

Outlook 4-14-88

By MISSY CLARK

Staff Writer

## Firefighters, city reach agreement

WINTER PARK—After nearly two years of mostly unproductive negotiations, the Winter Park firefighters' union and city management have reached an agreement and ratified a new two-year contract between the firefighters and the city.

The contract proposal was ratified by a majority vote of the firefighters, and the city commission approved it

Tuesday. Contract negotiations had resumed in February after having reached a dead-end "impasse" last August.

"We've had some very productive, give-and-take negotiations over the last month or so, and we were able to come up with an agreement that is acceptable to both sides," said John Litton, assistant city manager/personnel director. Litton

*Please see Agreement on Page 24*

Winter Park Outlook

Thursday, April 14, 1988

### Agreement

*Continued From Page 1*

was the chief negotiator for the city's bargaining team, which also included fire chief Duane Mehl and public safety director Ray Beary. On the union's side of the bargaining table were Pat Patatuccio, Larry Niren and Bobby Farrell.

Litton said that the city was able to retain its management rights while still granting some of the concessions the union has been requesting since contract negotiations began in 1986.

In June of last year, union representatives declared an impasse in the negotiations after they were unable to reach an agreement which would be acceptable to both the union and the city. Union spokesmen said the city was stubborn and unresponsive to their suggestions, while the city claimed the firefighters' requests were unreasonable. Key points which the two sides disagreed upon included incentive pay for emergency medical technician certification, compensation for working out of classification and vacation time accrual.

This time around, said Litton, both sides went to the bargaining table with more open minds and willingness to compromise.

"Instead of going in as adversaries as we had before, we decided to work together, with mutual trust, and we came up with some very innovative ideas."

For example, the new contract includes added incentive pay for

emergency medical technician certification, but the incentive does not apply to employees who are required to have EMT certification as part of their job classification.

Fire employees will also be compensated for working "out of grade" or in a higher classification, but only if they work two consecutive shifts (48 hours) or more out of grade. Some adjustments were also made in vacation accrual, added Litton.

The firefighters union reorganized shortly after former fire chief Mike Molthrop resigned in June 1986. Molthrop's resignation came in the midst of a build-up of poor and antagonistic relations between city management and the fire department.

Niren said he is pleased with the outcome this time. "It took a long

time, and there were a lot of frustrations and hard feelings, but I think for the most part everybody's satisfied now. It was worth it."

In other news:

•City officials are going ahead with plans to move a two-story office building from Morse Blvd. to a corner of Lake Island Estates, after getting the word from Orange County that the county has agreed to enter a five-year lease with the city for court space in the building. The office building, known as the Shelby Insurance building, was a gift to the city last December. Its owner, Jim Barnes of JTB Inc., offered it to the city with the condition that the city would be responsible for moving the building off its present property, where Barnes plans to construct a new bank-office building.