

Winter Park firefighter suspended, charged with disobeying orders

By Yvonne C.T. Vassel

OF THE SENTINEL STAFF

WINTER PARK — One of the city's two women firefighters has been suspended with pay on charges she disobeyed orders of superior officers.

Judy Manor, 36, was suspended July 8 after Lt. Bob Ferrell complained about Manor's behavior at a July 2 fire at 656 Worthington Drive. Ferrell, in a written statement, said Manor refused

to don protective gear, help remove items from the building and later his order to leave the scene.

He also said she argued with him. Manor also is accused of arguing with Fire Training Officer Chip Gaines, who was in charge of the fire scene.

John Litton, assistant city manager-personnel director, has scheduled a meeting for July 22 to hear reports of the incident and allow Manor to rebut

them.

Attorney James Moreland, a former chairman of the city's Civil Service Board, has been hired to represent Manor, who has declined to comment.

Battalion chief Wayne Garner recommended Manor's dismissal after interviewing other people who witnessed the incidents between Manor and Ferrell, who is president of the firefighters union.

Manor was hired by the 44-person fire department in November 1981.

In January 1985 she filed a sex discrimination suit against the department with the state Commission on Human Relations, claiming she had been prevented from driving fire trucks and performing duties she was accustomed to doing before changing shifts in February 1984.

In August 1985 the commission cleared the department of the charges but, in its wake, a more uniform training program was instituted through the appoint-

ment of a full-time fire training officer.

At the time the commission ruled, Manor said she was glad to put the issue behind her and she believed everyone benefited from it.

Moreland, though, said he believes Manor has been "a marked woman" since she filed the suit, which named Ferrell as one officer whom Manor claimed discriminated against her. Moreland said he plans to question during the hearing how Manor's supervisors handled the fire, which the department responded to twice that night.

If Litton goes ahead with firing or disciplining Manor, she can appeal the decision to the Civil Service Board.

Litton said the hearing is closed to the public, but Moreland said he is leaning toward waiving Manor's right to privacy and opening the meeting.

Any appeals to the Civil Service Board would be open to the public.