

**MINUTES OF A CIVIL SERVICE BOARD SPECIAL MEETING
HELD APRIL 26, 2016**

The St. Tammany Fire District No.3 Civil Service Board met in special session at 7:00 p.m. April 26, 2016 at the Training Center located at 29278 HWY 190 Lacombe, LA.

Present were: Michael Geissler, Vice Chairman
Bud Lusch,
Theresa McCarthy, Board Secretary

Absent: Eugenie Simpson

Others present: Sign in sheet attached for audience attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes from the April 14, 2016 special meeting were submitted to the board. Mr. Lusch made a motion to accept. Mr. Geissler seconded. A vote was taken and approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Geissler made a motion to open the agenda for discussion of a letter received from Ms. Simpson. Mr. Lusch seconded. A vote was taken and approved.

Mr. Geissler read aloud the letter emailed to himself and Mr. Lusch from Ms. Simpson which she also forwarded to Mr. MacGregor who is on the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners. Letter attached.

Ms. McCarthy stated that she did have the letter on hand for Mr. MacGregor to sign and send to SLU for a College List member to take Ms. Simpson's place on the Civil Service board.

Discussion of Investigation

Mr. Geissler stated that at last meeting on April 14, 2016 the board decided to move forward with the investigation on Chief Sicard and that he has received the proper documentation in reference to that investigation on April 15, 2016 by Ms. Simpson was still the Chairperson of the board. At this time the board needs to come up with a date to start the investigation. Mr. Lusch stated that the investigation has to be within 60 days of that letter and that the board needs to set a target date for the investigation to begin. Mr. Geissler stated that the board has a regular meeting scheduled for May 18th. The board discussed having the official date of the start of the investigation added to the May 18, 2016 regular meeting agenda. Mr. Lusch also wanted to inform the Chief that the investigation would start on the 18th and for him to be prepared to answer any questions. Also that the letter received from the union, the sworn statements should be available on May 18th. Mr. Geissler made a motion to send a formal request to the Union President that requesting the statements to be provided per their letter. Mr. Lusch seconded. A vote was taken and passed.

Mr. D. Rodriguez asked if the board would like only the statements or did the board need the people present as well? Mr. Lusch asked that the people be available. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he was sure that they could be. Mr. Lusch stated the after the second part of the meeting that he may be able to get better answers to those questions.

No further discussion of the date of the investigation.

Discussion of hiring a Civil Service board attorney.

Mr. Lusch feels that with the situation at hand that everything needs to be legal. Other parties will have a lawyer and he feels that the board should also have a lawyer so all is proper. Mr. Geissler agreed that the board should have a lawyer whether for civil service issue or legal questions. A discussion took place with the audience. The question of the District Attorney being used was asked and Mr. Geissler stated that they would look into that. He stated that he had written a letter before to the Attorney General's office requesting information. The board will contact the District Attorney to see where they can give the board direction. Mr. Lusch stated that he would work on finding an attorney.

D. Rodriguez stated that they had concerns about the Chief using the department attorney with the department's funds to represent himself. Mr. Lusch stated that if Mr. Ingram is the fire departments administrative attorney or does he represent the board of commissioners? If he is the fire department attorney, then he may be able to represent Chief Sicard. If he is the Board of Commissioner attorney, then depending on the investigation the Board of Commissioners may need to represent the Board of Commissioners. It is a legal question that the board does not know. E. Rodriguez asked about PMI and Mr. Geissler stated that he was told by OSE not to use PMI for any part of this investigation.

Mr. Lusch made a motion for the board to hire an attorney. Mr. Geissler seconded. A vote was taken and passed.

D. Rodriguez asked if there had been any consideration of putting the Chief on administrative leave? The Union is requesting that it at least be an option to protect the members and employees.

Mr. McClary also asked if there were steps being taken to protect public records, to make sure that no one tampers with public records.

Mr. Lusch stated that he understood the concerns and that is why the board is hiring a lawyer.

It was also discussed that Mr. Lusch will be handling all correspondence between OSE and anything the public may need. Mr. Geissler stated all issues in reference to the current issue should be sent to Mr. Lusch, any other day to day should continue to come to him.

No further discussion for the meeting. Mr. Geissler made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Lusch seconded. Vote passed.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Minutes submitted by
Theresa McCarthy, Secretary
May 3, 2016

Approved by the board
May 3, 2016