

Minutes of a Special Called meeting of the Town of Saltville Town Council held on Friday, January 23, 2009 at 6:00 P.M., at the Town Hall.

PRESENT: Steven W. Johnson, Town Manager
Edward T. Asbury, Assistant Town Manager

COUNCIL: Dickie Dye, Danny Maiden, Neil Johnson, Thomas Holley, Stanley Cahill

ASSENT: Jeffrey L. Campbell, Mayor
Todd Young, Councilman
Christen W. Burkholder, Town Attorney

Councilman Johnson chairing the meeting in the absence of the Mayor called the meeting to order. Councilman Johnson said this meeting is scheduled to discuss the demotion of Joe Frye as Fire Chief and the placement of Landon Smith as Fire Chief Interim.

Edward Asbury told Council that the word is the Town does not have a Fire Department, this isn't true, Glade Spring, Nebo, Chilhowie, and Clinch Mountain will give the Town full support to help us through this.

Mr. Asbury told Council he had called Joe Frye on Tuesday at his place of work and told him the Town needed a copy of his Fire Fighter 1 Certification by Thursday. Mr. Asbury said he had a message on Wednesday morning, the Mayor said the Town needed a copy of his certification as quick as possible and if he had a fax to send it to the Town Hall. Mr. Asbury said, from there Mr. Frye said what do you need it for, saying you can't tell me what to do. Mr. Asbury replied, send it to the Town Manager, Mr. Frye responded by saying, he is not my boss. Mr. Asbury then asked ask him to send it to Steve Surber, Mr Frye then responded by saying I'm not afraid of him either.

Mr. Asbury told Council, Mr. Frye came by the Town Hall today and would not give the supposed certification to him, but and handed it to the Town Manager. Mr. Asbury said this wasn't a certification and then told Mr. Frye in the presence of the Town Manager that he was removed from acting Fire Chief until the appropriate certification can be submitted. Mr. Asbury said he had taken the steps to put Landon Smith in as Interim Fire Chief. Mr Asbury said basically at the Special Called/Personnel Committee meeting held here yesterday; the Fire Department is under the direction of the Assistant Town Manager within the Organizational Chart structure that was approved by Council.

Joe Frye said Mr. Asbury was not as nice then, like he is at this moment, he called and demanded this certification, listen I don't work for him. Mr. Frye said, "I was on my job, he calls demanding this and demanding that, I don't think I get paid to fax. Mr. Frye gave a copy of the alleged certification.

Councilman Dye told Mr. Frye this is not a Firefighter 1 Certification, this lists only the classes and hours that you have.

Mr. Frye told Councilman Dye at a meeting you told Council all certifications were ok so all

members and officers were approved. Mr. Frye said he has been on the Fire Department for 17 years, this experience should mean something to with the Town.

Steve Surber said he talked with the Fire Fighters Program office in Marion saying these classes will have to be taken over by Mr. Frye because the time has already lapsed.

Bobby Frye said the By-Laws do not distinguish between a Firefighter 1 and a Class A Firefighter. Bobby said you can look at the Fire Department and see the good changes that have been made along with an excellent Ladies Auxiliary. Council need to understand we have a young Fire Department and working hard getting new members.

Councilman Johnson asked council if they had anything to discuss.

Councilman Dye said the Organizational Chart was approved that the Fire Department falls under the control of the Assistant Town Manager.

Councilman Johnson said if Mr. Frye can get his certification that this issue will be revisited

Councilman Holley said if the documents and the needed training can be accomplished by Mr. Frye we will bring this up for discussion.

Councilman Cahill said, until Mr. Frye gets the required certification Landon Smith is now the acting Fire Chief.

Councilman Cahill made a motion to add to the agenda Closed Session, Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-3711(A)(1) to discuss personnel involving the Fire Department. Councilman Holley seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Councilman Cahill made a motion to go into Closed Session at 7:10 P.M., Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-3711(A)(1) to discuss personnel involving the Fire Department. Councilman Holley seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Upon returning to open session at 8:40P.M., Councilman Johnson took a role call vote to certify that matters only identified in the motion to go into closed session were discussed during the closed session. Accordingly, each member present certified by responding "YES".

Councilman Cahill made a motion to rescind the motion to put Landon Smith in at Fire Chief. Councilman Holley seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilman Dye made a motion to put Landon Smith in as Director of Operations at the Fire Department. Councilman Cahill seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilman Dye made a motion to put Gerald Arnold in as Interim Fire Chief. Councilman Cahill

seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Some members asked why didn't you allow us to elect our own Fire Chief?

Councilman Johnson said we had to deal with this and we did in the best way we knew how.

A fire member asked what was the duties of the Director of Operations?

Councilman Cahill said Landon is going to work as a Liaison between the Town and the Fire Department, this consist on getting everyone upon their necessary training.

After a motion, duly seconded, the meeting adjourned at 9:05 P.M.