

I. SPECIAL MEETING

The Board of Public Safety met in a Special Meeting at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, August 6, 2024, with Board President Daniel Jones, and Board Members, Darryl Heller, Lee Ross (not present), Al Kirsits, and Pamela Claeys. Also present were Fire Chief Carl Buchanon, Attorneys Danielle Weiss, Adam Taylor and Board Clerk Theresa Heffner. The meeting was held in the Council Chambers 4th Floor, County-City Bldg., 227 W. Jefferson Blvd., South Bend Indiana AND virtually Microsoft Team at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/BPS-Special-Mtg08062024>

Attorney Weiss asked that everyone mute their microphone when not speaking, she then read through the agenda to note any additions or corrections.

A. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Board President Jones welcomed the public, called roll, and confirmed the presence of the Board Members.

B. FIRE DEPARTMENT

1. APPROVE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING SOUTH BEND COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION AND CITY OF SOUTH BEND FIRE DEPARTMENT

Chief Carl Buchanon thanked the board members for allowing the SBFD to hold a special meeting to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the South Bend Community School Corporation (SBCSC) and the South Bend Fire Department (SBFD) for their CTE program. It is a high school fire fighter career technology education program that we have had with the SBCSC for many years, but we needed a better understanding between both parties and a contract so that we can both be committed to it. Chief Buchanon then introduced Assistant Chief Brandon Roark who oversees training and is in charge of the CTE program to discuss it in further detail.

Assistant Chief Brandon Roark stated that four (4) years ago he submitted a bill to the School Corp and got a response back from the new controller that stated they did not have any documentation and at that time the program had been in existence for six (6) years. We are ten (10) years into the program now. They did end up paying the bill, so it worked out, because there had been a lot of turnover in the CTE leadership program with the School Corporation. Two (2) years ago, we started meeting with them to start talking about this issue, but it wasn't until March of 2024 that they got a new CTE director, Dr. Finley, and he was very amenable to this and was very sympathetic to our needs as an organization. So, what you are looking at before you today is the culmination of that and it also aligns us with every CTE in the state with how they operate. We were the anomaly in so much as we were providing the employees and the school Corp was reimbursing us, so this will push two (2) employees to the School Corp where they have more academic control and then most of the things that you see in here are specific toward that and defines the roles and responsibilities that each organization would have as we continue to develop and administer this program. There is also working out the liability mitigation, as there's lots of things that come with working in a high-risk, dangerous environment when we are training these sixteen (16), seventeen (17) and eighteen (18) year olds.

Chief Buchanon noted that the SBFD did as much as they could to get this done early, but the School Board just heard this agreement last night, so we literally put it on your schedule as soon as we could and we had to call a special meeting to get it approved before school starts on August 15.

Attorney Taylor noted it is more so an approval of the agreement as a concept and then the South Bend Fire Department will be entering into it and will be signing it.

Mr. Kirsits asked if this will allow the SBCSC to attract students from outside their district like Penn or Mishawaka.

Chief Roark answered yes. The whole CTE program within the county is being revamped. There is now going to be a CTE hub here in downtown South Bend and that CTE program is going to open up beyond South Bend Community School Corp., so every high school in

Saint Joseph County is now going to be able to participate. After this semester, we anticipate our numbers are going to go up in that as well.

Mr. Kirsits stated that there is a couple other programs like Goshen, but the training facility the SBFDF has is second to none, probably one of the best in the state.

Mr. Jones asked for a brief overview of how the program works.

Chief Roark explained that the students will express interest in traveling down this fire and EMT or fire and 1st responder pathway in high school, and they will interview for these positions. They will submit their interest and then they will enroll into the program. Once they do enroll into the program over a period of two (2) years, their junior and senior years of high school, they will attend and become certified so long as they pass all the state tests in Firefighter 1, Firefighter 2, and Hazmat awareness operations. There is a bunch of incident command classes and 1st responder, so that really makes them eligible for the job market as soon as they come out of high school, especially for some of the area agencies that are not in what we call the 77 fund or they can start working part time in the agencies that allow that.

Ms. Claeys asked if it allows them to come right out of high school and enter that job market with their certifications.

Chief Roark advised that selfishly, what is in it for us is a good recruiting pool. We have hired three (3) so far. We hired two (2) from the Elkhart program, and we currently have three (3) that have been extended conditional job offers so long as they meet all those conditions. They will be starting the Fire Academy on October 7th.

Ms. Claeys asked how many days per week they go and how long the program is.

Chief Roark noted that it's five (5) days per week. The Juniors come in the morning, and the seniors come in the afternoon for two (2) years.

Mr. Heller asked if the instructors are supervised by the Fire Department.

Chief Roark answered that one of them is a retired firefighter and one is a current South Bend firefighter that will be doing work for the SBCSC full or part time depending on the hours.

Upon a motion by Darry Heller, seconded by Pam Claeys, and followed by a roll call the Memorandum of Understanding was approved.

B. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, upon a motion by Pamela Claeys, seconded by Darryl Heller, and carried by roll call, the meeting was adjourned at 9:17a.m.

BOARD OF PUBLIC SAFETY



Daniel Jones, President



Darryl Heller, Member



Al Kirsits, Member



Pamela Claeys, Member

ATTEST:



Theresa Heffner, Clerk