mr. Kummer and Ms. Haas now so that the remaining elements of the hiring process can be completed by December 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Motion**

Commissioner Short moved to send conditional offers of employment to Police Officer candidates Bradley Kummer and Christie Haas. Commissioner Dailey seconded the motion.

**Vote**

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

Chief Thomas informed the Commissioners that Brad Kummer, was recently hired as a Police Officer for the Village of Huntley. Chief Thomas requested that, if Mr. Kummer accepts the Board's offer of employment, the Commissioners consider waiving his medical and psychological exams, as Mr. Kummer had recently taken and passed these exams as a condition of his employment with the Village of Huntley. City Attorney Buick stated that, according to the Rules and Regulations, the Board does have discretionary power in this area and can vote to waive these exams. Commissioner Short asked if the Commissioners can ask Mr. Kummer for verification that he has passed both of these exams. Mr. Buick answered that this would be acceptable, as long as the letters were not being used as a substitution for these two elements of the hiring process.

**Motion**

Commissioner Dailey moved to waive the psychological and medical examinations requirement for Police Officer candidate Bradley Kummer. Commissioner Dailey seconded the motion.

**Vote**

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

Commissioner Short asked Chief Thomas if the Sycamore Police Department would reimburse the Village of Huntley for Mr. Kummer's training expenses. Chief Thomas answered that they would reimburse the Village of Huntley for his tuition expenses to the academy and some of his equipment expenses, for a total of \$6,800.00. They would not reimburse them for any of his salary expenses. Chief Thomas explained that they would do this as a professional courtesy and because Mr. Kummer was required to sign a contract with the Village that requires him to pay them back if he leaves their employment before the end of a stipulated time period. Commissioner Dailey asked if it would be appropriate for the City of Sycamore to also have a reimbursement policy of this type. Chief Thomas answered that they had considered this in the past but decided against implementing one as it keeps poor performers who have completed their probationary period from accepting employment elsewhere if they know that they must reimburse the municipality for their training expenses.

Chief Thomas told the Commissioners that there is a chance that Mr. Kummer will turn down their offer of employment, in which case they would need to consider the next candidate on the list. He asked the Commissioners to go to closed session in order to discuss personnel issues.

**CLOSED SESSION**

**Motion**

Commissioner Short moved that the Commissioners go into closed session to discuss personnel issues. Commissioner Dailey seconded the motion.

**Vote**

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

Closed session began at 2:07 p.m.

**Motion**

Commissioner Short moved that the Commissioners return to open session and Commissioner Daily seconded the motion.

**Vote**

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

Open session reconvened at 2:16 p.m.

**D. Police Chief**

Chief Thomas reported that he had received good feedback from those Police Officers who had completed their oral exam thus far. The Officers said that the questions being asked were hard but fair. Once all of the oral exams have been completed, Chief Thomas requested that the oral scores be sent to him. He will let the Officers know that he has the scores and will give each one their individual score if they ask him for it. Once the written exam is completed, he asked that each Officer be sent their composite score along with the instructions concerning preference points. If an Officer wants to know his or her scores for each element of the examination process, they must make this request in writing. The Commissioners all agreed to the Chief's requests.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion**

Commissioner Short moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:30 p.m. and Commissioner Dailey seconded the motion.

**Vote**

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

Minutes accepted by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeff Petersen, Chairman

10/22/08  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Attest:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jean Tritle, Recording Secretary

10/22/08  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date