

Firefighter dropped for fitness reasons

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By Mark Andrews

OF THE SENTINEL STAFF

WINTER PARK — A city firefighter who confirmed that colleagues watched porno movies on duty has been fired by city officials who contend she isn't in good enough physical shape to do her job.

Judy Manor, a 10-year veteran of the Winter Park Fire Department, said Thursday she learned of her dismissal when she received a letter by registered mail a day earlier.

Manor, 41, insisted she is in condition and could do her duties. She said she works out every day and has lost 30 pounds since she was suspended without pay last May.

"I think I embarrassed the city by talking to reporters about sexual harassment," said Manor, referring to the porno tapes. "That's the real reason I was fired."

In March, Manor confirmed a report that male firefighters had watched sexually explicit videos at the fire station in years past. Fire officials said the practice has been discontinued.

Pat Moran, Winter Park's human relations director, said the city gave Manor several opportunities to take a training exercise to earn reinstatement, but she never took advantage of them.

"She could have, at any time

during that six-month period, come and gone through the training exercises, and she would have immediately been put back into active duty," Moran said Thursday. "It came to the end of the six months [suspension period], and we had to make a decision."

Manor said she attended a firefighters' training exercise in November but refused to go through with it after the head of the training academy at Mid-Florida Technical Institute insisted her husband leave the compound for safety reasons.

Manor said she did not accept invitations to attend other training exercises because they included department members with whom she had had conflicts since the videotape issue came up.

Manor said she got out of shape while she was out of work for more than eight months after breaking her foot during a training exercise in August 1990. She acknowledged she still needs to lose another 20 pounds but would not disclose her present weight.

She has appealed her firing to the city's Civil Service Board.

In another case involving the fire department, the Civil Service Board ruled in December that it could not hold a hearing on sexual harassment complaints by Lt. Fire Inspector Lyn Wright against Police Chief Jim Younger. Younger denies Wright's accusations.