

DEPARTMENT OF CITY CLERK

CITY HALL

MAY 19, 1997

The Committee on Finance meets this day at 5:00 o'clock P.M., in Committee Room "A", City Clerk's Department, City Hall.

PRESENT: Chairwoman Patricia K. Nolan, Council President Evelyn V. Fagnoli and Councilman Igliazzi.

ABSENT: Vice-Chairman John H. Rollins and Councilman Peter Mancini.

(Subsequently, Vice-Chairman Rollins joins the Committee.)

Also present are Stephen Woerner, City Council Internal Auditor, Boyce Spinelli, Finance Director, Alex Prignano, Deputy Finance Director, Patricia McLaughlin, Deputy City Solicitor, Lisa Vitullo, Data Processing Coordinator, Councilwoman Rita M. Williams, Councilman Kevin Jackson, Chief James Rattigan - Fire Department, Chief Gary Mulcahey - Fire Department, Michael R. Clement, City Clerk and Claire E. Bestwick, Assistant Clerk.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: I just want to mention, before we get started that we have a couple of new letters on the Providence Review Commission and I will just give them to Claire and maybe Claire can make copies because we are not going to take this up tonight but just so you know.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: How many spots are open?

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Three, I understand.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: There are three spots open?

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Three spots open. We need an attorney.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: But there are two vacant spots?

MR. WOERNER: Three vacant spots.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: Three.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: Put the attorney aside, there are two vacant spots?

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Two, yes. But an attorney is somebody we would really appreciate.

CHIEF JAMES RATTIGAN INVITED RELATIVE TO THE FIRE DEPARTMENT BUDGET AND FIRE STUDY.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Good afternoon everyone.

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CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: The Chief provided us with some written documentation.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: I apologize to not getting this to you sooner but whether it was through the mail, I didn't receive it. I wanted to let you know that.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: That is fine.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: So it took me a while to put it all together and that is why I didn't get it down here.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: That is fine.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: I began it on Friday and got it down here this morning so I apologize for that. It is pretty brief what I have given you. If you want me to discuss this or I could just answer questions, whatever you prefer.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Maybe you could go over what you gave us.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: In response to the correspondence that I received from the Chairwoman asking if we had in our budget, asked for any new positions, I did encompass some requests for new positions, many of which I believe, as I have noted, I probably should have marked these pages, probably the third or fourth page in, fourth page into this. I believe lots of the requests for additional officers in various divisions in the department, which would probably, I think would be subject to the Collective Bargaining Process but I felt that there is special services divisions within our department that are certainly in need of more manpower. I did ask for one, a Command Staff Position, on the first page. I asked for a Second Assistant Chief for the Department to oversee the support services within the department. This would be a high level job, obviously, would be second in command but right now, it seems like at the top, we have so many divisions to run with respect to Fire Prevention, Division of Training, Automotive Maintenance, Faculty Maintenance. I find myself dealing on a day to day basis with operational procedures that maybe should be better handled by someone closer to the operation . This would be a Chief who would be a second Assistant Chief because we have one now who has been off injured. Chief Mulcahey has been acting as my assistant and that Chief would continue to work with the

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operational portion of the job, emergency medical training, safety and fire suppression.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Is that in conjunction with the recommendations of the fire study?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: That certainly is part of it and I would like to say, when I was interviewed by the MMA Consultants, some of these thoughts that were mine and knowing that other department similar to our size had this type of organization, there certainly were, as some of the people know that were on that steering committee about the report, there were lots and lots of recommendations and/or ideas in that report. What I felt was to prioritize the needs and again, I chose a couple of positions at the Command Staff Level and some Fire Officers in the Special Services Divisions. Again, just about every position on our job, currently, every Lieutenant position, every Captain position, is spelled out in the Collective Bargaining Agreement and it is not lost on me that this wish list would maybe be dependent on the Collective Bargaining process. I did neglect to, by mistake, add one other Chief Officer that I felt a need to ask to incorporate into the department. It is kind of a radical change for us and it was not part of the study. It was something that I think we needed to address in the department and that would be a Department Investigative Officer. As you probably can recall in recent months, there has been many, many different allocations and/or anonymous letters and anonymous phone calls pertaining to violations of our rules and regulations and/or similar activity and I would like to say, many, many of that has been disproven. Many, I have assigned those duties to a Chief now on a temporary basis and he has spent many, many times investigating allocations that certainly prove to be untrue, much more so than that they were true and I have a hand out for that but I just copied from the budget. It is very similar to the Investigative Inspector in the Police Department.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Like the Internal Affairs in the Police Department?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Very similar and if there were some criminal activity, then he would work in conjunction with the Providence Police Department. I would like to make a statement that I certainly, this is not to accuse anybody or the department of being overrun by activity that is

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not of a lawful nature and/or within the rules and regulations but at advice from the Solicitor's Office and advice from the Police Department, advice from the Commissioner's Office, they felt the need is here now and some say long overdue, just as a means of insuring that our department maintains the tradition of standards that has been set over the years. Again, I will repeat myself and say, the Officer that I placed in charge a few months ago has investigated a number of reports of allegations of some wrong doing and virtually every one has turned out to be an erroneous report but we have certainly looked into everything that was brought to our attention.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Would that mean an increase in the budget that we see before us or is it included?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: I asked in the budget. I am not sure what Finance has done with the numbers. I did ask for that. I got that right out of our budget proposal. I neglected to put it in here, that was a mistake. Those are the two Command Staff Officers that I would like to request. There are a couple of civilian positions in the Fire Prevention Bureau that I requested. The Chief Clerk of the Fire Prevention Bureau, this position was within the department for, a woman who retired last year after 28 years in the department and it was unfunded and I probably dropped the ball and didn't come here last year and ask to have that position filled. Fire Prevention Bureau is the part of the Fire Department that most people are not familiar with but it requires a lot of manpower hours. It takes care of scheduling fire inspections, code violations, plan review, emergency medical reports go through that office, the Fire Marshall, who is here today, is the official keeper of the records of the Fire Department. They deal on a daily basis with lawyers looking for reports because our emergency medical records are kept there. It is a tedious job and right now we have a firefighter doing lots of these tasks that would be better suited for a civilian clerical type person to do and I also asked for a Clerk Typist because also involved in that division is lengthy inspection reports, lengthy fire reports, which all have to be typed and maintained, filed. We recently got a temp. worker there that has been a great help. Those two positions have not been incorporated into the department in the last couple of years, since I have been the Chief and it has really put a strain on the division and a strain on, when we have to take firefighters in, with the

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manpower situation, which I am sure you all know about and probably will talk about, it means that the fire --- down two more individuals.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: The reason why I interrupt is because it is dealing with what you are suggesting here. Are you planning to computerize your department? Will your computer be able to issue these reports and then a second question, is it possible that you could have light duty for injured firefighter and perhaps he could provide these services that you are looking for?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: The first part of the question, the computers and I know that is a sore spot with many of us here. We have been working on the computer system, I know since I have been the Chief, what will it do for us? For one thing, we process approximately, I will estimate 20,000 rescue runs or 23,000 rescue runs a year by hand now. We literally have a person sit there and sort and copy.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: I know, I had to get information from you. It is unbelievable.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: With the computer system that was linked to the department, the Rescue Officer, at his quarters, could type the input into the computer. We need the report, we just pull up, print it out. That right there would save someone who works virtually all day doing reports.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Didn't we put money last year into computers?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Yes. There has been money allocated, even before I was the Chief. I think it was \$170,000.00. Is that right Chief?

CHIEF MULCAHEY: Correct.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: And we have been working on it. I can ask the Chief to give it to you. He does a lot of the purchasing work for me and requisitions so if you can recall, Chief?

CHIEF MULCAHEY: When we came on board, it was kind of in limbo. Nothing had been done. The money had been allocated but it hadn't been put out to bid and it was along process to put together the specs. for the software and the hardware and we did that and we put it out to bid and we awarded the bid and we submitted the requisitions and they were kicked back because they said there were no funds available for the networking of this system. There was funds available for the

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computers themselves and the software so this has been an on-going process and what I did in this budget was to put in for capital expenditures, money in order to network. Lisa Vitullo is with us.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: So you haven't spent the money yet? It is still there?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Right.

MRS. VITULLO: What happened was, a year ago April, April of 96, we went out to bid and it was 2/3's of what we needed. It was for hardware and software and that came to about \$167,000.00 so we are planning on spending, in June or July, this is the past fiscal year, we were going to go out for hardware, which was approximately another \$100,000.00 for just the lines and get the hardware and what not. When Finance heard that, I know we discussed that back, almost two years ago, a year and a half ago.....

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Yes.

MRS. VITULLO: We knew that, well, Finance ripped up the requisition and said, no, we don't have money for this so now they are giving us permission, after that fire study, to go ahead and award or purchase what was awarded in June. I have all that paperwork. Now we may have to go out to bid again. I need to talk to Matt and to Alan Sepe because they are 14 months old.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Couldn't we have made it part of the Master Lease?

MRS. VITULLO: It was part of the Master Lease.

CHIEF MULCAHEY: I included it in this request.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: In this Master Lease?

CHIEF MULCAHEY: Yes, I included a request from this budget for that.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: Because it seems ridiculous to do these reports the long way when a computer can print it out and can have the information on a disk and all you have to do is punch in the numbers and you have it all there. It seems like we are behind times.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: We need help from the Finance Department. When one of these things is torn up, we need to know that because I am sitting here thinking, you have your computers. They are in place and nothing has happened. Just so we know where stand from now

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on and I hope you will bring that back because we really need to know when a requisition is torn up because there is not enough in the Capital Budget because we can re-address it at some time.

MRS. VITULLO: This bid was awarded in April of 1996. Now, I can't go back to the vendors, well, I don't want to buy equipment that is over a year old anyway.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: No, you don't because it is outdated already.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: Chief, just to go back a couple of things. The Investigative Internal Officer, Internal Affairs up at the --- court, the idea would be, I assume, right now what would happen is a person would go out and investigate a complaint and what is it, a report prepared for you?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Correct, to look at .

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: Do you disseminate that report with the City Solicitor and the Commissioner of Public Safety and someone from the Mayor's Staff?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Correct.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: And you determine whether or not anything else needs to be done?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Yes.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: If it becomes more serious, does it get turned over to the next, who does it get turned over to? It goes to you, somebody complains, I say, so and so is doing this, you said this.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: And act that would be considered criminal in nature then the Providence Police would work in conjunction with us.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: Are they getting a copy of that report? Is that your idea? The idea is, any and all complaints....

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Right.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: Do you keep a copy of it?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: I would use the discretion of that if it were just a, say a minor infraction of our rules and regulations, then we would handle it in-house but if anything that would be considered criminal in nature, then the Providence Police Department and investigators who are trained to do criminal type investigations, that is where I would send it

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right off and any questions I would have, legality wise, I certainly would meet with the Solicitor's Office.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: In the budget right now, what are the major differences as far as increased expenditures?

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: It isn't. It is almost level funded. That was going to be my next question.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: What about call back? Call back is 2 million dollars.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: 3.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: 3 now?

MR. WOERNER: That is not what is budgeted.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: I know it is not but what is budgeted for next year?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: I think it is 1.125 million.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: What was it last year?

MR. WOERNER: 1.0, \$1,080,000.00.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Is 1.125 right this year?

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: Is there any other item, other than that, that is out of your control right now?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: No.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: It seems like that is out of your control, right? You can't seem to get a handle on it because of.....

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Because of many variables but yes, no, I don't feel anything else is out of control, no, not at all.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: If that problem is solved, would you say that this budget pretty much.....

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Again, I would imagine the budget is prepared without any increases in personnel and staff that I have proposed.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: That is what my next question was.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Mine are proposed.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: The difference in salaries between this year and last year is about \$300,000.00.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Maybe I misinterpreted the letter because what I prepared was what I had proposed in the budget. If in fact they are not in the budget, then my answer would be, do you have any new positions? My answer would be, no. If you get my point.

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CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Alex, are there any new positions in the Firefighters, none in the Firefighters.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: So maybe this is a moot point.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: The only item that is out of control, again, for a second year, is the call back.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Correct.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: And it is tough, with everything that you have to handle because we discussed the trucks, right? You are all satisfied with the trucks?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Well, it is on-going. Every year is a different year.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: But the last time you were before this Committee, about three months ago, you were telling us it was an emergency.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: It was in October.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: Right.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: October.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: Several months ago.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Right.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: That problem at least is being worked on.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: No, we received the truck. We have bought the truck. The truck will be in service within approximately 10 days.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: So right now, there are not more equipment emergencies.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: I will not call it emergencies.

CHIEF MULCAHEY: We included requests.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: But it is certainly, to maintain our high standards, to maintain our equipment, to maintain our protection of the city, apparatus purchase and apparatus refurbishment is an on-going process, Councilman. I know you understand that. Will we be back this year? Absolutely because it needs to be every year. If now, we fall behind and then I am before you in the middle of the year, in October or September, saying, I don't have trucks to put in service .

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: So other than that, there is the three issues, if I may continue, three issues, at least in my mind. The minimum

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manning issue or the callback issue, which right now is out of your control. But you have a handle on the equipment.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Again, on-going.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: On-going.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: That is important.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: In October you came in here and you said that was an emergency.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: It certainly was.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: Is this an emergency right now?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: The emergency has been alleviated once that truck is in service.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: If it is not true, I want to know that, at least I want to know that before I go forward.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: I would say yes, but please, if they allow me to clarify, but apparatus purchasing and refurbishment is a yearly situation and we will have to continue that.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: What about all the vehicles. I know you gave a list of all the vehicles.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Right. That was asked by the Councilwoman.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: There is nothing that is....

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: 21 vehicles.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: Yes, but there is nothing that is....

CHIEF RATTIGAN: And many of them, as you can see, if you want to get into those vehicles, Fire Prevention is.....

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: I am just saying, there is nothing over there that you think is so old.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: No, the Committee last year, before the emergency situation, I came for Master Lease and we bought some four wheel drive vehicles for the department.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: We are going to discontinue four wheel drive vehicles. They are getting to be too much of a status symbol so enjoy them while you have them. We can get a pick-up truck for half of that.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: But we got them as response vehicles to get through the inclement weather to fire scenes.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Yes.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: That is what we got them for.

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COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: Those were my only questions.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Do all these vehicles go home?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Not all of them, no. The little asterisk, if you see the chart, that indicates the ones that go home and some don't go home all the time but I gave a little description on the next page of what cars do go home, or they are assigned to and why they are on a 24 hour emergency basis and they are all integrated in our Incident Command Staff and I think it is a relatively --- number.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Some of these are older cars, will you be coming back to us on the new Master Lease asking for additional cars?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: I believe we have asked for one and it would be an Incident Command vehicle, marked with lights and sirens that would not leave the city. It would be a response vehicle.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Are these marked Providence Fire Department on them?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Some are, some aren't. All the fire prevention cars are marked. They will be Fire Inspector, Fire, Assistant Fire Marshall.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: I think we would like them to have some kind of a decal or something.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Most cars have Fire Department license plates.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: Most, not all?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Some, like for example, the Arson Squad, they do investigative work, surveillance and they have, as you can see, Arson Squad, there is a 1990, 1987, 1989 auto. They have Police type plates, Fire plates.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Since your budget is level funded, it looks like to me, it has gone up maybe \$300,000.00, these new positions, I don't think there is anyway we are going to be able to fund these. Do you have any idea what the price tag is on these new positions? While you are looking through there, have you sent a written reply on the Fire Study?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: No, I have not. I can tell you a little bit that I do know. To the best of my knowledge, there have been no final draft given.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Yes, we have gotten it either. We should be getting it this week though.

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CHIEF RATTIGAN: I shouldn't say final draft, final report. I have called and tried to speak with those people. They said it should be forthcoming very shortly and that is something you know already.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: We are supposed to get the report, I don't if that particular one will be included in there.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: Have you studied the draft, Chief?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: I have read it.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: Are you in agreement with some of the recommendations?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: If I could say this and I mean it with all due respect, I have spoken to the Commission, I have spoken to the Director of Administration and many, many issues in that report, as you well know, deal with situations that I feel and they feel are going to involve negotiations and they are in binding arbitration now and I believe still in some negotiations and I certainly wouldn't want to make any statements or say anything that might effect those negotiations.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Is that why you didn't answer some of these questions in the thing that Stephen sent you?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Correct and also, I think it says be prepared, I received this Friday, by the way. I just don't want you to think....

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: No, I think you did a marvelous job considering you got it on Friday.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: But I say that with all due respect and I certainly wouldn't want to make any statements that would effect the negotiations and I know you folks that is utmost in your.....

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: We don't want to sit here negotiating.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Right and many of the questions that were involved in Mr. Woerner's letter here....

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Are contractual.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Many, many and I know that disappoints some people but that is what I would have to answer on some of them.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: How about the closing of the station? That is not contractual.

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CHIEF RATTIGAN: It is in the sense that the contract that we have been abiding by, states the number of apparatus and I believe that and I may report.....

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Yes, it is not just closing. It is doing away with three trucks I think.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: It kind of coincides with the number of trucks in the station. If there are any questions in here that I think I could share.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: How about that question about the large diameter hose line?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Okay, the large diameter hose line, they recommend that we use 5 inch hose, which diameter of the hose would be 5 inches. We use 3 inch hoses. Up until a few years ago, we used to use 2 1/2 inch and 3 inch. We went to 3 inch hose. Before this study was ever even commissioned, we had --- diameter hose and to have some on hand for major events. With the hydra system that we have here in the city, it is an outstanding hydra system with water pressure, the number of hydrants and we have virtually every 300 feet, there is a hydrant and in some districts even closer and primarily, we fight 3 deckers, 3 1/2 story, 4 story wood frame buildings and I will say they do it as well as anyone in the country. On occasion, when we had, for example, the Gordon Avenue fire or the mill fire, we believe it would be advantageous to have some of this hose at the ready but we certainly don't believe at this time that we need to convert all our hose to 5 inch. We believe it would be very much of an overkill but we have attempted to budget money for hose this year and we certainly are open to the prospect of getting some and having it on call for when we need it. At the fire on Gordon Avenue, we had, as you all know, it was a huge fire, biggest fire I have ever seen in a neighborhood in 20 something years and we virtually had all our apparatus there and out of town apparatus and we did have one truck from Smithfield come with the large hose. Virtually what that does, it allows us to get large volumes of water to the fire with less friction loss. Believe it or not, pressure is lost with the hose, the water hitting the hose going through the hose line.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Would that have helped fight the fire?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: We did have it. North Smithfield, Smithfield had it on the truck. It would have helped but again, we are blessed with a very good hydrant system and with the number of apparatus we had on

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the scene, it wasn't a problem. We would like to phase some in. Even the report, if my recollection is correct, says we should phase some in. It is very expensive, I will tell you that. We have been researching it. One section is like 500 and something dollars for one 100 foot section where our trucks carry 1,200 feet.

CHIEF MULCAHEY: You would need 1,200 feet ---.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: We would need 1,200 feet of --- on our trucks and also, I have been told by senior staff guys, guys that have been on the job 30 years or so that x amount of years ago, the Chief of the department came before the Finance Committee and made a recommendation and why it didn't happen, I don't know but it may have been the expense and again, we don't believe we need it on a daily basis but we could certainly phase some in to have on the rare occasions when you have.....

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: When you have a fire like that.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Those huge fires.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: And the recommendations they talked about like the recommendation, I am not even going to touch reorganize table of organization but what about recommendation to increase training?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: We certainly are, again, our training division works very hard but they are very overworked. We recently, and this may help with the accountability question and the incident command question, if I could put them together.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Yes, that is good.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: We recently, the Communications Department required for us, a while back, portable radios for every firefighter as a safety issue, as an accountability issue and equipped with a panic button or better phrase, if someone was to go down, if they just hit this button, they will know which radio it is. If they just keyed their mic. without saying a word, it is identified by computer at Fire Alarm. It is a great advancement for us, long overdue and I am sure the funding came right from this table and we do appreciate that. That alone as helped our accountability drastically. At the time of the report, we had the radios purchased. Communications did their job a long time ago and purchased them. We were in the process of trying to put the best standard operated procedure together to initiate them into the job. What we have also done and Communications again acquired us extra frequencies so now, when we go

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to a fire, we will be able to have only that fire, only that incident on the radio. There will be no transmissions from vehicles or apparatus not at the fire. There will be no dispatching over that frequency, that again, long over due and much greater safety factor for our firefighters. What we have done is, we have phased in this big transition in the radios. First we put an informational packet out. We called it phase, I where people would read about the radios, know what they do, when they are supposed to use them, procedures about using a radio. Secondly, which we just, will be finished up tomorrow, our Division of Training has drilled with every Chief Officer, every Fire Company, we had them over at Division of Training, our drill yard and we went through scenarios, 6 or 7 scenarios using the radios, different frequencies, different channels and that process alone, we have had the Incident Command System in place for over a decade. The report, if my recollection is correct, the report insinuated that at sometimes, different groups will do things different ways so what we did was we fine tuned it and I believe they used the word institutionalized it and so what we did in this situation was that every Chief Officer, every potential Incident Commander, we even used some Captains in case they were in the position of Incident Commander, go through these scenarios and Phase III will be, now we will take all that data. We will improve some more. If there are any glitches we will find them out and that system, Phase III will be put the system into place and that should be in the near future and again, that, I believe, has vastly improved our fire ground scene, our accountability, our institutionalization and this is fresh in my mind because this is on-going and to be completed within the next few weeks.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: Does that coincide with the book of rules?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Book of rules has been issued. I brought one just so that you can say I didn't fib you. The book of rules, it has been in the process of being published quite a long time. It was adopted in 1963 and revised in 1996.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: And every firefighter is trained.....

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Every firefighter has a copy. Every Fire Officer has been ordered to go over it with his men.

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: And who does your internal investigation of the department people?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Right now?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: Right now.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Again, there is no actual funding for a position, which is what I asked for but I have delegated responsibilities to a Chief Officer at this time but I believe some time in the future, that it should be a position that is in place and some one who takes the job will know that that is the job they are taking. Similar to Internal Affairs on the Police Department but also again, I feel a need to say that many, many times, most times, these investigations have lead to show no wrong doing and someone just writing it in an anonymous letter or making an anonymous phone call accusing people of wrong doing without basis of fact.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: Is that what happened at Messer Street?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: An investigation was done by the Police Department. They handed it over to an independent agency, which was the Attorney General's Office. It went before the Grand Jury. The Grand Jury came back, no true bill, no indictments, found no grounds to continue out the investigation.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: Do you normally send them to the Attorney General?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Criminal activity, our department, would investigate. Once we deemed it to be potentially criminal, then the Providence Police Department Law Enforcement Agency is brought into play right away. We certainly don't pretend to be Police Officers or Investigators so once it is placed in the Police Department's hands, my belief is that they then went to an agency divorced from the Public Safety community within the City of Providence and that was the result.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: This restructuring, these different positions, I don't know, if you accept the Fire Study and if we have a contract and all that stuff, at that time, would you be looking into restructuring the department a little bit so that you can fit some of these positions in?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Certainly but I believe that, again, if my recollection of the report is correct and my personal believe, I should base

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it on my personal belief, I would certainly like to restructure how the department is run. I certainly would like to add needed Officers in certain divisions. I wish we had the luxury and I hope it could be negotiated to have the luxury to, in certain divisions, build an incentive --- division. Firefighters take the job they want to, believe it or not, run into burning buildings but Fire Departments, their main objective is certainly to save lives and protect property but it is also part of our mission to insure fire safety, public education, make sure our buildings are fire proof and go to our schools and teach the elderly and all those support systems, I would like to see some incentive in that division to entice people to come in to it because it is very difficult to get people, firefighters, especially Providence firefighters, very aggressive, very amounts the urban cowboys who want to be firefighters and they are excellent at it but that would be part of the restructuring would be to have some incentive to go to fire prevention, Division of Training and those types of support systems.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: Do you do that by examination or by, how do you judge promotion?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: All our promotions now are done by examination, every one of them with the exception of when we get to Chief Officer ranks, then by Charter, it is the Commissioner of Public Safety and on up but all our Lieutenants, all our Captains are all based on testing and seniority.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Battalion Chiefs aren't though.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: No.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: Do you feel that the lack of a contract has hampered your department's functions?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: I believe, the way the situation is now, that the manpower, we certainly have had to adjust but again, I would not want to make any statements that will....

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: Don't I don't expect you to.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Jeopardize any contract negotiations.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: It is just that so many of these things depend on the outcome of the contract because we would like to see you implement many of the recommendations of that MMA Study to give the Fire Department a higher image, to your credit.

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CHIEF RATTIGAN: I would love to bring up, the image of the Fire Department. The image that, you know, I have been told that I was a good PR man, I think last time I was here, I think someone told me that but certainly, we fight fires, I will steal a line from a Battalion Chief, or like lens crafters, we are in an out in an hour. In this city, the very difficult neighborhoods, the close proximity of buildings, it is wonderful and people should feel save that that can be done because potential of a Gordon Avenue, potentially is all over this city. There was a 2 alarm fire on Wickenden Street out there in the Fox Point area and believe me, without an outstanding job by the department, there was a 4 story wood frame home right next to this building and it must have been arms length but with our equipment, men, aggressive fire fighting, they made a great stop and I believe it was 50 minutes it was under control and that is pretty impressive for a 2 alarm fire.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: I think what we are saying is, we would love to put those positions in but we can't right now until we find out where the contract negotiations are going and how much of the fire study that you agree with and you would like to implement so unfortunately, I think we may have to put that on hold, if the Committee agrees.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: I would like to see a more sophisticated way of dealing with your record keeping and your reports and believe me, this data is so antique in operation, it is sinful because you ought to be able to punch in information and gain a report readily accessible to anyone who would need the report.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: I agree.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: Long overdue.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: This meeting today may very well get that into effect and I think it is good it was brought up. I am glad Finance is here and Lisa and maybe finally we will be on the road to do that.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: I just thought it was done. I was so surprised to hear that you haven't implemented that yet.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: And I was hoping you would try to help us out with this overtime, which I think is an abomination.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Again, that is.....

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: I know, contractual.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: 3 million dollars but it is 2 million over.

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COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: I just had a question about the fire investigation person. I wondered if it would make more sense to have the Commissioner of Public Safety oversee that kind of thing. I don't know what the positions are in his office but since the Commissioner of Public Safety has oversight over the Police and Fire, I just wondered if it makes sense to have the investigation come out of his office, any complaints would go there and be investigated in that office rather than from the Chief's Office because.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: I would like to do that with the Police, too.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: Why do we have a Commissioner?

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Yes, our goal is to just insure that any infractions and/or violations and/or on the rare, rare occasion, any criminal action is dealt with. That is our feeling. My feeling as the Chief, just to make sure our department does take every measure to "police itself", whether it was the Commissioner or my department, the main goal is to make sure we take every and all action, that is all. How it would be done, through the Commissioner's Office, that would be fine with me. I have no problem. You would have to speak with him though on that.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Any other questions from the Committee, other Council people? Thank you very much Chief.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: Thank you.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: I will be contacting you all when -- is going to be put in to place.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Yes, I would like to see it.

CHIEF RATTIGAN: Thank you.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING REIMBURSEMENT FOR LEGAL FEES SUSTAINED BY CHRISTINE ROUNDTREE, DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION, PURSUANT TO RHODE ISLAND GENERAL LAW 45-15-16 "INDEMNITY OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS, EMPLOYEES OR ELECTED OFFICIALS" FOR APPROXIMATELY \$2,300.00.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: You should have something in your packet.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: All I have is a Resolution.

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CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: That's it. That is all we have.

COUNCILMAN IGLIOZZI: What's it for? I don't get it.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: I believe she was sued for harassment. Maybe we have to go into Executive Session for that. Alex, did you really rip up that thing for data processing for the Fire Department?

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: He does.

MR. PRIGNANO: We didn't have enough money. When we sat down, the project was supposed to be \$177,000.00 and the Communications Department was going to do the wiring and cabling and all that stuff. You were there, we were all there.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: Yes, they decided not to do it?

MR. PRIGNANO: I don't know. Then they came back in to me and said, we need a minimum \$65,000.00 to \$100,000.00 more. I said, I don't have the money. Until you go back to the Finance Committee and talk to Steve because all those people were involved in it, I said, that is where you have to resolve it. We still have \$177,000.00.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: You have it put aside?

MR. PRIGNANO: Yes, I didn't spend it on anything else. They need the money for the cabling and they have been trying to get this.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: If Patricia can answer our question we can be finished in five minutes. We may have to continue this because we don't have very much information. We are being asked to pay this legal bill. Do you know what this is about?

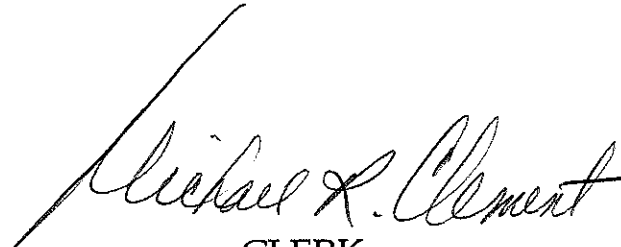
COUNCIL PRESIDENT FARGNOLI: I believe it was dropped but now she wants to be reimbursed for her legal fees. This has been pending for a long time.

CHAIRWOMAN NOLAN: May I have a motion to Continue item number 2 until tomorrow night? Patricia is going to get some information for us.

On motion of Council President Fargnoli, seconded by Councilman Igliazzi, it is voted to Continue the foregoing Resolution.

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ADJOURNMENT: On motion of Councilman Igliazzi, seconded by Council President Fagnoli, it is voted to adjourn the meeting at 6:05 o'clock P.M.


CLERK


Assistant Clerk