CITY OF FAIRBORN
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
June 2, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.
Fire Training Room

COUNCIL MEMBERS	Present	Absent
Dan Kirkpatrick, Mayor	☒	☐
Clint Allen, Councilman	☒	☐
Sylvia Chess, Councilwoman	☐	☒
Adam Fritzsche, Councilman	☒	☐
Rodney McCubbins, Councilman	☒	☐
Mary Reaster, Deputy Mayor	☒	☐
Tana Stanton, Councilwoman	☒	☐

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Browning, E. Gay, Gebhart, McClure, McNamee, Schell, and Taylor.

FIRE DEPARTMENT STAFFING

Ryan Williams, Fire Chief, began the discussion by taking a few minutes to discuss the newly designed Fire Department patch. They started a new muted logo. They worked for over a year on a new patch. He passed around the end product. What they ended with was the City of Fairborn Fire Department logo, the American flag, the city logo and two stars that represent Fairfield and Osborn with the words established 1950 to celebrate our anniversary. They are excited to roll this out. He has uniforms at the alterations place to replace patches. This will be a two-year rollout period for the new patch to be attached to the uniforms.

Councilman Allen likes the idea of patches, but he also likes the idea of what the symbolism means. He thinks it is great that he got the team involved. Chief Williams explained that Carl Fugate who is one of our Firefighter/Paramedics contributed more to that patch than the graphic designer did. There is some ownership and buy-ins with the department. Carl also designed and painted the station logos that are inside the fire station bays. Carl also built the wood podium for the Fire Department in his woodshop.

He explained they are a very proud Fire Department having the tradition of the entire department being paramedics. While he is not coming to them to ask if they can do this immediately, he is coming to them to present an idea of filling positions with EMTs. He thinks part of his job and part of staff's job is to constantly evaluate what we are doing, where we are at, and all those vision questions of where we are going and where we want to be.

Recruitment and retention continue to be a problem. Retention, not so much. They lost four people primarily to promotional opportunities in their hometown which rings closely for him because that is his story as well, six years ago. They are constantly reaching out

on how to fill vacancies that have been vacancies for a long time. It is not lack of trying. He highlighted the following points through his power point:

- Hiring considerations 2025 – goal is to have 54 total – 18 assigned per shift.
- Goal is to have employees "in waiting" to start.
- Time off, overtime, and general operations are based on 18 per shift.
- Generational differences between fierce competition and our own certification requirements are preventing us from reaching our goals.
- Enrollment Data – Sinclair 's Data - EMT Enrollment – 65, Paramedic Enrollment- 30.
- State of Ohio's Data (April 2025) 14,000 dual-trained FF/Paramedics and 8,500 dual-trained FF/EMT's which means there is an 8500-person market Fairborn is not yet tapping into.
- An EMT program is three to six months, and a paramedic program is two years.
- Billing data – 55% of the calls are basic life support. If we had a paramedic with these proposed EMTs that paramedic would be assessing every patient to ensure it is not a paramedic call and let the EMT take the call.
- Set a maximum number of possible EMT firefighters before they start.
- The EMT can work overtime.
- Compensation recommendation for new hires: 10% lower than current in FF/Paramedic salary
- Provided comparable salaries for FF/EMT's in Beavercreek, Trotwood, Clearcreek, Troy and Huber Heights ranging from $51,488 lowest starting entry pay to $84,184 highest top out pay.
- Fairborn's pay proposal for 2025 FF/EMT would be $63,275 entry and $80,982 top rate.
- Expand the Recruit Program to include hiring those enrolled in EMT-B and FF Level 1 and/or 2. Goal would be to hire FCS graduates involved in our (upcoming) Youth Explorer Program
- Order of Operations (tentative)
  1.) City and Council supports all of the initiatives.
  2.) Budget support/5 positions budgeted at Step C, and 1 at Step A
  3.) EMT Wage MOU with Labor
  4.) Personnel Advisory Board for PGAL addition
  5.) Council PGAL Approval
  6.) Recruitment drive for EMTs/Hiring Process for EMTs
  7.) Consider implementation of Explorers program.
  8.) Modify Recruit Program to include students in EMT-B and FF
  9.) Determine what policies need revisions.

Mayor Kirkpatrick stated on the first Sinclair data the paramedic student enrollment is 30, to be a paramedic do they have to already have gone through the EMT classes? Chief Williams responded, yes. Mayor Kirkpatrick stated those 65 have the potential of becoming paramedic so the entry level is EMT. Chief Williams stated that anytime he talks about a paramedic please understand a paramedic has been an EMT and has received certification as well.

Deputy Mayor Reaster asked what would be considered a legal liability. Chief Williams stated it would be everything they do in EMS. He explained patient refusals, a patient says I don't want to go. How would they assess their mental status and actually allow

them to refuse? Are we in a pink slip situation? How do we assess that? Documentation is a huge piece if you did not write it down it did not happen kind of thing. A lot of the legal liabilities are in the documentation. Forceable entry, they are dispatched to someone's home for a welfare check, can they or can they not, break down the door? They deal with patient abandonment issues. They have battery issues and assault. He can't just go up and touch a person without being invited to do so or under certain presumptions of care. Those types of liabilities are what they get a lot of training in. Mayor Kirkpatrick asked if everyone knew what pink slipping meant. Chief Williams explained it is where law enforcement or a physician can say that someone is medically incompetent to decide to not go to the hospital. Deputy Mayor Reaster said in Florida it is called a Baker Act, and they take them for mental evaluations. It is becoming more frequent with teenagers.

Chief Williams stated he is asking for conceptual support in considering hiring EMT basics. He has sat in front of Council many times and bragged about being all paramedics. He owns that, but when you see all of these departments that are dealing with some of their recruitment challenges, he starts to fall behind. He did not want to be the first department to say let's drop our training requirement, but he doesn't want to be the last either when they see the opportunity. They feel if they have an ALS provider on every call the department makes, they are not losing care.

Councilman Allen likes the idea of casting a wider net. It is a change in philosophy on how talent is distributed. Also casting a wider net means there may be a person who isn't necessarily a paramedic, but you know they are great candidates. Overall, they have created a good work culture in the Fire Department.

Deputy Mayor Reaster stated it is evident when you see swearing ins and retirements and promotions it is definitely a family culture in the Fire Department. She thinks providing that opportunity for these EMT's would hopefully drive them to be more and grow in that culture and get their paramedic and continue to grow with the City of Fairborn. She thinks that culture and family units do build that. You can translate that over to any business, people grow where they are watered.

Councilwoman Stanton asked if an incentive to hire for these positions could include one of the infill lots in the City. Mike Gebhart, City Manager, stated then what would they do for Police recruits or new employees for other departments.

Councilman McCubbins stated they do all employee surveys in the government, and he did climate assessment surveys when he was active duty. The two of the top three are promotional opportunities and post development opportunities. He sees this as a good thing. They have had great success with it at the VA. He stated the Chief might consider doing the new hire introductions during a Council Meeting instead of 9:00 a.m. Chief Williams stated they could consider that. They typically start them like it is their first day but bringing them in for an introductory meeting could be something into which they could look.

Councilman Fritzsche liked the idea of casting a wider net. He feels like it would be better to fill the positions than leave them empty.

Deputy Mayor Reaster stated she has a real concern about this, and it could potentially impact the hiring process, is this potential for our constitutional rights to go onto the ballot for the right to sue government actors and eliminate the community defenses for constitutional violations. If you are not familiar with it, she would suggest everyone read up on it. It is very concerning for them as sitting Council members, but also first responders whether it be Police or Fire. If that makes it to the ballot and passes it could potentially be very bad for us. Mike McNamee asked if that was at the state level. Deputy Mayor Reaster responded, yes. As far as this and the recruitment change, she believes it is a fantastic idea.

Mayor Kirkpatrick asked if it would remain a goal that everyone be a paramedic. His concern is if they said no and we ended up with a bunch of EMTs and if we got to the point where we had too many paramedics because of financial restrictions would be restricted from hiring paramedics to keep the costs down. As a medical person Mayor Kirkpatrick loves the idea of all paramedics, but times are tough now with hiring and we can't get people with that kind of expertise. We may have to go to a lesser-trained person. Would it be a goal that we would want them to eventually become a paramedic. Chief Williams stated it is a goal based on cost analysis.

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

Mike Gebhart, City Manager, stated that the Fire Department will always be ALS. They can always take a broken arm through cardiac arrest and there will always be someone that can take care of that person. Remember when people say to you what this is going to do to us? It is not going to do anything we are still ALS compatible with every single call. We are not reducing services at all.

He needs to come up with a date if they would like to have a joint meeting this year, or if they want to go to every other year with the School Board and Bath Township. He does not know how they feel about that, but they would look at some time in July to do that. If Council wants to move forward with that, he can work Amy Gayheart and the Township to schedule that. They were looking at either a Monday or a Tuesday night. He will get some dates and email them and see which one is going to be better for
you and then go from there.

Mayor Kirkpatrick asked who would be presenting the June milestones. Mr. Gebhart stated Ryan has two members of his staff and Hilary has one member of her staff. Council will come down and the two department heads will come up and do their introductions, talk about their person, and present them with their certificate.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Deputy Mayor Reaster stated Ryan Williams and she attended Real World, Real Money at the Middle School. It was so much fun. These middle school kids get assigned to a job, a spouse, and a number of kids. They may have kids they may not have kids. They have to visit all of the stations and figure out a budget. She took the chance station which is whatever crazy life can throw at you like a tree falls on your car. She took so much out of it, and it was so much fun. She highly encourages Council to attend the next one.

Mayor Kirkpatrick reminded everyone of the upcoming Coffee with Council and Council Conversations. Emily Gay stated she would send out reminders about those events.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilwoman Stanton moved to adjourn the meeting. Deputy Mayor Reaster seconded. Yeas, six: Stanton, Reaster, Allen, Fritzsche, McCubbins and Kirkpatrick. Nays, none. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

MAYOR

CLERK, CITY OF FAIRBORN