

Selectmen's Meeting
Tuesday, September 13, 2006
Ayer Town Hall, 1st Floor Meeting Room, Main Street, Ayer, MA
FIRE CHIEF INTERVIEWS

7:00p.m. Open Session

Present

Frank F. Maxant, Chairman	X
Pauline Conley, Vice-Chair	X
Carolyn McCreary, Clerk	X
Gary J. Luca, Member	X
Cornelius F. Sullivan, Member	X
Shaun Suhoski, Town Administrator	X
Janet Lewis, Secretary	X

Chairman Maxant opened the meeting by stating the Board is meeting this evening for the purpose of interviewing the five finalists for the Fire Chief's position that have been presented to the Board of Selectmen by the Screening Committee. Chairman Maxant advising to two (2) of the five (5) finalists for the Fire Chief's position will be interviewed this evening and the board will finalize the interviews on Friday, 9-15-06. Chairman Maxant advised to each candidate will have opportunity to present their 90 day transition matrix/overview should they become Chief. Following this presentation the Board of Selectmen will conduct a question and answer session with each of the candidates time allowing each Selectman approximately six minutes. Chairman Maxant read a prepared statement into the record re guidelines.

The Board met with Charles Dillion, Town of Ayer resident and Lt. with 19 years of service with the Ayer Fire Department-candidate for the Fire Chief's position. Selectman Luca took this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Dillion for making it this far in the Selection process. The Board echoed Selectman Luca's statement.

Mr. Dillion ran through his 90 day comprehensive plan with the Board outlining his vision statement for the Department should he become chief. Mr. Dillion presented his assessment re Personnel-hiring of new firefighter/paramedic and re-alignment of the department, Budget, Training, EMS/ Call Firefighters training and attendance, Ambulance Service, Operations and closing out New Station as well as new station needs and future needs, long and short term planning. Mr. Dillion's presentation finalized and the Chairman opened the floor to questions from Selectmen. Questions ranged from administration, operation, training, fire prevention, ambulance service/s, on-call volunteers, problem solving, stepping up to managerial position-strong points, areas where he may need support in, diversity of department & how to improve, recognition of employees, principal role to sub-ordinates, Performance reviews, community service outreach, current morale of call fire-fighters improvement. Current department consists of 12 full time fire-fighters and 18 call volunteers looking to update Rules & Regulations establish Performance Reviews re promotional incentives. Area he would seek support: administration (i.e. budgeting and Grant Applications). Department support is available through Chief's Assoc., MA & Federal Agencies should problems come up and he needed guidance/assistance with. The Board closed with what makes Chuck Dillion who he is. Mr. Dillion stated he is a dedicated employee, doesn't shirk responsibilities, good listener., knows how the department works to provide leadership and direction for the Ayer Fire Dept. to continue providing the highest quality fire protection and emergency medical services.

The Board took this opportunity to ask Mr. Dillion if he had questions for the Board. Mr. Dillion questioned time line. The Board alluded to final interview necessary and hopefully winding up by the time Interim Fire

Chief's contract ends. The Board thanked Mr. Dillion for stepping up to challenge and wished him well.

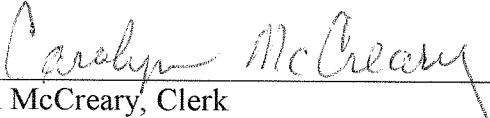
15P.M. The Board met with Mark Kirko, Skagway, Alaska Fire Chief. Chief Kirko applauded the Board for excellent recruitment format. Mr. Kirko stated it was a pleasure to be here and looking to relocate back to the east coast. Mr. Kirko advised to no power-point presentation due to travel arrangements. Mr. Kirko reviewed with the Board his six (6) key areas-focus. Familiarize himself with Town personnel policy, Collective Bargaining Contract and review and update Fire Departments Policies and Procedures (indicate which policies/procedures may need modification. Month 1 milestone to meet with Fire Dept Review Board and establish timeline policies to be reviewed. Month 2 Hold working meeting to review suggested changes to policy for review by chief and then forwarded to membership. Month 3 Meet with membership review changes and explain process for implementing change. This key area of focus will ensure Chief is familiar with policy of the Town for himself and employees so there are no misunderstandings of the bargaining agreement during emergencies and non-emergencies ensuring safety rules and guidelines for standard operating procedures are followed. Focus #2. Getting acquainted with area geography, key infrastructure, officials, Department Heads, Mutual Aid Department Chiefs and State Fire Marshall. Mr. Kirko would visit local area and neighboring communities, local officials individually. Month 1. Chief would appoint aid to show him around community, review plans for buildings that require special attention, i.e. Power plants, railroad, manufacturing plants. This would allow him to introduce himself to co-workers at department head level and let them know he will be readily available to assist them any way he can, opening communications between the Fire Dept and Town Depts. so they can work efficiently together.. meeting neighboring chiefs will increase mutual aid efforts. Focus #3. Become familiar with Budget and outline future financial obligations. Compare budget to past budgets, create capital equipment replacement matrix showing lifetime of each. Month 1. Milestone meet with Finance Director to go over budget to be clear on line items, Month 2. pursue grant opportunities to subsidize budget, outline future capital purchase requirements and preventative maintenance program for department and equipment. Month 3 complete capital replacement matrix using sound judgment making appropriate operational purchases for the department. This will determine what direction the department is heading/under budgeting, areas that could assist the town with planning needs which meets NFPA & OSHA standards. Focus #4. Training Evaluation-ensure members are adequately trained that meets/exceeds State level/NFPA and needs of community, Month #1. top priority will be to review all personnel training files for each member of the department and meet with individual members. Month #2 Each member complete self evaluation outlining training level/overall career goals, how to improve upon ability to excel in respective position/cross training to prepare for promotions. Month #3. Develop individual tailored training ensuring call members are not overlooked and train together. This will evaluate the strength/improvements and if members have ability to teach./lead providing public awareness. Each member will receive solid continuing education which in turn will increase safety and awareness within the department. Focus #5 Inter-department communication develop plan for regular meetings of the department encouraging open and constant communication between member and the Chief. Month 1. Open door policy to approach him with concerns or friendly conversation. A shift log will be developed. Month #2. Increase department training from once a month --Month #3. Develop Web Site including members email. Opening lines of communication, if it doesn't exist it creates negative impact the more we communicate the more effective we are. During emergencies it is imperative that communication be clear and concise in order for all to do their jobs effectively. Focus #6. Ensure Emergency Response and Mitigation Plan meets community needs. Be familiar with ER & M plan make informed amendments to plan if needed according to State, Federal, NIMS regulations. Month 1. Read the plan see what needs updating if need to update talk with Town Administrator re assigning review and revision committee including Selectmen, state agencies and community members. Month 2. Send out memo to all Town Dept. heads if plan needs to be updated urging them to become part of the review committee ensuring proper changes are made. Month #. Have each department update portion relating to their department i.e. personnel changes, resources, contacts, inventories etc. Long term: plan a table top exercise involving the amended plan to be followed by a full scale exercise. This would mitigate response to hazardous situations as natural disasters, chemical,

biological, nuclear and explosive including derailments/spills (Guilford) to preserve life and property which reflects the NIMS format of response to retain eligibility to apply for Department of Homeland Security Grants.

Mr. Kirko concluded his presentation and Chairman Maxant opened the floor to questions from the Board. Questions ranged from comparison Skagway community vs Town of Ayer, population etc., operation, training, fire prevention, ambulance/paramedic services, on-call volunteer recruitment/diversity of department how to improve, recognition of employees, problem solving, managerial style, role to sub-ordinates, performance reviews, community service outreach, moral of call fire fighters.

Mr. Kirko requested time line of appointment process. The Board acknowledged one other interview in process and final interviews probable. This ended interview.

9:45p.m. Selectman Conley moved to adjourn the meeting, 2nd by Selectmen McCreary, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.


Carolyn McCreary, Clerk

DATE: _____