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## MEMORANDUM

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DATE: February 19, 2024

TO: City of Mauston Police and Fire Commission

FROM: Robert Whitaker

RE: Fire Chief Hiring Process

The McMahon Team is recommending the Police and Fire Commission proceed with a process to appoint a Fire Chief for the Mauston Fire Department. Currently, McMahon recommends the position continue to be a part-time position.

To ensure a part-time chief position is effective, additional work hours will be required of the fire officers and members of the Department. Since this work is required, the members performing the work must be compensated.

Without the support of work done by officers and other departmental members, additional hours required of the chief will be necessary. At some point, without this support from the officers, the additional hours required for the fire chief position may become more than most part-time chiefs will be available to work and the interested pool of candidates for fire chief will likely be limited. If the model of utilizing officers and other members to support administrative duties of the Fire Chief is not feasible, consideration will need to be given to looking at a full-time fire chief position.

The Job Description for Fire Chief is enclosed. Requirements for the position are detailed in the Job Description. The requirements reference, "such other requirements as the Wisconsin Statutes and Administrative Code may require." Statutes and Administrative Code require the fire chief to either have completed fire officer training as required in Wisconsin SPS330 or to have been appointed as a fire officer in the State prior to October 1, 2018.

The Police and Fire Commission is responsible to appoint a fire chief in accordance with State Statutes. McMahon recommends the Commission adopt a process for this hiring prior to advertising to ensure candidates are aware of the process and its requirements.

McMahon recommends the Commission consider the following process. McMahon would be available to manage this process under a separate scope of work that is included for consideration by the Commission.

- 1) Police and Fire Commission adopt Fire Chief Hiring Process – February PFC Meeting
- 2) Advertise internally and on City Website – Up to twelve current members of the Department currently qualify for the position.
- 3) Interested and qualified candidates submit a cover letter and resume to the Police and Fire Commission or the appointed representative of the PFC.
- 4) Verification of qualifications of candidates – it will be important the Police and Fire Commission carefully ensure applicants meet current qualifications included in SPS330 for appointment to Fire Chief.
- 5) PFC holds a special meeting in mid-March to review applicants and determine which candidates to interview in closed session at regular March PFC Meeting.
- 6) Candidate interviews at March PFC Meeting.
- 7) PFC make an appointment to the position of Fire Chief upon completion of the process.

McMahon recommends the PFC consider allowing up to two (2) at large members of the community/department to participate in the interviews to provide additional input to the PFC. In accordance with State Statutes, these at large members do not have authority to vote on the appointment of the Fire Chief.

**Recommended Action:** If the Commission elects to move forward with a Fire Chief Hiring Process, it is recommended the Commission adopt a Protocol similar to the one outlined in this memo.