

**CITY OF CHEROKEE VILLAGE, ARKANSAS
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
OCTOBER 24, 2008**

The Honorable Mayor Lloyd Hefley called this special meeting of the City Council to order Friday, October 24, 2008.

Clerk Endrihs called role – present were: Thone, Viers, Martin, Oberding and Paul which gave us a quorum.

Mayor Hefley indicated that the purpose of this meeting was to introduce his selection of the new Police Chief, Jason P. French. Mr. French has received the following degrees:

EDUCATION:

Associate of Applied Science in Criminal Justice, 2005
Associate of Arts, 2005
Master of Public Administration, 2004 (Recipient of MPA
Honor Graduate Award
Bachelor of Science in Agriculture, 1994.

EXPERIENCE: Instructor, Law Enforcement Training Academy March 2002-
Present, Black River Technical College, Pocahontas
Sergeant/Supervisor/Investigator, Second Judicial Drug Task
Force, March 1999-February 2002, Jonesboro
Adjunct Instructor, August 2001-February 2002, Black River
Technical College, Pocahontas
Patrol Officer, July 1996-March 1999, Jonesboro Police
Department
Transport Officer, March 1998-March 1999, United States
Marshals Service, Jonesboro
Auxiliary Officer, January 1996-July 1996, Jonesboro Police
Department
Shift Supervisor/Dispatcher/Booking Officer/Jailer
January 1995-July 1996.

Officer French's accreditations and references are on file.

Mayor Hefley went on to say that Officer French comes highly recommended; and he personally recommends him highly.

The Mayor then opened up for the Council to ask questions of Officer French. Paul wanted to know why a change now. French replied that he had moved to the area 3 years ago and feels it is a good place to raise children. It presents an opportunity to serve in an administrative position, and he also wants to serve the community in which he lives as best he can.

Paul then questioned him as to how he would handle the turmoil in his department that would be awaiting him. French replied that he had spoken with the Mayor and is aware of the situation. He indicated that he is a straightforward individual, plays no favorites, works in a professional manner at all times and expects the same from his officers.

Thone then asked if he understood how his officers felt in the loss of previous chief and what would he do if some pulled a walkout. French said that if something like this happened, he had a working relationship with the Mayors and Police Chiefs from surrounding areas and would seek their help in making sure that Cherokee Village had police protection at all times.

Oberding asked if he knew his officers. He said he knew each officer by name as each one had come through the Police Academy at one time or another.

Thone asked him how he would handle himself, would he wear a uniform, would he be just an office policeman; or... French replied that he is a working administrator and part of a team. He planned to wear a uniform and be out in the community on patrol at times. He would be willing to speak to various organizations and would dress accordingly. He believes in leading by example.

Viers asked what would be the first thing he would do when he takes office. He replied that he would do a complete audit of every police officer.

Martin questioned the lack of information in the personnel files. French replied that a verbal warning was not sufficient. If some discipline action is necessary and is not written down, it is like it never happened.

Oberding asked what would be done if a complaint was received from a citizen. French replied that it would be investigated; and if the investigation warranted action, appropriate action would be taken.

Oberding then asked that considering the turmoil, would he meet as a group or individually. French replied that he would meet first as a group as things need to be brought out in the open, discussed, straightened out and then move on from there. If an officer wants to talk to him individually, he would have an "open door" policy.

Viers asked him if he thought he had sufficient staff to work the Village French replied that what he would like is two officers working per shift; however, he is aware of his budget and knows that this is not possible at this time. He does, however, plan to seek grants and with proper management, things will work out.

Martin indicated that at one time we had volunteer police officers and would he have a problem with this. French replied that he would be very happy to have individuals willing to donate their time; however they would have to be willing, capable and trained. This would be a great opportunity for them; but we would have to promise to treat them with appreciation and respect.

Martin asked if he would have a supervisor working the same shift as the patrol officer, if he would stagger shifts or rotate the officers every three months or so. French replied that he could not answer that question until he gets involved. He does, however, understand complacency and will deal with that should it arise.

Viers asked if he was okay with the pay scale. French replied that after speaking with the Mayor, he was okay with the pay as well as the benefits offered.

The Mayor said that the pay scale info was given to Council and that he felt we could offer to pay his family medical benefits as well. He talked with the other department heads and no one objected. Martin indicated, however, that this should be brought up at the working meeting and discussed in more detail.

Viers asked French when he could start. He replied that he would be starting November 1st.

The Mayor thanked French on behalf of himself and the Council, and dismissed him. French thanked everyone in return for the opportunity to present himself.

Mayor Hefley stated that Chief Goodwin had requested an opportunity to appeal to side to the Council. Attorney Abele indicated that this had to be done within 10 days of his request. Meeting for this special hearing was set for Tuesday, October 28th at 7:00 PM.

Meeting adjourned.

DATE: _____

APPROVED: _____
Mayor Lloyd Hefley

ATTEST: _____
Phyllis J. Endrihs, Clerk/Treasurer

