

Winter Park may appeal rehiring of firefighter

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OF THE SENTINEL STAFF

WINTER PARK — The case of Judy Manor, a firefighter who was fired and later reinstated on the condition that she complete a four-month suspension, may not be over.

Manor is supposed to return to work Friday, but the city still may ask city commissioners to overturn the civil service board's decision to reinstate her.

City labor attorney C. Robin Fawsett asked civil service board members Tuesday to modify their written order on Manor to state clearly which sections of the city's code of conduct she violated instead of including general statements.

The board refused but added a sentence saying Manor had been found guilty of "insubordination and discourtesy as further defined in the city personnel policy manual."

The board heard 14 hours of testimony Nov. 11 before deciding Manor had been insubordinate to a superior officer on July 2 but that firing her was too harsh a penalty. It did not agree with the city that Manor had neglected her duties.

However, when board member Steven Bechtel presented his draft of the hearing's final order Tuesday, two members said it was not written harshly enough. Bechtel was chairman of the hearing.

Board member Zell Washburn said she had been "appalled" by what the testimony against Manor showed and wished the order spelled that out.

"I have real concerns. . . I don't know how we can convey to the firefighters and the police department that this was really bad and you're not entitled to one insubordination and a good lawyer to get out of it," Washburn said.

"She [Manor] lost 120 days, which is about \$5,000, and she has to pay [her attorney]. She gets off with more than a slap on the wrist," Bechtel said.

Washburn suggested the board heed Fawsett's recommendations on the order's wording.

Fawsett said the city, if it decided to appeal the rehiring, would have a stronger position if the order were more detailed.

Board member Larry Mosley said the board should not be placed in the position of providing leverage for the city to act against an employee: "I have a problem with changing it if that's a consideration."