

**COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO
ACADEMY ROOM
CITY HALL – 107 N. NEVADA AVENUE
AUGUST 8, 2013 – 4:00 P.M.**

Council met in Special Session.

There were present: President King, Councilmembers Collins, Knight, Miller, and Pico.
Absent: Councilmembers Bennett, Gaebler, Martin, and Snider. Also present, Mayor Bach,
Chief Christopher Riley, Jeremy Kroto, and Legislative Counsel Massey.

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President King welcomed Mayor Bach, Chief Riley and the other City staff in attendance and thanked them for their time. The Councilmembers introduced themselves and described the extent of their districts, as applicable.

President King asked Chief Riley to introduce himself and discuss his recruitment and interest in the Fire Chief position in Colorado Springs. Chief Riley described his background, education, training and experience in Fire Service, including his wild land fire experience in California, his teaching credentials for EMT and fire science, and his professional certifications and affiliations. Chief Riley expressed his desire to be confirmed next week even though he will be out of town for a professional commitment. He also informed the Council that he has given notice to his current employer. He respectfully asked that the confirmation be considered at the August 13 meeting.

Councilmember Collins thanked Chief Riley for attending this special meeting today and asked about the 3 v. 4 persons per engine issue. Chief Riley responded that safety is his number one priority. He described his understanding of apparatus staffing and the value of a 4 person crew. He has been tasked with taking a fresh look at the current model and will recommend safe efficiencies.

Councilmember Knight asked about the Fire conference Chief Riley will be attending next week. Chief Riley responded that he has a long standing commitment to membership and leadership of this organization as the immediate past president. He currently serves on the program planning committee for the conference and is the Chair of the Fire Chief Professional (IAFC) Development committee. In addition, Chief Riley will be representing his current employer, the City of Pueblo, on reaccreditation and it is important for him to attend for that process.

Councilmember Knight asked about Chief Riley's 32 years of experience, what would he be on the look-out for? Chief Riley answered wild land support, training, and practices. Chief Riley discussed methods of attacking and managing incidents and the importance of reviewing practices. Chief Riley pledged to work with the department and labor leaders to identify areas of improvement.

Councilmember Miller asked about efficiencies in public safety, and how the Chief balances pressures between administration and what his professional judgment tells him is in the best interests of the department. Chief Riley described that he experienced the same issues in

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Pueblo. He reiterated that Mayor Bach has made no specific requests to reduce or change staffing, but rather has asked Chief Riley to prioritize safety.

President King asked about structure of the Department. Chief Riley responded that he can't discuss specifics because he is not familiar with the details of this department. A risk assessment of the department has been performed as a requirement to be accredited. He stated an assessment would address some of those issues (staffing, call volume, response times, station coverage, etc.) and indicated the number of firefighters on a truck is only one factor in a complicated analysis.

President King then asked about medical response and if he would recommend any changes to organizational structure regarding medical transport. Chief Riley answered that he worked as a paramedic for 10 years and has also been an EMT instructor describing EMS as a passion. Service delivery is important, and he understands the City is seeking a new model for ambulance service. He has worked with the ESA's current provider in Pueblo and the ambulance provider is meeting the benchmarks (response times, got revenue from AMR for Pueblo firefighter services).

Councilmember Knight asked whether 911 calls in Pueblo for emergency medical services result in the dispatch of fire engines? Chief Riley answered they always respond and explained that dispatch for EMS in Pueblo, varies depending upon the type of emergency. He described changes in staffing at one Pueblo station to provide ALS.

Councilmember Miller explained a bit more about the ESA and the City's desire to change contracting for ambulance service. In response to several related questions from the Councilmembers present, Chief Riley discussed strategic planning for the department and how that relates to resource allocation and various management decisions (apparatus deployment, fire station location and construction, staffing levels, safety, response times, training needs, etc.).

Mayor Bach commented on optimization and expressed his belief that "optimization" means more than just reducing costs.

Councilmember Miller asked how Chief Riley will bring IAAF/labor into department decision making? Chief Riley responded that labor and fire management relations are very important and groups must work together. He stated that he had created a labor-management initiative in Pueblo and has maintained a good working relationship with the local labor organization. His goal is to find common ground for the betterment of the community. He emphasized it is important to understand policies and have everyone at the table.

President King asked if Chief Riley had any questions for Council? Chief Riley respectfully requested that confirmation occur August 13 so he can move forward with finalizing his departure from Pueblo and targeting a start date in CS of September 9. He stated he had called all the Councilmembers and will be happy to answer any questions from individual Councilmembers. He needs everyone's support to be successful.

Mayor Bach provided additional background on Chief Riley's recruitment and emphasized his support for him.

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Jeremy Kroto described that Chief Riley's credentials demonstrate he is more than qualified. He stated local firefighters support the Mayor's selection of Chief Riley and believes the Department and City have learned lots of lessons through this process, primarily that communication and cooperation are key. He added that local believes Chief Riley is the best candidate for the job.

It was acknowledged that Mayor Bach meets monthly with representatives of the Fire local and he's committed to working on relationships to face challenges together.

Councilmember Knight stated that from Council's perspective, they need to make sure they are confirming the best candidate. He thanked the Mayor for involving two Councilmembers in the selection process.

President King remarked that the confirmation process should be fair to the candidate, Council and the constituents/citizens. He wants confirmed people to come on board knowing how the Council feels about certain issues and their legislative perspective on matters. He indicated he was concerned about doing the best job for the City and understands the citizens want to bring the best person to the job.

Chief Riley described that he was impressed with Council's concerns for safety and staffing levels and the Mayor's approach to fire issues. Chief Riley stated that he has a good situation currently, and he would not consider coming to Colorado Springs without feeling as if he has the support of his new boss, the labor group, and Council. Like Council, he's been doing his due diligence and he's satisfied that his criteria have been met and he is excited about this opportunity. Chief Riley articulated his respect for the process and his immediate plans upon confirmation.

At 5:20 p.m., there being no further business to come before City Council,

**Minutes were prepared from notes provided by Legislative Counsel Massey.*