

STATE OF MICHIGAN
LABOR MEDIATION BOARD

Dr. Jack Stebbins FF
2/7/67

TRUE COPY

In the Matter of:

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, MICHIGAN
AND MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

- and -

MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION
LOCAL 1600 - AN INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
FIRE FIGHTERS

Case No. L-66 G-303

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APPROVAL OF HEARINGS OFFICER'S FACT FINDING REPORT

The Hearings Officer's Fact Finding Report in the above matter, dated January 13, 1967, having been submitted to the interested parties and the Labor Mediation Board in accordance with Article V, Section 1, of the Board's Rules and Regulations relating to fact finding; and the parties having had an opportunity to review said Report for at least ten days from the date of service, as required by the Board's Rules and Regulations; and neither party having submitted comments with respect to said Report,

The Labor Mediation Board, after reviewing the Hearings Officer's Fact Finding Report and the entire record in the matter, hereby affirms, approves, and adopts said Report.

MICHIGAN LABOR MEDIATION BOARD

/s/ Robert G. Howlett
Robert G. Howlett, Chairman

/s/ Leo W. Walsh
Leo W. Walsh, Board Member

/s/ Philip Weiss
Philip Weiss, Board Member

Dated: 2/7/67

Meridian Township

STATE OF MICHIGAN
LABOR MEDIATION BOARD

In the Matter of:

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, MICHIGAN
AND MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

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MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION
LOCAL 1600 - AN INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
FIRE FIGHTERS

Case No. L-66 G305

HEARINGS OFFICER'S REPORT WITH RECOMMENDATIONS

APPEARANCES:

For Meridian Township:

Ted Swift, Attorney
R. R. Robinson, Supervisor
Noel Miller, Treasurer

For Fire Fighters Association
Local 1600:

Gary Thomas, 8th District Vice President
Harold E. Spross, President, Local 1600
John W. Creed, Vice President, Local 1600
Richard McKane, Secretary, Local 1600

Also Present:

Robert Patterson, Fire Chief

BACKGROUND

This is a fact finding report under the provisions of Section 25 of Act 176 of the Public Act of 1939, as amended, which provides in part as follows:

"Whenever in the course of mediation under Section 7 of Act No. 336 of the Public Acts of 1947, being Section 423.207 of the Compiled Laws of 1948, it shall become apparent to the Board that matters in disagreement between the parties might be more readily settled if the facts involved in the disagreement were determined and publicly known, the Board may make written findings with respect to the matters in disagreement. Such findings shall not be binding upon the parties but shall be made public ***."

In accordance with the Board's Rules and Regulations relating to Fact Finding Procedures, the undersigned Hearings Officer was designated to conduct a hearing in the matter and to issue a report in accordance with Article V, Section 1, of the Rules and Regulations which provides as follows:

"After a hearing for the purpose of taking evidence upon a petition, the Labor Hearings Officer shall prepare a report. Such report shall contain findings of fact and the reasons or basis therefor. The Labor Hearings Officer shall file the original with the Board and cause a copy thereof to be served upon each of the parties. Within ten days from the date of service of the report, the parties may file written comments with the Board."

On March 1, 1966, Local 1600 of the International Association of Fire Fighters, AFL-CIO, was granted recognition by the Meridian Township Board as bargaining agent for all fire/employees except the Chief. Shortly thereafter, the parties started negotiations. A number of negotiating sessions were held at which salaries and other issues were discussed. The union submitted several proposals and the Township responded with its proposal on July 6, 1966. Agreement was reached on some issues but not on salaries which was the major issue in dispute. On July 21, 1966 the Union filed a request for mediation with the Michigan Labor Mediation Board. A mediation session was held on August 24, 1966 which failed to produce an agreement. On September 29, 1966 the union filed a petition for Fact-Finding and the Township filed an answer to the petition on October 15, 1966. The Labor Mediation Board, on October 18, 1966, appointed the undersigned "as its Hearings Officer and Agent to conduct a fact-finding hearing . . . and to issue a report with recommendations with respect to the matters in disagreement."

In response to a request from the Hearings Officer, the Township submitted a "Statement of Position of Employer in Regard to Issues in Dispute." The union chose not to submit a pre-hearing statement. A hearing was held in East Lansing, Michigan, on November 28, 1966, at which the parties presented evidence and arguments in support of their respective positions.

Issues

At the hearing four issues were presented to the Hearings Officer.

1. Salaries.
2. The union's request for time-and-one half pay for holidays worked and extra duty hours.
3. The union's request for one-and-one half times the volunteer fireman's rate of pay for regular fire fighters recalled to duty.
4. The union's request that an annual physical examination be required and paid for by the Township.

The parties agreed that by far the most important issue was salaries and practically the entire hearing was devoted to this issue.

Township Position on Salaries

During negotiations and at the hearing the Township proposed the following salary schedule effective January 1, 1967, except where another date is shown:

1967 Proposed Firemen Salary Schedule
(Submitted by Township)

Step		Present Salary	Fire Lt. Grade 13 6110-7280	Fire Sgt. Grade 12 5850-6890	Fireman Grade 11 5590-6630
3	McKane	6110.00 ^a	6630.00		
3	Grettenberger	6110.00 ^a	6630.00		
3	Smiley	6110.00 ^a	6630.00		
3	Creed	5850.00 ^b		6370.00	
3	Stillman	5850.00 ^b		6370.00	
3	Bosnak	5720.00 ^c			6110.00
3	Karnes	5720.00 ^c			6110.00
2	Spross	5330.00 ^d			5850.00
2	McKinley	5200.00 ^e	Effective April 1st		5850.00
2	Joseph	5070.00 ^f	Effective July 1st		5850.00

^aGrade 11, Step 3

^bGrade 10, Step 3

^cGrade 9, Step 3½

^dGrade 9, Step 2

^eGrade 9, Step 1½

^fGrade 9, Step 1

The Township noted that it had adopted a salary schedule for all employees in January 1966, before there was a union of fire fighters. (See Table I attached to report) At that time it had slotted employees into grades and steps in accordance with their then existing salaries and without regard to years of service. The Township stated that it intends to advance firemen on the basis of service in the future subject to negotiations with the union.

In support of its proposal the Township adduced the following arguments:

1. The proposed increases are far greater than the increase in the cost of living since the last salary adjustment, though the Township does not believe and has never considered this to be the sole criterion.
2. The proposal would result in an average increase per year since the date each man was hired of \$275 to \$536 or 7.6 to 12.0 per cent (exclusive of McKinley and Joseph).
3. In addition to the salary increase the Township contributes 4 per cent of basic salary for pensions; \$55.80 per year per fireman for life insurance; provides sick leave of one day per month up to a maximum of 30 working days, and after this period employees receive 60 per cent of salary for a period of six months at a cost to the Township of \$33.84 per year per fireman; provides accidental death and dismemberment insurance costing \$4.20 per year per fireman;

a uniform allowance of \$75 per year; Blue Cross hospitalization at a cost of \$10 to \$10.39 per month per fireman; and duty death and disability insurance which pays \$50 per week for disability and \$10,000 in the event of death or specified dismemberment; and other fringe benefits.

4. The proposed salary increases would be accompanied by a reduction in working hours as a result of a state law which will result in weekly hours being reduced from 63 to 56 effective July 1, 1967.
5. Meridian Township salaries compare favorably with those in nearby Lansing and Delta Townships, though they are lower than salaries in East Lansing and Lansing which are much larger communities and have larger fire departments.
6. The proposed salary schedule is higher at both the base and top than most Michigan Area #2 cities and especially those cities with 10,000 to 25,000 population.
7. A comparison of earnings of teachers in Okemos schools and fire fighters shows that during the 20 years after graduation from high school a fire fighter would earn \$16,165 more than a teacher when allowance is made for the cost of a teacher's college education.
8. Under the proposed salary schedule Meridian Township fire fighter earnings will come to about 47 to 56 per cent of the Township Supervisor's salary which is higher than the proportion fire fighters' earnings bear to city managers' earnings in selected cities.

Union Position on Salaries

During negotiations the union made various proposals with respect to salaries. However, at the hearing it made the following proposal which replaced all previous proposals. This proposal was also contained in a letter dated December 15, 1966 submitted at the request of the Hearings Officer. All salaries were to become effective January 1, 1967 except as otherwise indicated.

1967 Proposed Firemen Salary Schedule (Submitted by Union)

Lts.	)McKane	\$7,280 (Grade 13, Step 5)
	)Grettenberger	7,280 " " " "
	)Smiley	7,280 " " " "
Sgts.	)Stillman	6,890 (Grade 12, Step 5)
	)Creed	6,890 " " " "
Firemen	)Bosnak	6,630 (Grade 11, Step 5)
	)Karnes	6,630 " " " "
	)Spross	6,110 (Grade 11, Step 3) (eff. May 1, 1967)
	)McKinley	5,850 (Grade 11, Step 2) (eff. April 1, 1967)
	)Joseph	5,850 (Grade 11, Step 2) (eff. July 1, 1967)

In support of its salary proposal the union adduced the following arguments:

1. The Township proposal does not take account of years of service. Thus, according to the Township salary schedule, employees with four years or more of service should be in step 5, but the Township proposal would result in fire fighters with six to more than ten years of service being slotted in Step 3. The union proposal would accord fire fighters the salary to which their years of service would entitle them under the Township salary schedule.
2. The Meridian Township Fire Department is under-staffed. According to the National Fire Protection Association there should be 2.4 firemen for every 1,000 population. The Township has only 10 fire fighters serving a population of about 18,000. There are also fewer volunteer firemen than the standard set by the National Fire Protection Association. The net result is that fire fighters in Meridian Township have more responsibility than in most communities and that this should be taken into account in setting salaries.
3. The U. S. Department of Labor "modest but adequate income" budget calls for an annual income of \$6,665 for a family of four. This is more than the Township proposal for Fire Lieutenants with more than 10 years of service.
4. Meridian Township has had difficulty recruiting fire fighters at salaries offered.
5. Fire fighting is one of the most dangerous and hazardous occupations and should be compensated accordingly.
6. Construction workers in Lansing had wage rates ranging from \$3.20 per hour for laborer to \$4.65 per hour for bricklayer as of April 30, 1966. Wage rates at Oldsmobile and Fisher Body in Lansing were equivalent to annual earnings of \$6,240 for janitors, \$8,153 for electricians and \$6,697 for factory firemen as of September 5, 1966. Also, Lansing firemen earned \$6,856 per year. Meridian Township proposed salaries compare unfavorably to earnings of these other occupations in the Lansing area.
7. The Union pointed out that in other communities some firemen are at the top of the rate range, whereas none have been slotted in that position in Meridian Township.
8. Firemen's salaries in selected Michigan cities are higher than those proposed for Meridian Township and increases granted in 1966 were higher than proposed by the Township. (Hearings Officer's note: All but three of the cities in this exhibit were in Area No. 1, the Detroit Metropolitan area, and the salaries and increases quoted were for the top of the range.)

Discussion and Recommendations on Salaries

The Hearings Officer has given careful consideration to all the evidence and arguments of the parties. In reaching his recommendations he has been guided by the following criteria:

1. Salary levels for fire fighters in other comparable Michigan communities.
2. Salary increases granted to fire fighters in 1966 in other comparable Michigan communities.
3. The internal salary structure among fire fighters in Meridian Township with due regard for rank, years of service and the Township salary schedule.

To preface this analysis we present below a comparison of the Township and Union proposals:

Name	Date Employed	1966 Salary	Township Proposal		Union Proposal	
			Salary	\$ Increase	Salary	\$ Increase
Smiley	1/23/56	6,110	6,630	520	7,280	1,170
Grettenberger	5/2/56	6,110	6,630	520	7,280	1,170
McKane	7/1/56	6,110	6,630	520	7,280	1,170
Stillman	10/16/57	5,850	6,370	520	6,890	1,040
Creed	2/7/58	5,850	6,370	520	6,890	1,040
Bosnak	8/8/60	5,720	6,110	390	6,630	910
Karnes	2/6/64	5,720	6,110	390	6,630	910
Spross	5/23/65	5,330	5,850	520	6,110(5/1/67)	780
McKinley	4/1/66	5,200	5,850(4/1/67)	650	5,850(4/1/67)	650
Joseph	7/1/66	5,070	5,850(7/1/67)	780	5,850(7/1/67)	780

Since the Township and the Union are in agreement on the salary adjustments for the two men hired in 1966 (McKinley and Joseph), there is no need to include them in the discussion which follows.

For comparison purposes with respect to salary levels and increases in other Michigan localities, we believe that the relevant communities are those in Area #2 which is defined by the Michigan Municipal League as "that portion of the Lower Peninsula outside the metropolitan area and below a line drawn just north of Bay City, Midland, and Mt. Pleasant." Area #1 consists of "the Detroit metropolitan area, extending outward to Mt. Clemens, Pontiac, Ann Arbor and Flat Rock," and Area #3 is the "northern half of the Lower Peninsula and all of the Upper Peninsula."

The Michigan Municipal League published salary information for fire fighters in February 1966 (Information Bulletin No. 106) and again in a Supplement issued in September 1966. The February 1966 Bulletin contained pay information as of January 1966 for classifications of Fireman, Fire Sergeant, Fire Lieutenant and Fire Captain. The September Supplement reported August 1966 salaries for the Fire Fighter classification (equivalent to Fireman) but not for Sergeant, Lieutenant or Captain. Twenty Area #2 municipalities were shown as having increased Fire Fighters' salaries between January and August 1966.

The salaries and increases are shown in Table II attached to this report.

Table II shows that the average salary for Fire Fighter in the 20 municipalities (calculated on the basis of the median of the mid-point of the salary range in each city) was \$5,885 in August 1966; the average increase was \$475 or 8.7 per cent over the January 1966 salary. In municipalities with a population of 10,000 to 25,000 the average salary was \$5,785 and the average increase was \$504 or 9.4 per cent. These figures are for the Fire Fighter classification only.

Comparing the salary figures for Area #2 municipalities with Meridian Township we find that the Township salary proposal for Fire Fighter is in line with salaries paid in comparable communities. The salary increase proposed for Bosnak and Karnes, however, is lower than the average increase, in both absolute and percentage terms, than in other Area #2 municipalities. The union's proposal would bring Fire Fighter salaries and increases well above those in other comparable communities.

The absence of August 1966 data for Fire Sergeant and Fire Lieutenant does not permit a direct comparison of proposed Meridian Township salaries for these classifications with those in other Area #2 communities. However, if we assume that Sergeants and Lieutenants received the same absolute increases as Fire Fighters in 1966, the Township proposal would give these two classifications about the same salaries as the average paid in Area #2 municipalities in the 10,000 - 25,000 population category, but lower than the average in all Area #2 municipalities for which estimates could be made.

In making these comparisons, we must keep in mind that proposed Meridian Township salaries would remain in effect until December 31, 1967 while salaries in most other municipalities went into effect on July 1, 1966 and will probably be increased again on July 1, 1967.

Turning to the effect of the proposed salary increases on the internal salary structure, we find that the Township proposal would give an increase of \$520 to every man except Bosnak and Karnes who would receive \$390 each. These increases would yield percentage increases of 8.5% to Lieutenants, 8.9% to Sergeants, 6.8% to Fire Fighters Bosnak and Karnes and 9.8% to Fire Fighter Spross. The union proposal would give \$1,170 to Lieutenants, \$1,040 to Sergeants, \$910 to Bosnak and Karnes and \$780 to Spross. Percentage-wise the union proposal would result in increases of 19.1% to 14.6%.

After careful analysis of the Township and Union proposals, salary data for other Michigan municipalities, and the arguments presented by the parties, the Hearings Officer recommends the following salary schedule:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date Employed</u>	<u>1966 Salary</u>	<u>Increase Eff. 1/1/67</u>	<u>Salary 1/1/67</u>	<u>Increase Eff. 7/1/67</u>	<u>Salary 7/1/67</u>
Smiley	1/23/56	6, 110	520	6, 630	180	6, 810
Grettenberger	5/2/56	6, 110	520	6, 630	180	6, 810
McKane	7/1/56	6, 110	520	6, 630	180	6, 810
Stillman	10/16/57	5, 850	520	6, 370	130	6, 500
Creed	2/7/58	5, 850	520	6, 370	130	6, 500
Bosnak	8/8/60	5, 720	520	6, 240	130	6, 370
Karnes	2/6/64	5, 720	520	6, 240		6, 240
Spross	5/23/65	5, 330	520	5, 850	130	5, 980

The above salary schedule provides increases effective January 1, 1967 which are about the same as those granted to Fire Fighters in other Area #2 municipalities. To compensate for the fact that salaries in most other localities have been in effect since July 1, 1966 and will be subject to an additional increase on July 1, 1967, and to bring salaries of Sergeants and Lieutenants closer to those in other Area # 2 municipalities, including East Lansing and Lansing, the recommendation calls for a modest adjustment equivalent to 1/2 step in the Meridian Township salary schedule at mid-year. Delaying this catch-up adjustment to July 1, 1967 will reduce the cost to the Township. Only one man, Karnes, would not receive this mid-year adjustment in order to introduce some differential between him and Bosnak who has 3½ years more service. The recommended salary schedule also takes account of differences in rank and brings salaries more closely into line with years of service. Thus, the three Lieutenants, each with approximately 11 years of service, would be paid \$6,810 after July 1, 1967; two Sergeants, each with more than 9 years of service, would receive \$6,500; and the three Fire Fighters with 7, 3½ and 2 years of service would be paid \$6,370, \$6,240 and \$5,980 respectively. The two new firemen who will complete their first year of service in 1967 will receive \$5,850.

The Hearings Officer recognizes that in order to achieve a salary structure which meets that test of comparability and internal consistency, he has recommended salaries which fall mid-way between steps in the Meridian Township salary schedule. However, this is not a departure from past practice inasmuch as two firemen (Bosnak and Karnes) were placed in Step 3½ when the schedule was introduced by the Township in January 1966.

Discussion and Recommendations on other Issues

At the hearing the Township indicated that it was prepared to grant the union's request for time-and-one-half pay for holidays worked and extra duty hours. Therefore, it is not necessary to make a recommendation on this issue.

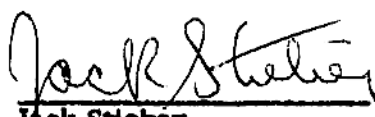
With respect to the union's request that a regular fire fighter be paid one-and-one-half times the rate of pay received by a volunteer fireman when recalled to duty, the Township stated that its mind was open on this issue and that the subject had not been

sufficiently explored in negotiations. The Hearings Officer is confident that the parties can reach agreement on this issue and recommends that it be returned for further negotiation.

The final issue is the union's request that an annual physical examination be required of all fire fighters and be paid for by the Township. The union argued that the nature of the work and the hazards involved called for an annual physical examination as a condition of continued employment. Such a condition would protect both the individual fireman and the public and should properly be paid for by the Township.

The Township pointed out that applicants for a fire fighter position were required to have a physical examination at Township expense. To require annual physical examinations would pose a host of problems such as the setting of standards, application to volunteer firemen and others. The union admitted that most other communities do not pay for annual physical examinations for members of their fire departments.

The Hearings Officer recommends that the union request for an annual physical examination paid for by the Township be denied.


Jack Stieber
Hearings Officer

Dated: January 13, 1967

TABLE I

MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP SALARY SCHEDULE

Annual Rates in Dollars

	<u>Step 1</u> Start	<u>Step 1½</u> 6 mo.	<u>Step 2</u> 1 yr.	<u>Step 3</u> 2 yr.	<u>Step 4</u> 3 yr.	<u>Step 5</u> 4 yr.
1	3,380	3,445	3,510	3,640	3,835	4,030
2	3,510	3,575	3,640	3,835	4,030	4,290
3	3,640	3,705	3,835	4,030	4,290	4,550
4	3,835	3,900	4,030	4,290	4,550	4,810
5	4,030	4,160	4,290	4,550	4,810	5,070
6	4,290	4,420	4,550	4,810	5,070	5,330
7	4,550	4,680	4,810	5,070	5,330	5,590
8	4,810	4,940	5,070	5,330	5,590	5,850
9	5,070	5,200	5,330	5,590	5,850	6,110
10	5,330	5,460	5,590	5,850	6,110	6,370
11	5,590	5,720	5,850	6,110	6,370	6,630
12	5,850	5,980	6,110	6,370	6,630	6,890
13	6,110	6,240	6,370	6,630	6,995	7,280
14	6,370	6,500	6,630	6,955	7,280	7,540
15	6,630		6,955	7,280	7,540	7,800
16	6,955		7,280	7,540	7,865	8,190
17	7,280		7,540	7,865	8,190	8,515
18	7,506		7,865	8,190	8,515	8,840

TABLE II
FIRE FIGHTERS SALARIES IN AREA #2 MICHIGAN MUNICIPALITIES
 January and August 1966

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>Salary Jan. 1966</u>	<u>Salary August 1966</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Jan. 1966</u>	<u>Mid-Point August 1966</u>	<u>Increase</u>
<u>Over 50,000 Population</u>						
Bay City	5117-5900	5477-6077	360-177	5509	5777	268
Flint	5484-6855	5772-7213	288-358	6169	6493	324
Grand Rapids	5122-5902	5616-6526	494-624	5512	6071	559
Jackson	5071-6146	5294-6416	223-270	5608	5855	247
Lansing	5866-6532	6164-6856	298-324	6199	6510	311
Saginaw	5465-6137	5971-6706	506-569	5801	6339	538
Wyoming	5122-5902	5486-6370	364-468	5512	5928	416
<u>25,000-50,000 Population</u>						
East Lansing	5110-6335	5530-6855	420-520	5723	6193	470
Midland	5480-6645	6000-7045	520-400	6063	6523	460
Muskegon	5000-5800	6200-7000	1200-1200	5400	6600	1200
Portage	4600-5200	5016-6240	416-1040	4900	5628	728
<u>10,000-25,000 Population</u>						
Albion	5115-5590	5371-5870	256-280	5353	5621	268
E. Grand Rapids	5040-5640	5400-6288	360-648	5340	5844	504
Grand Haven	4298-5445	5239-6084	941-639	4872	5662	790
Holland	4810-5902	5330-6500	520-598	5356	5915	559
Monroe	5206-5646	6043-7032	837-1386	5426	6538	1112
Mt. Pleasant	4407-5317	4826-5741	419-424	4862	5284	422
Muskegon Heights	5200-5800	5500-6100	300-300	5500	5800	300
Owosso	5304	5785	481	5304	5785	481
St. Joseph	4440-5400	4914-6110	474-710	4920	5512	592
Median Salary, All Municipalities				5453	5885	475
Median Salary, Municipalities - 10,000-25,000 Population				5340	5785	504

Source: Salaries, Wages and Fringe Benefits in Michigan Municipalities over 4,000 Population, 1966.
 Michigan Municipal League, Information Bulletin No. 106, February 1966; and "Supplement
 To Information Bulletin No. 106," September, 1966.