

City of Olmsted Falls
Minutes of a Special Council Meeting
Tuesday, October 4, 2016, at Olmsted Falls City Hall
26100 Bagley Road – Council Chambers, 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Mayor Ann Marie Donegan called the Special Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call was conducted. Present: Councilmen Jay Linn, Linda Garrity, Jim Haviland, Bob Sculac, Terry Duncan, and Kyle Miller. Paul Stibich was excused.

Also Present: Gregory Sponseller, Law Director and Chief William Traine. Audience: 0.

NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution 50-2016

A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE TEMPORARY POSITION (NOT TO EXCEED SIX MONTHS) OF ASSISTANT SAFETY DIRECTOR, RATIFYING AND AFFIRMING THE APPOINTMENT OF WILLIAM TRaine TO SAID POSITION, SETTING COMPENSATION FOR THE SAME, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY **First Reading**

Mr. Linn moved to **discuss**; Ms. Garrity **seconded**.

Mayor Donegan indicated that today is the 120th day of his temporary assignment. Obviously, that is problematic as we move forward. We are a home rule city and are only able to move him into a temporary position. This temporary position will have the responsibilities of a Chief. We will also take advantage of him with fire department scheduling. We have scheduled interviews for the fire chief position. We face challenges in terms of just doing the status quo in terms of deciding should we have a working chief, do we have a working assistant chief, what shifts should they be on, and do they get overtime, these items will need a complete analysis. Again, just because it was done that way in the past does not mean it is necessarily the right way. She believes it is incumbent upon us to make sure we do what makes sense. He will also be participating in the police chief exam. In terms of Civil Service they have had a lot to do and the reality is with all the meetings to correct some of the unlawful civil service specifications within their rules, having a full board compliment and getting a quorum together it was absolutely impossible to test for the police chief's position within 120 days. Council is certainly aware of what the administration has been doing for 120 day. This is an extra ordinary but purposeful move to make certain we are not challenged by groups like the OPBA and ensure that we still have someone overseeing the police department and the reform.

She stated that interviews for full time police officer were held today and we completed those the right way starting from number one and scratching off those who were no longer interested in sitting for an interview. The candidates that were interviewed included two individual who have been part time with the City. Chief Traine did an unbelievable job running through various police scenarios and then we held frank discussions regarding the reform and how they believe that is going. One would expect that they would say what we wanted to hear but in her unique way, she

does not want to hear what you think she wants to hear rather she wants to hear what you actually think. One of the comments that struck her and was echoed by both part time officer, one is the former chief's nephew, and the other is a long serving police officer, and was also echoed by Deputy Chief Rogers, both indicated that working for Chief Traine and working in this police department they now feel like police officers again. She does not believe you could get any better recommendation than that.

Mr. Linn indicated that he was present in the building this afternoon and encountered probably four to five police officers. He believes there was something that was could have been a serious situation at Mayor's Court. He interacted with every one of the officers and in his almost 35 or 40 years of coming to this building he has never seen so many smiles and that is a tribute to Chief Traine. These were different people today than he has ever seen before. In fact, after the last Council meeting he was approached by Floyd Takacs in the parking lot who was extremely cordial and wanted to know how he keeps his constituency and what Mr. Linn feels are important issues. Mr. Linn replied to Officer Takacs that he believes important issues are comprised of whatever is important to this city, spending our tax payer money wisely, and moving the city in a forward direction. We had a 15 or 20 minute conversation which was positive. He does not understand how this came about but it is another pat on the back for Chief Traine. He believes this move is out of necessity.

Mayor Donegan indicated that looking back this has been really hard on her professional and horribly hard on her personally. She would have preferred a different manner which we did try.

Ms. Duncan stated that when Chief Traine was appointed to the interim position she believed it was a potential two period. Mayor Donegan stated that in retrospect she should have left Chief Traine in his Deputy Chief position for 120 days and then moved him to the interim Chief position for the next 120 days. But, she believes that you cannot ask someone to fill a role and not have a position they deserve. Unfortunately, there is no renewing his 120 days. This was recently brought to her attention because no one had their finger on the 120 days. When the issue arose she contacted the Council leadership and we determined that this would be the best suggestion.

Ms. Duncan asked if there would be any financial impact moving Chief Traine to the Assistant Safety Director position. Mayor Donegan replied that his salary would remain the same but his duties would vary in two ways, as he will now review the firemen's schedule because Mr. Presley has voiced concerns. Mr. Presley also made some suggestions that he put forth in Pepper Pike and believes those suggestions would work better for us and be much more conducive to the finance committee. Chief Traine offers a lot of advice to Interim Chief Arida and people look to him for help. This will help us make a decision when we bring forward a Chief and if we move to an assistant chief. Chief Traine will also sit in on the interviews which will be held on October 18th as well as Councilman Sculac.

Mr. Miller asked if these duties would be in addition to acting Chief. Mayor Donegan stated that the Police Chief position is currently vacant. Ms. Duncan stated he would have the chief duties as the Assistant Safety Director otherwise the Mayor would become the Police Chief. Mayor Donegan stated that was correct.

Mayor Donegan apologized for bringing Council in on their off week and takes full responsibility as she does attempt to get all business completed during regular meetings.

Mr. Haviland stated that he was recently participating in a Metro Health event and introduced himself to an officer and informed him that he was a Council person. The officer indicated that he does know one of our officers and has heard a lot of good things happening in our police department. Mr. Haviland believes that the people in our community are talking about the changes Chief Traine is making and wants to commend him for his work.

Chief Traine stated that he appreciates Council taking the time away from their families to attend tonight's meeting not only for him but for the city and its residents. He stated that when you begin change there is resentment, and in the beginning there was some, and he believes the Mayor got first hand privilege to what real reform is about today. If there was anyone who would be apprehensive of change it would have been Mike Dunegan. This goes back to the Civil Service controversy and his uncle. Some of what portrayed was him not obtaining the job. He stated that Officer Dunegan informed the Mayor that he supports him as Chief and that the reform is positive and his words were powerful to him as a leader. He explained that he takes this job very serious and has told each officer that is here that they will be the utmost professional, even in trouble times they will talk and treat people with respect. When you call the police or come in to make a report he has been asking people how they were treated, how their encounter was, did they ever have an encounter in the past with the police, and how was that encounter. What he has found out is that they are a lot more confident about coming through the doors and discussing their issues now than they were in the past and that means something. We have 10,000 residents in this city and as elected public officials and as your chief, assistant safety director or whatever his title, we all have to pitch in together and do our jobs to make the City a better place and that is his goal. The Mayor recently found out that he did not receive his chiefs pay increase for a whole month and to him that was ok. Mayor Donegan stated that unfortunately he did not receive that increase for a whole month. Chief Traine stated that he did not take the job for the pay as he has other issues he has to accomplish.

Mr. Linn stated that this past week at 12:13 at night he received an email from someone named Emily who lives next to the DiBenedetto abandoned property on Columbia Road. She raised tremendous concerns about traffic and speeding in the area and the fact that she is unable to back out of her driveway. He sent a response to her at 12:30 p.m. This resident was amazed that he responded. The next morning Mr. Linn forwarded the email to Chief Traine and Mr. Borczuch. At 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, Chief Traine responded to Emily indicating that a traffic detail would be posted on Monday morning to monitor the traffic situation. He stated that Mr. Borczuch also responded that he would send someone out to look at the condition of the tree limbs and over brush hanging onto the sidewalk. These responses all took place on a Sunday morning. He stated that Emily responded back to him that she was speechless and does not know what to say about the the fact that the Police Chief responded to her concerns on a Sunday morning along with the service director. He informed Emily that this is what our employee's do we are relatively a tight knit community and we try to respond as quickly and as effectively as possible. Chief Traine stated that those types of responses is what makes us a strong community.

Mr. Linn moved to suspend; Ms. Garrity seconded. Poll: 6 ayes; 0 nays. Motion carried. Mr. Linn moved to **waive** the reading in its entirety; Ms. Duncan **seconded**. Poll: 6 ayes; 0 nays. **Motion carried**. Mr. Linn moved to **adopt**; Mr. Haviland **seconded**. Poll: 6 ayes; 0 nays. **Motion carried**.

Ms. Duncan moved to **adjourn**; Ms. Garrity **seconded**. Poll: 6 ayes; 0 nays. **Motion carried**.

The meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Ann Marie Donegan, Mayor

Angela Mancini, Clerk of Council