

*Sycamore Fire and Police Commission  
Special Meeting Minutes*

*July 17, 2009*

**ROLL CALL**

Chairman Petersen called the meeting to order at 11:06 a.m. Present at the meeting were: Commissioner Samantha Dailey, Commissioner Teresa Jacobson, Police Chief Don Thomas and City Attorney Kevin Buick. Fire Chief Bill Riddle was absent from the meeting.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion**

Commissioner Dailey moved to approve the agenda, as written, and Commissioner Jacobson seconded the motion.

**Vote**

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Probationary Period Discharge Review Pursuant to Chapter VI.2.E of the Sycamore Fire and Police Commission Rules and Regulations**

City Attorney Kevin Buick explained to the Commissioners that, according to the Sycamore Rules and Regulations dated March 31, 2008, the Police Chief can act to recommend the discharge of a probationary employee. The role of the Commissioners in this action is to either accept or reject the Chief's recommendation after a review of his written report, as well as the letters that were submitted to the Commissioners by the employee in question and her father, who is also a Sycamore Police Officer. Mr. Buick advised the Commissioners that this was not a hearing, as cause proceedings are not required for probationary employees.

Chief Thomas reported to the Commissioners that he had one hundred pages of documentation to support his recommendation to terminate the employment of probationary Police Officer Christie Haas, who has been on administrative leave with pay since July 13, 2009. He presented the Commissioners with a two-page synopsis of the documentation, as well as written recommendations from the Lieutenant and the two of the four Field Training Officers (FTOs) who had worked with Officer Haas over the course of the past fourteen weeks. The Commissioners took time during the meeting to review the documents submitted by the Chief along with the two letters that were sent to the Commissioners by Officer Haas and her father.

Chairman Petersen commented that only two of the four FTOs whom Officer Haas had trained with had written a recommendation. He asked Chief Thomas what the other two had recommended to him. Chief Thomas explained that the Daily Reports completed by each FTO showed from two to five areas in which Officer Haas did not meet standards. Both of these FTOs questioned Officer Haas' eagerness and ability to learn. Chief Thomas stated that usually only 3 FTOs are used to train a new officer, but they decided to extend one phase of Officer Haas' training and also allowed her to work with a fourth FTO in hopes that her performance would improve. Chief Thomas added that all four FTOs worked hard to ensure Officer Haas' success and each told Officer Haas about her performance issues during each phase of her training. Lt. Johnson and Sgt Swartzendruber also counseled Officer Haas on her performance issues. Therefore, her termination should not have caught her by surprise.

Commissioner Jacobson asked Chief Thomas how many Police Officers in the past had been terminated during their probationary period. Chief Thomas responded that, since he has been Sycamore's Police Chief, this has only happened with one other Police Officer. He added that, during his tenure, his Department has trained 18 other Police Officers without any problems.

**Motion**

Commissioner Dailey moved to consent to Chief Thomas' recommendation to terminate the employment of Probationary Police Officer Christie Haas effective July 17, 2009 and Commissioner Jacobson seconded the motion.

**Vote**

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

Chief Thomas informed the Commissioners that, for budgetary reasons, he would not seek to hire a replacement for Officer Haas until the new eligibility list is completed on November 1, 2009. He added that he would like to have a new hire in place by January 1, as the next Police Academy session would convene on January 4, 2010.

Mr. Buick informed the Commissioners that they are likely to be contacted to schedule another special meeting concerning the discipline of a firefighter, which may require them to convene a hearing. If that is the case, the Commission would need to retain counsel to represent them at the hearing.

**CLOSED SESSION**

A closed session was not needed at this meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

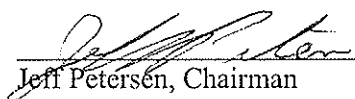
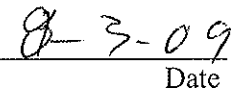
**Motion**

Commissioner Dailey moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:52 a.m. and Commissioner Jacobson seconded the motion.

**Vote**

All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried 3 - 0.

Minutes accepted by:

	
_____ Jeff Petersen, Chairman	_____ Date

Attest:

	
_____ Jean Tritle, Recording Secretary	_____ Date