

DEARBORN CHARTER COMMISSION
City Council Chambers
Tuesday, August 15, 2006

Due to the number of people in attendance, the meeting was moved to the City Council Chambers.

Chairman Bazzy called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m. A roll call was taken. Present were: David Bazzy, Paula Hamilton-Stokes, John Jay Hubbard, Thomas Patrick Korte, Mary K. Petlichkoff, Ganelle Shooshanian, and Raymond Thomas Trudeau. Absent: Mary M. Bugeia, and Stephen S. Dobkowski, Jr. Also present: Kathleen Buda, City Clerk and Laurie Sabon-Ellebrake, Deputy Corporation Counsel.

Barry Murray, Director, Economic & Community Development, appeared before the Commission and stated that he was not informed until today that he was to appear before the Commission tonight and was not prepared to give a presentation at this time.

It was decided that the Economic & Community Development Department's presentation would be rescheduled for the September 06, 2006 meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Korte and seconded by Commissioner Shooshanian to accept the minutes of the July 18, 2006 meeting with a correction made on page 2 changing the word legionnaire to engineer. The motion passed as follows: Yeas: Bazzy, Hamilton-Stokes, Hubbard, Korte, Petlichkoff, Shooshanian and Trudeau (7). Nays: None. Absent: Bugeia, and Dobkowski (2). The motion was adopted.

Commissioner Dobkowski entered the Council Chambers at 5:47 p.m.

Nazih Hazime, Fire Chief, appeared before the Commission. Chief Hazime stated that the Fire Department has four stations that are geographically located throughout the City that provide services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Department is supported by five advanced life support engine companies, three ladder companies, four advanced life support rescue units, and one battalion chief command unit.

Chief Hazime stated that the Fire Department is broken down into six divisions: fire suppression, EMS, fire prevention, training, apparatus, and emergency management. Fire suppression is broken down into a lot of job responsibilities that are handled by 112 firefighters assigned to three 24-hour shifts housed in all four stations. Some of the job responsibilities are fire suppression, specialized rescue, hazardous materials control, hydrant testing, surveys, special events, and fire awareness education. The Fire Department provides services to residential and business occupants, general public, schools, churches, high rises, commuters, major railroad and truck transporters and industrial complexes.

Chief Hazime further stated that major expenditures of the Department include personnel wages, benefits and allowances that are approximately \$14,300,000 and operating expenditures that are approximately \$970,000.

The Fire Department averages approximately 10,000 runs per year, the past year the department made almost 13,000 runs. The runs that are made are composed of about 20% fire incidents and 80% medical incidents.

Chief Hazime stated that he has been with the Dearborn Fire Department a little over 22 years. He further stated that he went through the ranks to Lieutenant before he was appointed Fire Chief. Through his experience, he understands the importance of sufficient staffing. Currently, the department has effective staffing. The department's services are performed with the highest level of professionalism and safety because of the training and the current staffing.

Chief Hazime stated that members of the Fire Department are in attendance tonight because of their concerns with the staffing. The Department does not want to see the staffing reduced from the 120 firefighters that is now required in the Charter. They feel that this amount is a comfortable staffing for the firefighters safety and the safety of the citizens. There is a direct correlation between the staffing levels and the service provided.

Commissioner Shooshanian asked Chief Hazime if the Fire Department is currently at full staffing according to Section 10.17 of the Charter.

Chief Hazime stated that the Fire Department is currently at full staffing.

Commissioner Korte asked Chief Hazime how the number is calculated to determine what would be ideal full staffing. Is it by runs or by population?

Chief Hazime stated that he believes the number was determined according to adequate safety and manning of the fire scenes. The amount that is currently required in the Charter has been in place for about ten years and it works well for the Department. The Chief stated that he recommends to maintain the 1.24 firefighters per 1,000 residents, but not to exceed 120 firefighters.

Commissioner Dobkowski stated that he presumed there were national standards that set parameters as to what are appropriate numbers of firefighters to man the trucks and the number of trucks according to population. He asked Chief Hazime how the City of Dearborn compares, as a department, to these national standards.

Chief Hazime stated that this is a difficult question because there is so much vast difference from community to community, it is virtually impossible to compare two different cities.

Chairman Bazy asked Chief Hazime how Dearborn compares with the City of Livonia in regards to staffing.

Chief Hazime stated that the City of Dearborn and Livonia are very compatible in different areas. He further stated that with using the 1.24 amount, the City of Dearborn is within the same range as other cities in the area. The amount of employees in other cities range from 1.0 to 1.30.

Commissioner Korte asked Chief Hazime if the City of Dearborn Fire Department is often called upon to respond to fires in other cities.

Chief Hazime stated that the Department is not often called upon; but, the City does belong to a mutual aid pact with western Wayne County. There was a fire incident in the City where all of the resources were being used and the cities of Detroit and Dearborn Heights were on stand-by in case they were needed. The resources are there for Dearborn to help other cities

and for them to help us if needed. Private ambulance companies are called for back-up when all of the City's rescue units are being used.

Commissioner Shooshanian asked Chief Hazime if there are any responsibilities of the Department that could be picked up by the Police Department, some other City department, or be out-sourced.

Chief Hazime stated that he could not think of anything. The Department currently works with the Police Department and other departments within the City on different services.

Chairman Bazy stated that at the September 6, 2006 meeting, representatives from the Police and Economic & Community Development Departments will appear before the Commission to give presentations.

A motion was made by Commissioner Trudeau and supported by Commissioner Korte to adjourn.

The Charter Commission meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Approved:

/s/ David Bazy
Chairperson

Attested:

/s/ Kathleen Buda
CMC, City Clerk