

CITY OF BURTON
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 11, 1990, 9:00 A.M., POLICE/FIRE FACILITY

This Special Meeting is called to order by Council President Cross at 9:05 A.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cross, Card, Walls, Smiley, Martinbianco and Abbey.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Hammon.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mayor, Jane L. Nimcheski; K. Collard, City Administrator; A. DoorenBos, Fire Chief; C. Sanford, Assistant Fire Chief; M. Joliat, City Attorney and W. Walworth, City Clerk.

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING: To conduct an investigation into recent complaints with regard to the fire department.

PRESENTATION:

Council President Cross asked for a moment of silence for Eldon Ives.

Mayor Nimcheski said she had given the Council a packet of materials. These documents and today's input would be the basis of her recommendations and report back to the Council. See attached packet.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

Ken Baker, 1133 Forest, thanked the Council for the meeting and said he would be the spokesman for the firemen. He read the 15 questions, which are attached, to the minutes. He also spoke on beards later in the meeting. He wants same standards for all. He also spoke on the trucks and their location. In addition, he addressed the trucks life expectancy and the purchase of new trucks in 5 years.

Jerry Sturk, 2005 Ready, said that when the Chief was not available, he makes all the fires.

Bill Mahler, 1129 Willman Ct., wanted the battalion chief position advertised and filled from within the department. He also asked about a meeting held with Station Personnel #2 and #3, while a meeting was not held with Station #1.

Dan Evans, 1063 Forest, complained about the morale of the department and tendered his resignation.

Kevin Burge, 1415 Genevieve, wanted a response from the Mayor and was told her report would come later after, reviewing the materials and questions from this meeting. He also wanted to know if the Council approved all policies.

Mr. Cross indicated the Attorney was looking into the matter.

Theda Borucki, 1341 Wells, spoke in support of the firemen.

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David Honomichl, 6033 Surrey Lane, spoke on the issue of beards and is resigning as of July.

Charles Cook, 1347 Donovan, spoke on advancements in the department and felt they were being sidestepped.

Robert Johnson, 1193 Belsay Rd., said he would like to see a copy of the problems the Chief has discovered.

Paula Mahler, 1129 Willman Ct., asked about using lights and sirens on fire runs.

Kevin Burge, 1415 S. Genesee, wanted the Mayor's packet distributed to all. He was told it would be available by Tuesday in the Clerk's office. He also asked about the Council approving policy on Leaves of Absence.

Mr. Cross said this was not the responsibility of Council and was the responsibility of the Personnel Department.

Recess 9:50 a.m.

Reconvened 10:00 a.m.

Dennis Kinder, 1224 S. Genesee, spoke on the issue of training and reimbursement by the City.

Bud LeGrande, 2105 E. Buder, said men were doing a fine job and expressed concern on what is happening to the fire department.

Pamela Baker, 1133 Forest, spoke on firemen cutting wires and spoke in support of the men.

Mary Hunt, 2161 E. Bristol, said the problems need to be solved but not to bury the Mayor. She has done a fine job and she cares. Mary Hunt also asked about a meeting of the men at a councilman's home.

Les Hawtin, 2245 McLaren, asked everyone to put aside hatred and work as a team. He said the Council and Mayor must work together.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION:

Mayor Nimcheski noted she is responsible to the citizens and must protect the City against law suits. She said job evaluation cannot be raised at these meetings.

Mr. Martinbianco wanted to be sure the meeting on the 25th excluded personnel matters. He also felt that some matters had been cleared up and the meeting was a good chance to provide responses. He said the best interest of the City had been served. He explained there was just so much money to go around and the budget kickoff would be around April 1, 1990.

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Mr. Smiley thought some questions could be handled today such as training. He also asked about training as it related to fire fighter, officers and drivers.

Mayor Nimcheski said training was set up and handled by the Fire Department. The number of hours are determined by need.

Mayor Nimcheski said this was a brow beating session for her and her fire department and told Mr. Smiley he should have brought his concerns to her.

He said he took his concerns to the Council President.

Mr. Card complained that he was not advised of any meeting and would like to be informed in the future.

Mr. Smiley said he would inform Mr. Card if something come up again.

Mr. Card also inquired, when firemen passed a course if they could be reimbursed.

Mr. Doorenbos said this would be considered in the overall look at training programs for the men.

Mr. Abbey expressed concern on holding these types of meetings and what could happen down the line. He wants all meetings open to the total Council.

Mrs. Walls supported Mr. Abbey's position and wants all future meetings called as this one was.

Mr. Cross said he asked for a meeting after he heard what the men had to say.

Mrs. Walls asked if a time table was set up for the training hours. She also wanted to see renewed leadership of the fire department officers.

Mayor Nimcheski said the number of training hours are kept by the Chief. Also, the Mayor explained that budget allocations do not mean that the money would necessarily be completely spent and that training programs determine expenditures within the budget.

Mr. Smiley asked about NFPA 1500 and if the Mayor could get dates of compliance from MIOSHA. He did not know if we must comply and would like that information.

Mayor Nimcheski said the procedures manual on the fire masks did not guarantee working if they were put over facial hair. She said she was looking at the safety of the men and would not put the City into liability or the men in jeopardy.

Mr. Abbey asked the Attorney if the men could waive their liability with a signed statement. He said they cannot.

Mr. Smiley asked about guidelines to be promoted to Lt. or Captain. The Fire Chief said that was not spelled out at this time.

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Chief DoorenBos appreciated the comments from the floor and noted that some were inaccurate. He also took issue with the remarks on being a Flint retiree and felt he could help the Burton Fire Department grow.

COUNCIL ACTION:

Moved by Card, supported by Walls to set a special meeting of the Council on March 25, 1990 at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, to accept and review answers to the questions raised (excluding confidential personnel matters) at the March 11, 1990 meeting and other related matters. Motion carried 6-0.

Meeting adjourned at 11:20 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

William R. Walworth
Burton City Clerk

WRW/cml