

Civil Service Board delays discussion of time-off policy

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OF THE SENTINEL STAFF

WINTER PARK — The city Civil Service Board has delayed until April discussion of fire department policies concerning vacation time and time off for attending school.

Fire Chief Mike Molthop, who had asked that the board discuss the time-off policies at this week's meeting, Tuesday asked for more time to get opinions of firefighters.

The policies came under scrutiny last month because Molthop attempted to dismiss firefighter Daniel Bennett, who had taken vacation time in hourly

increments to attend college classes.

A fire department policy says firefighters should clear classes with their supervisors to avoid conflicts with their work schedules.

Although Molthop withdrew his attempt to have Bennett fired, Bennett later resigned.

Molthop said he is enforcing the policy as it is written, and if firefighters want the policy changed he is willing to seek that change while still maintaining the department's shift manning levels.

The board also delayed until next month action on a proposal by city Commissioner Tom Ivey to use on-duty firefighters as community service officers for the police department.

In February, Ivey asked the board to give an opinion on his proposal to have firefighters spend part of their 24-hour shift working with the police to handle the paperwork for non-emergency incidents.

Board member Anne Hamilton volunteered to study Ivey's plan and make a report to the board by March, but Tuesday she said she needs more time to complete her survey.

"Primarily I volunteered to do it because there appears to be some concern that on-duty firefighters have a lot of time," said Hamilton Wednesday. "I wanted to see how much time they do have because, with shift work, they have certain things they have to be doing at certain times in addition to the calls they go out on."