

Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS Commissioners' Meeting Non-public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II(a)

Meeting Called By: Commissioners Date, Time: October 15, 2009 at 8:39 PM

Note Taker: Kathy Tobine

Place: Tilton School, New Academic Building, School Street, 1st Floor 9th Grade Classroom, Tilton

Attendees: Commissioners Paul Auger, Tom Gallant and Kevin Waldron; Chief Stephen Carrier, Deputy Chief Mike Robinson, Gretchen Wilder and Administrative Assistant Kathy Tobine

A motion was made by Commissioner Gallant to go to nonpublic session per 91-A:3, II(a) with matters that may adversely affect an employee of the District. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Auger. A roll call vote was taken: Commissioner Gallant, aye; Commissioner Auger, aye; Commissioner Waldron, aye. The meeting went in to nonpublic session at 8:42 P.M.

Commissioner Waldron stated this was going to be a one sided conveyance of information. It can be either written or verbal.

Gretchen Wilder thanked the Commissioners. She stated again she goes back to impressions. Each month she comes to the meetings she attends. There are hand outs provided for the attendees. In recent months we get the report of the Fire Chief. Over the course of the months he's busier and busier. Part of the reason the Fire Chief is busier and busier is we are working with different agencies creating things that take place in today's world for preparedness. You know, in last month's report the Chief was in attendance for a funeral. Do you know where this funeral was because it really doesn't say? She's looking at these things and sees a lot of activity. She's wondering if some of this activity does not directly relate to the goings on, the enhancement, the benefit of District. Some of it is really things that seem to be career oriented. Her concern is, as we talk about how the Chief should spend his time, whether or not he should be on committees, whether or not he should be talking to architects, stuff like that. How many different rotaries should we belong to if they are not in our area? How many other agencies should we help with the recruitment of their staffing whether it's the police or the fire chief or deputy chief? We've done that a few times this year. Not only is it what is it on his time if he's not here. Then that means that he's not here. If he's recruiting for Bristol or whoever he was recruiting for, were these people a recipient. She's looking at the mutual aid and she sees that we are very good about mutual aid. We do our part. It looks like we do more giving than we do receiving. That just means that maybe our staff because of training we provide them and the equipment we give and what happens in our community we don't need the outside resources but they need us. We are out there to help them because we are a community. She understands that in the business we go to retirement parties for other fire chiefs and we go to of course the funeral of anyone who has fallen in service. I'm assuming that this wasn't a local funeral, that it was somewhere else. The other thing that comes up is he went to the Fire Academy for a training. When he's providing training she's assuming he's being compensated to facilitate this training. If he's being paid he should be using vacation time so he's not being paid twice, by the District and by the Fire Academy. She assumes he's a paid employee as he's listed in the directory of employees under the Fire Academy. It's double dipping in the purest of sense. Chief Carrier responded he doesn't teach during week. If he does, he takes a vacation day. He teaches nights and weekends.

Commissioner Gallant suggested we not do this tonight. That it be put off to another time when both parties come before us unless the Chief doesn't have a problem doing this tonight. Chief Carrier responded that he doesn't have a problem with this. When he does the Chief's Report he tries to be

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as open as possible about what he does, where he does it. This month he taught three times and he didn't put it in his report because he didn't think it was relative. It was nights and on the weekends. What difference does it make? All these questions about what he does, how he does it and under whose authority he does it all you have to do is look at the job description, the contract and RSA 154. It's all right there. Gretchen stated she was talking about her impression and this is what she sees. She's reading it and her assumption is that this is what is being done during his normal work hours. She does factor in that he does have meetings at night. Commissioner Gallant stated that training is at night, the Officers meeting is at night, the Commissioners meeting is at night.

Gretchen commented that when she looks at these things she sees a lot of time and she wonders if this is really value added to the District. That's her concern. This is why she is bringing it to the Commissioners. She is trying to voice her concerns. She did offer because she should come to them if she has concerns. It is about the Chief. She doesn't want to do it behind his back. She is concerned that we are talking about shortages, response times, spending money on people, buying vehicles and running around. She is concerned about the amount of time being spent out of the office. People stop her. It has been her concern because you see the vehicle running around here and there. She does wonder about the amount of time he spends out of the office. Her concern is the day to day operation of the District. Commissioner Gallant stated he's concerned about that too because he's constantly running calls.

Commissioner Waldron stated it was to be one sided. Chief Carrier replied he has nothing to hide.

Commissioner Gallant stated his point is he's concerned about the time he's spending away from doing the duties as Chief because we are short handed many times. He's constantly running calls. Brad is constantly running calls. They are constantly on the road. They need to be on the road. Does that make a difference? He would think so. Gretchen asked what he meant by being on the road as that was kind of vague. Commissioner Gallant responded out of the office on the road. Gretchen responded she is not talking about servicing the needs of the District. She is aware of the contract. He's attending training and her concern is the focus should be on the District. Commissioner Gallant responded that on the record, he along with countless people he encounters are proud to have Steve Carrier as chief of this department. We are lucky to have Steve Carrier as chief of this department. He services the department's needs very, very well. His top concern has always been the District. He has no problem with his daily comings and goings. It's well within the confines of his contract, well within the confines of the RSA. He does not in any way, in his opinion, cheat the District of the benefit of his presence. Commissioner Auger stated he does have a contract. There are some things in there he doesn't care are in there. He was not a commissioner when it was signed. When the contract comes up again it will take some reviewing to make him satisfied. Chief Carrier stated they can open the contract any time they want. It has to be in a negotiating format. They need to be careful too that it's not just the contract it's the job description. The contract was based pretty closely on the job description and also on the policies as they existed at that time. It's not just a contract; it's a job description as well. Gretchen stated she knows they are working with the LGC on the job description. Commissioner Waldron stated that is part of the wage and benefit study. Gretchen asked if when they went into negotiation for the contract and went into nonpublic do they state that they are going in to negotiate a contract. She asked Commissioner Gallant if this is that how it is typically done. Commissioner Gallant stated he didn't recall what was done at the time. He doesn't know what the proper thing would be. They will have to check that. Gretchen stated she didn't notice that in the minutes and it was never noted in the meeting when you signed it. That was her problem with the whole thing. Commissioner Gallant stated he didn't have a problem with the contract. He didn't have a problem when he signed it. Gretchen stated that he did. Commissioner Waldron stated that from his perspective that anything taking place and some of the things taking place he doesn't like but believe that the things taking place are covered by description and contract.

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He said can it be changed. He guessed at some point it could. Whether he likes it or doesn't like it, it's irrelevant because there is nothing he can do about it until the time presents itself.

Commissioner Gallant made a motion to go out of non public at 8:58 P.M. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Waldron. A roll call vote was taken: Commissioner Gallant, aye; Commissioner Auger, aye; Commissioner Waldron, aye. The meeting went out of nonpublic session at 8:58 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Tobine
Administrative Assistant