

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SITTING AS THE GOVERNING BODY OF FIRE DISTRICT #1**

REGULAR MEETING

October 4, 2006

The Regular Meeting of the Board of the County Commissioners of Sedgwick County, Kansas, was called to order at 10:48 a.m., on Wednesday, October 4, 2006 in the County Commission Meeting Room in the Courthouse in Wichita, Kansas, by Chairman Ben Sciortino; with the following present: Chair Pro Tem Lucy Burtnett; Commissioner David M. Unruh; Commissioner Tim R. Norton; Commissioner Thomas G. Winters; Mr. William P. Buchanan, County Manager; Mr. Sherdeill Breathett Sr., Economic Developer, Community Development; Mr. Bob Lamkey, Public Safety Director; Mr. Rich Euson, County Counselor and Ms. Lisa Davis, Deputy County Clerk.

GUESTS

Dave Thompson, President, Local 2612 IAF.

ROLL CALL

The Clerk reported, after calling roll, that all Commissioners were present.

Chairman Sciortino said, "Next item."

NEW BUSINESS

**A. AGREEMENT WITH CHARLES ENGINEERING, INC. PROVIDING
PAYMENT OF SERVICE CHARGES IN LIEU OF TAXES.**

Mr. Sherdeill Breathett, Sr., Economic Developer, Division of Community Development, greeted the Commissioners and said, "With regards to the economic development that was afforded to Charles Engineering, a fire district agreement is to follow along with that agreement, so they can be sure that they can insure that they have the fire protection needed for their property. At this time, the 2006 grant and the economic development tax exemption to Charles Engineering Incorporated for personal and real property, said exemptions to begin in 2006. Charles Engineering Incorporated desires the continue receiving fire protection services from Fire District #1.

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During the tenure of these exemptions, Charles Engineering Incorporated has executed an agreement to pay service charges in lieu of taxes, which direct the company to pay Fire District #1 for those protection services. It would be in our opinion, best opinion that the council receive this and sign this agreement.”

Chairman Sciortino said, “Commissioner Burtnett.”

Commissioner Burtnett said, “Since I don’t know if I’ve been a part of one of these before, do the service charges in lieu of taxes come out to the same amount of money?”

Mr. Breathett said, “That is correct.”

Commissioner Burtnett said, “Okay.”

Chairman Sciortino said, “And this is something, commissioner, that’s very common. We’ve done this many times before, where we’ve given these tax abatements, but the companies have been willing to keep us whole on the fire protection.”

Commissioner Burtnett said, “Okay, thank you.”

Chairman Sciortino said, “All right, thank you very much. I don’t see there’s any further comments.”

MOTION

Chairman Sciortino moved to approve the Agreement and authorize the Chairman to sign.

Commissioner Burtnett seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion, the vote was called.

VOTE

Commissioner Unruh	Aye
Commissioner Norton	Aye
Commissioner Winters	Aye
Commissioner Burtnett	Aye
Chairman Sciortino	Aye

Chairman Sciortino said, “Thank you very much. Next item please.”

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B. MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH LOCAL 2612 INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIREFIGHTERS.

Mr. Bob Lamkey, Public Safety Director, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I'm pleased to be before you today with this agreement between you as the governing body of the Fire District and IFF Local 2612. And before I begin in talking about . . . briefly talking about the contents, I'd like to recognize members of both the labor and management team who are here today. Union President Dave Thompson and Vice President Corrie Hanes and Randy Paxton, who is part of their team, could not be here today and we've got Deputy Chief Rick Brazil, Division Chief Chuck Thomas, Mike Mueller who was an addition this year that we hadn't had in the past and Mike was absolutely invaluable in the development of enhancements to our promotion process, including a weighted scale matrix to give us really a far improved promotion process over what we had the previous years, and Mike Pepoon, who we used for technical advice and legal review in this process.

What we've accomplished, with your consent and the Manager's support, is a two-year agreement affective January, 2007 to December 31st, 2008. The agreement provides for a 3 ½% general pay increase for firefighters and lieutenants in each year. Significant events were again as I said improvements to the promotion process, establish of a joint labor management pilot project for an enhanced fit for duty program were major changes. We're going to shift from our current fit program to one that has a fitness evaluation that's directly related to the functions of a firefighter. So as opposed to having kind of the common things, we're focusing on what it takes to be a firefighter and again, labor and management will partner over the next two years to develop that program and implement it and we hope in the next contract.

Other changes, some increases in tuition assistance, support the fire chief's continuing effort to support education among his staff and the firefighters, an increase in uniform allowance to take account for inflation, some changes to vacation scheduling and language to conform parallel county policies to what's in our contract.

I must say, one of the things that was unique to this contract, at least as far as I can understand as long as we've done it, is this is the first experience based upon a suggestion from labor that we sit at the table without the benefit of attorneys at the table and I think that's quite a reflection . . . and of course you all and the manager allowed us to do that, but I think that's a wonderful reflection of the relationship and confidence between management, labor and the Fire District to come to meaningful decisions in an open and honest way in this process. I mean, what we've determined over years of working together and with your support is that we have a shared interest in fair compensation, safe and productive working conditions for employees and in that venue, we're able to sit down and come to you with this contract and it's my recommendation that you approve the agreement and sign."

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Chairman Sciortino said, "Okay. Before we make that, does any of the unions would like to talk to us about it, because I think that would . . . that was kind of a unique way to make a negotiation, without the lawyers. Probably saved us both a whole bunch of money too."

Mr. Dave Thompson, President, Local 2612 IAF, greeted the Commissioners and said, "Like Mr. Lamkey indicated, it was a first. We had brief discussions before we met at the table and we made the recommendation based on a new relationship that we had with management that we could sit down and have honest discussions. Whether we agree to agree or agree to disagree, we can move past those issues and come to an agreement that would benefit us, as well as the citizens we serve. So I think when Bob and I last talked, we figured we saved county and the union, both between \$20,000 and \$30,000 in attorney fees. So definitely something that we appreciated and we're hopefully that that worked on your end as well."

Great enhancements, we had a great turnout for our voting. Obviously, that goes along with your voting discussion you had earlier. The difference in our voting is we carry around the ballot box, so everybody gets the chance to vote.

Other than that, our people are very supportive. Our union is growing. We're having more people get out and talk and have their voices heard and give us their opinions. We were working on this contract as late as last evening on some issues that we had interpretations of, and it worked out well, so I'm very pleased, our membership is pleased, and I'd like to thank Corrie Hanes and Randy Paxton, my family, definitely. A lot of work went into this, a lot of time I missed with them, but it was well worth it, I'm glad to be here."

Chairman Sciortino said, "Well, thank you very much. Commissioners, any comments before we vote? I think we have a couple of comments. Commissioner Winters."

Commissioner Winters said, "Well this is just a comment to both of you. I certainly have appreciated the work that went into this contract. It seemed to be well thought out and well prepared. I do want to assure everyone that the whole contract was not put together without some legal assistance. I mean, we do have a bona fide contract here and our Legal Department here in Sedgwick County, with Mike Pepoon, all of the parts of the contract."

Commissioner Norton said, "It's not written on the back of a napkin."

Commissioner Winters said, "That's exactly right, it's not something that's written on the back of a napkin but did have some forethought. But I think it is encouraging that management and our firefighters could get together without the traditional labor lawyer involvement in every sentence. And again, so I certainly am appreciative to everyone who worked on this contract. It looks like it was a good process this year. So thank you."

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Chairman Sciortino said, "Is that an indication that you might be voting for it?"

Commissioner Winters said, "I'm going to be supportive of this contract."

Chairman Sciortino said, "Well let me say something too. This is starting out, I think, kind of a new era in government labor relations, from the county's point of view I think and it all started out . . . well, it starts out with trust. I mean, when you made that recommendation Dave, and county agreed to it, that sort of said we're sitting down as friends and we're going to try to negotiate this as neighbors visiting on what we can agree on and get done and that takes trust on both sides. And I commend you, first of all, for coming up with the idea. Any other ideas you can have that can save us 20 or 30,000, don't hesitate to call, my doors always open to you for that. But I mean, this is a new era because . . . well, first of all, the work that the firefighters do is definitely needed when it's needed. I mean, you are an integral part of our overall public safety plans that we have for the citizens, but just to sit down and not . . . not to put down lawyers, they have a definite place, but when you have lawyers in the room and boy, there's just all the sudden . . . boy, those guys are after us, we've got to . . . but just to sit down and start visiting over concerns that labor had, the concerns that management had and come to an agreement as quickly as you did too, because it wasn't really too overly protracted. You're to be complimented and I thank you and I think you're going find that government, Sedgwick County government is going to work real closely with labor in seeing how, together, we can benefit this entire community and I applaud you for the effort and please pass that on to your membership. Thank you.

All right, I don't see any other questions. So what's the will of the Board on Item B?"

MOTION

Commissioner Burtnett moved to approve the Memorandum of Agreement and authorize Commissioners to sign.

Commissioner Norton seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion, the vote was called.

VOTE

Commissioner Unruh	Aye
Commissioner Norton	Aye
Commissioner Winters	Aye
Commissioner Burtnett	Aye
Chairman Sciortino	Aye

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Chairman Sciortino said, "Thank you both very much. Anything else to come before the Fire District? Seeing none, this meeting is now adjourned."

C. OTHER

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D. ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business to come before the Board, the Meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS**

BEN SCIORTINO, Chairman
Fifth District

LUCY BURTNETT, Chair Pro Tem
Fourth District

DAVID M. UNRUH, Commissioner,
First District

TIM R. NORTON, Commissioner
Second District

THOMAS G. WINTERS, Commissioner
Third District

ATTEST:

Don Brace, County Clerk

APPROVED:

_____, 2006