

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
AUGUST 24, 1992
7:30 P.M.

Council present: Funke, White, Pedersen, Vergeront, Karstens, Kersich

Others present: Ron Buzzard, Richard Mabee, Marilyn Trosper, Bonnie Manicke, Gene Nobles, Mike Tucker, Ron Boyce, Leonard DeVore, Earl Whittington

Mayor James W. Jones presiding;

STARTING SALARY-FIRE CHIEF: Karstens asked if there was a base pay for this position. Funke asked if they should try to follow the plan they had done. Jones said it had not been adopted yet. Funke said it would be a good place to start. Pedersen said Tucker would probably like that as it started around \$11,500. White asked what the Fire Chief currently made. Nobles said almost \$14,000. Kersich verified this was for 1040 hours. Nobles said that covered the four hours on duty at City Hall. The job entailed more hours than that. Kersich asked how many hours he thought the position needed. Nobles said he was not advocating a full time position, however, it did take more hours than the position currently described. He recommended Tucker's starting wage be the same as his current wage. He had turned down the last several raises due to his retirement status and felt it would be compensable to an incoming chief. Devlin said Nobles wage prior to the recent 3.2% increase had been 10.93/hour base rate of pay. The pay grade plan they had done began at 11.00/hour. Nobles felt that would be a fair rate of pay. Kersich asked how many years Tucker had with the fire department. Tucker said many years. **Motion White, second Pedersen to approve a starting salary of \$13,500 for the incoming Fire Chief with a probationary period of six months. Motion carried unanimously. (Clerk's note: Have council clarify this is a budgeted figure or set hourly rate for purposes of payroll preparation.)**

EDUCATION REQUESTS AND PROBATIONARY STATUS-RICHARD MABEE: White said he had had a steady stream of phone calls complaining about the Building Inspector and his abrasive manner. He did not know whether this could change or not. Almost every contractor Richard had dealt with had called him. Jones said he had calls, too, about his attitude. White had not heard any complaints about the price of building permits although there were some complaints about the review of plans when they were previously reviewed by the VA, FHA or HUD but the fee could be incorporated into the fee for a building permit. He, personally, unless there was a change in attitude and the way things were handled, preferred to have his resignation. Kersich felt some changes needed to be made since they were serving the public, but he would like some documentation regarding the complaints. If it was overzealousness in doing the job, that could be moderated. If there were other problems they should be looked in to. White said there had been complaints about Richard handing out his business cards, although he did not know what business they were for, but he felt that was wrong while on city time. He had been approached today by one of the county commissioners regarding a city-county building inspector. He/she would cover St. Ignatius, Ronan, Polson and Lake County. The county would be interested in talking about that proposal, however, this gentleman was not acceptable to them. Karstens said he had not had any direct complaints. There was still two months to go with Richard's probationary period and whether the problems could be rectified remained questionable. He would like to see documentation of specifics rather than hearsay before that time was up. White said the building inspector, as far as he was concerned, was here to help the contractors and the way that was handled was important. Karstens said every city employee should adhere to serving the public rather than themselves or special interests. White said he had been asked by one contractor what would happen should they refuse to cooperate. The lumber yard indicated that even if he changed, his effectiveness would not be an asset to the city. He said they could document things if that was what everyone wanted. There had been problems over demolition permits since no fee had been set. These things were time

consuming and cost people money to stop work for. It was partially their fault since no fee had been set by the council. Vergeront said the ordinance had been tabled at the time. Jones said the plan review fee was partially their fault since it had been set at 65%. UBC indicated it could vary from 35-65%. White did not feel the contractors, as a whole, objected to getting permits and building the way they were supposed to. Pedersen said the only complaints he had received were regarding price and he had responded to those with the statement they were entering the modern era. He valued Clint's opinion, but Richard was given a job that was not popular, a new fee schedule and was told to enforce the rules. Perhaps he had been overzealous at times, but the contractors were not here to complain publically. Earl Whittington said he had not dealt with Richard until just recently. He had heard a lot, but personally had no problem with him. He did feel they needed to reconsider the plan review fee for pre-approved plans such as FHA, VA or HUD. Jones asked if those plans met UBC. Mabee was not exactly sure what criteria they used. The objective was to have a structurally sound building that met fire code as well as having integrity for the purpose of protecting the consumer from the contractor. Funke said he had 4-5 people complain about the handing out of business cards as well as shutting down jobs quickly without much information. Vergeront said he had received only one complaint about a shutdown as well. Mabee said Polson for years and years had not really had a conforming attitude. As far as the contractors having knowledge, most of those who were professionals in the field had a good attitude and did not voice too much in the way of complaints other than the raised fees. As far as his particular position, he was doing the best he could with what orientation he had been given. He was given a two hour tour of the structures in progress by Bob Fulton and handed the books. No policy or procedure was given him at that time. Based upon administrative code and the procedural steps spelled out in the handbook he had proceeded. A stop work was a standard formality in regards to an individual who has not gotten a permit. Part of the issue in town was that people were doing work without permits. Since he had taken the position in April, he had issued \$1,201,455 (gross value) in permits. He had issued 95 permits and brought in \$15,094.14 for the city. In addition, there were mechanical permits, which were a whole other issue. For comparison purposes, a year ago during the same time frame they had done \$922,768 (gross value), 49 permits issued, \$3,647 in permit value. The amount of permits had almost doubled, his workload was substantial and he had done the best he could. With regards to an abrasive attitude, he had only encountered a few problems with regards to the total whole. He had kept accurate records from day one if they would like to review documentation. Even the builders who were knowledgeable and had been building a long time in Polson did not necessarily call for inspections. He had been as diplomatic as possible, had enforced the codes as they were written and done the best he could for the jurisdiction. He had letters requesting more hours and during a meeting to discuss this request had been caught offguard when reprimanded for being harsh to contractors. Since that time, he had been trying to cut back on his hours (based upon current amount of hours, they involved an excess of 2-1/2 weeks to date) but he could not restrict them to twenty hours per week and still get the job done. He was interested in doing a good job and anytime people were not used to enforcement of something there would be opposition. As far as the business cards, he was not sure what this was in reference to. He was not soliciting business within Polson since it was made quite clear to him upon hiring he was not to be building in this town. He had not taken on any projects nor solicited any projects within the jurisdiction of the city nor was he utilizing his position for personal gain. They would have to realize the position itself was an obstinate type of situation. He was from out of town and considering the type of opposition he was dealing with on a daily basis, he felt he had done a tremendous job. He had put in a sincere effort and, if the city felt he was worthy of continuing, he would do his best to improve. Orientation was very important so they needed to tell him what they wanted. White said there was more than one way of doing a job, the way it had been done so far was not the most popular and sometimes the way in which people are dealt with makes a difference in how one was perceived. Kersich suggested another evaluation process in 30-45 days. Richard was going to run into a lot of obstinate people, but if there were ordinances on the books the

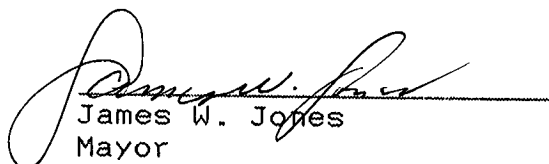
city council needed to support Richard in enforcing them. Motion White, second Funke to evaluate Richard Mabee in another 30 days. Motion carried unanimously.

PLAN REVIEW FEE: Jones asked the council to give Richard some guidelines on the plan review fee. Motion Pedersen, second Verg ront to approve charging 35% for pre-approved plans from VA, FarmHome and HUD as long as they have an acknowledgement with all remaining plans charged at 65%. Motion carried unanimously.


EDUCATION REQUESTS-MABEE: Mabee requested attendance at an annual seminar held in Spokane to review the Uniform Fire Code. He felt it was important since there was a transitional period going on with the incoming Fire Chief as well as being new himself. He and Mike would be sharing costs and they could support one another in their jobs. White asked what the total cost would be. The seminar was September 16-18 and would cost approximately \$386 apiece (sharing room and mileage). Nobles noted the fire department share would be split between the rural and the city departments. Pedersen said the question was what city policy was regarding education requests for employees on probationary status. He did not have a problem with annual schools such as this. Motion Pedersen, second Kersich to approve Richard Mabee attend the Washington State Fire Prevention Officers Conference September 16-18, 1992. Motion carried unanimously. Richard said he would bring the correspondence course request back after his probation was over.

PAY GRADE PLAN: Karstens said he requested job descriptions be given to each councilman in conjunction with the pay grade plan over six weeks ago. Devlin said it had been agreed that two copies of each description would be made and they were available in the office. Karstens said he asked to have them distributed. Jones said they would be available tomorrow. Karstens said he did not want to discuss pay plan until the positions had been reviewed, they were commensurate with one another and the council had agreed earlier they would not act on any of this until such time as a special committee got together to intertwine the pay plan with the positions. Even then, whether or not to implement it at this time was another question he had. Kersich said they commissioned the plan as a basis for a starting point to develop a pay schedule. Karstens said there was definitely a need for it, but to act on a plan just because it had been paid for was beyond the scope of their budget and hasty. Pedersen felt it had been made very clear it was a starting plan, it would not be implemented until next year and there was no provision in the budget for it. Jones said the primary objective at this point was to set starting salaries for incoming employees. Pedersen agreed with this, however, he would not be hurried on this in light of what it would cost over the coming years. Jones asked the Clerk to distribute the job descriptions the next day.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m. Next regular council meeting September 8, 1992 at 7:30 p.m. Public hearing for water and sewer rate increases to start at 7:00 p.m. September 8, 1992.


James W. Jones
Mayor

ATTEST:


Jayne Devlin
City Clerk