

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

REGULAR MEETING

December 8, 2004

The Regular Meeting of the Board of the County Commissioners of Sedgwick County, Kansas, was called to order at 10:12 a.m., on Wednesday, December 8, 2004 in the County Commission Meeting Room in the Courthouse in Wichita, Kansas, by Chairman Thomas G. Winters; with the following present: Chair Pro Tem David M. Unruh; Commissioner Tim R. Norton; Commissioner Carolyn McGinn; Commissioner Ben Sciortino; Mr. William P. Buchanan, County Manager; Mr. Rich Euson, County Counselor; Fire Chief, Gary Curmode and Ms. Bethany Carpenetti, Deputy County Clerk.

GUESTS

Mr. Jeff Cowley, President, Firefighter's Union 2612.

ROLL CALL

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

Chairman Winters said, "Next item."

NEW BUSINESS

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

Mr. Michael D. Pepoon, Director Government Relations, greeted the Commissioners and said, "I have before you today a memorandum of agreement between Fire District #1 and Local Union 2612 of the International Association of Firefighters. I guess, before we go into the details of the memorandum of agreement, I'd like to recognize the union president who is here today. Mr. Jeff Cowley and also Mr. Cowley's management team, were Dave Thompson, Jim Eliason, Randy Paxton, the management negotiating team consisted of Deputy Chief Rick Brazill who is here with Mr. Cowley, Division Chief Chuck Thomas, Bob Lamkey, Assistant County Manager Kathy Sexton and of course I was on the management team. The management team is very thankful of the guidance that we received and help from the County Manager and of course all of you sitting as the Fire Board.

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This agreement for you today is a two-year agreement. This has been approved by the union. It provides to be in effect for the year 2005, 2006. There is a general wage adjustment in 2005 of 2% and then that goes up to 2.5% for 2006. We provided that employees in the union with over 25 years experience would get an extra day of vacation with this agreement. There's a slight increase in the uniform allowance, an increase for an adjustment for acting officer pay and there's been some additional funding put in for tuition reimbursement. S

ome of the non-monetary items that we talked about in the agreement dealt with promotion, including some new provisions on promotion from firefighter to lieutenant and including a new provision, a new article dealing with promotion from lieutenant to captain and there were a number of other clean-up changes that we were able to dispose of very early and make this agreement more workable for both the Fire District and the union.

I'd like to say that these negotiating sessions began in June they were very difficult. There were many times during this process that I honestly didn't believe we would be before you this year with an agreement, but while it was very difficult, I think the parties acted in a professional manner. We disagreed. We were very far apart on a number of issues but never became disagreeable and there was a measure of professional decorum on both sides of the table for that. I'm very thankful of not only the members of our negotiating team, but also the members of the Fire Union's negotiating team, but that's the agreement that's before you today and we'd ask that you approve it."

Chairman Winters said, "All right, Mike, thank you very much. Jeff, we would acknowledge your presence and if you'd like to make any comments at this time, I'd certainly offer any comments if you have any comments, regarding either the negotiations or the agreement itself."

Mr. Jeff Cowley, Union President Local 2612, greeted the Commissioners and said, "As Mr. Pepoon said, this was a very challenging negotiation session this year. I had a family death, so I was unable to attend a couple of sessions, but my extremely well-voiced negotiating team for the union stepped up and took care of business while I was gone. We didn't miss a step. We continued on to come to a common ground on many of those items. Did we get everything we wanted? No, so with that being said this agreement is a building block and it serves the Fire District and the members very well. It also sets the platform for the firefighters that we're going to hire in the future, that we are very marketable, we have a good benefit package. Our benefit package is second to none in most of the areas.

We do fall behind on some, which we're working to upgrade. Went through this two-year process

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with our promotional process in place. Everyone knows where everyone finishes and promoted accordingly. Outside of this agreement, we want to take this opportunity to thank the Commission for reinstating three positions that we lost two years ago. So we can get back to our staffing levels that we feel we need to meet to do the job that we do in a safe and productive manner. And I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank the County's negotiating team, very professional, very business like and yes there are agreements but it never, at any time, did it become hostile for that. I thank Mike and his team and we'll be talking to you in the future."

Chairman Winters said, "All right, Jeff thank you very much for your comments. Commissioner Sciortino."

Commissioner Sciortino said, "Well, I just want to make a general comment and compliment both negotiating teams. The key word that I like, that Mike said, you can disagree without being disagreeable. You can maintain decorum, you can be professional. And in light of what we see in some of these negotiations between governmental entities and their unions and the turmoil and disruption and what have you, it seems that the County and our union always seem to, in a final analysis, get together. Sit down and come up with an agreement that's acceptable on both sides. Neither side gets exactly what they want, but we can continue delivering quality. Service to the public without a lot of disruption and turmoil and picketing etcetera, and so forth, and that's to be a direct compliment to your group, Jeff and also Mike to your team. I just want to compliment both of you, very professionally done."

Chairman Winters said, "All right, Commissioner, thank you very much for those comments. Commissioners, are there other questions or comments for understanding or clarification?"

MOTION

Commissioner Sciortino approve the Memorandum of Agreement and authorize the Chairman to sign.

Commissioner Unruh seconded the motion.

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

VOTE

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Commissioner Unruh	Aye
Commissioner Norton	Aye
Commissioner McGinn	Aye
Commissioner Sciortino	Aye
Chairman Winters	Aye

Chairman Winters said, “Mike thank you very much, Jeff thank you, Chief thanks, Chief Brazil, thank you very much for all the work you’ve done.”

Mr. Pepoon said, “If I might, Mr. Chairman, I forgot and I was remiss in not mentioning the assistance and guidance we received from the Fire Chief Gary Curmode too. He was involved in the process the entire way and very beneficial to the process.”

Commissioner Sciortino said, “Bob Lamkey hanging around the fringes of things too, was he?”

Mr. Pepoon said, “Very, very helpful.”

Chairman Winters said, “All right. Well, we’re all glad that we’ve got a contract and that we’ve got a two-year contract and we’re very pleased with all the work everyone has done on this. Commissioners, is there any other business to come before the Fire District? Seeing none, the Fire District is adjourned.”

There being no other business to come before the Board, the Meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

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

THOMAS G. WINTERS, Chairman
Third District

DAVID M. UNRUH, Chair Pro Tem
First District

TIM R. NORTON, Commissioner
Second District

LUCY BURTNETT, Commissioner
Fourth District

BEN SCIORTINO, Commissioner
Fifth District

ATTEST:

Don Brace, County Clerk

APPROVED:

_____, 2005