

**Village of Higginsport
Village Council Special Meeting
August 26, 2024**

The Council of the Village of Higginsport met in special session at the Village Municipal Building on Monday, August 26, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. with all members present except Mayor Lester Bear and Mark Fester.

Also present were: Police Chief Shawn Elliott, Duane Germann, Tina Germann, Anthony Moon, Raegan Moon, Rob Starrett, Curtis Henderson, Patrick Elliott, Dona Starrett, Connie Smith, Mark Smith, Cindy Brown, Dylan Branham, Wayne Johnson, Diane Johnson, Tricia Wood, Doug Fisher, Casey Jones and Danielle Hart.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the village fire chief position.

Council President, Matt Adams called the meeting to order and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Adams presented a recap of the last council meeting stating that the mayor had fired the Fire Chief, Rob Starrett however the mayor did not have the authority to do so. Also, Chief Starrett had submitted his resignation as well but that no member council members had seen his resignation letter.

President Adams stated that Council had not formally accepted Mr. Starrett's resignation and that he had spoken with Mr. Starrett and requested he rescind his resignation and remain the village fire chief.

Resolution 24-21

Motion by: Ms. Wills

Seconded by: Mrs. Adams

WHEREAS, Village Fire Chief, Rob Starrett submitted a letter of resignation on August 12, 2024, and

WHEREAS, the Village Council does not desire to accept Chief Starrett's resignation,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Village Council rejects Chief Starrett's resignation.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Mrs. Adams, Yes; Mr. Adams, Yes; Mr. Fester, Absent, Mr. Null, Yes, Mr. Smith, Abstain, Ms. Wills, Yes

President Adams expressed that the Ohio Revised Code states that the mayor could not fire the fire chief and that Council did not accept Chief Starrett's resignation.

Mr. Smith inquired if everything with the fire department goes back to the way it was. President Adam confirmed that it did and that it shouldn't have ever been changed as Council had not seen Chief Starrett's resignation and had not accepted his resignation.

President Adams asked Chief Starrett would rescind his resignation. Chief Starrett agreed that he would rescind his resignation.

Chief Starrett addressed Council expressing that he had requested the fire department records be returned to him as it was given to them upon his resignation. He explained the records need to be secured under one lock and one key as there are records that contain personal information for the department volunteers. A brief discussion ensued regarding the fire department's use of the old police department evidence room.

Chief Starrett expressed that he would be happy to provide Council with any records or information they requested. He stated the situation shouldn't ever have escalated to what it did.

Chief Starrett expressed his concerns as to what the future will be with the village's fire contract with Lewis Township. He informed Council that Lewis Township had hired a consultant to evaluate fire and EMS services in the township.

President Adams expressed that there was a lot of work that needed to be done in the village, several improvements that had already been made and that the Mayor and Council should be focused on those matters.

Motion by: Mrs. Adams, seconded by: Mr. Null, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Lester Beair., Mayor

Sheila G. Dufau, Fiscal Officer

Kathy Adams, Council Member

Matt Adams, Council Member

Linda Wills, Council Member

Scott Null, Council Member

Mark Fester, Council Member

Drew Smith, Council Member