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## Fire Chief Fights For His Job

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**Oklahoma** - A fire chief dismissed by the city of Kingfisher has filed an appeal to get his job back, calling his termination an "orchestrated farce" executed by the city manager to discredit him.

Randy Poindexter was fired Sept. 25 by City Manager Dave Slezickey. Poindexter had been fire chief six years and made a trip to Washington, D.C., in 2010 to accept an award for rescuing several people by helicopter from floodwaters in 2007.

Poindexter's appeal, filed with the city of Kingfisher, describes the reasons given by the city for his firing and Poindexter's response to the allegations.

Slezickey said in a predetermination hearing before the firing that Poindexter failed to get city commission approval to enter into an agreement with Physio-Control that stemmed from Poindexter's purchase of a used cardiac monitor-defibrillator for \$25. The units cost \$27,000 new. The contract provided for inspection and repairs of that unit and the fire department's three other defibrillators for \$1,100 a year, according to the paperwork filed by Poindexter.

Slezickey also alleged Poindexter deviated from his established duty location without permission on July 9 to go on a lobbying trip to Washington.

The third allegation centers on Poindexter's request for comp time for hours worked outside his normal schedule. The city manager said Poindexter did not get permission to work the extra time.

Poindexter said through his attorney, Matthew Smith, that the extra hours were used to respond to emergencies. Poindexter said that on Aug. 20 he was driving into Kingfisher and saw a city ambulance and rescue trucks heading to a call on State Highway 33, so he followed the vehicles to provide assistance as needed.

After rescuers took a wrong turn, Poindexter arrived at the home from where the call originated and performed CPR on one of the occupants. Poindexter's attorneys said Slezickey's directive would have required him to get permission before assisting.

On Aug. 22, Poindexter said, he was at home when a double fatality traffic accident occurred. Poindexter received a page from the Kingfisher County Sheriff's Department to staff the city's fire station while crews were responding to the accident. Poindexter said he responded as requested.

On Aug. 30, Poindexter said, he filled in for a firefighter who had a family emergency and was unable to report for duty.

"It's clear that Mr. Slezickey seeks total control over the day-to-day, even hour-to-hour activities of the city's fire chief," Smith wrote in the appeal.

Smith has requested that Slezickey recuse himself from the appeals process along with Kingfisher Mayor Jack Stuteville. Poindexter's brother, Chris Poindexter, is currently involved in a lawsuit against Stuteville involving business dealings.

Slezickey said Wednesday he had received Poindexter's appeal but had not reviewed it in full. He said he would be unable to comment on the appeal because it is a personnel issue.

"We've sent it to our attorneys and they will review it and counsel us on the appeal," Slezickey said.

Poindexter said the contract with Physio-Control is an example of how he had handled maintenance of the units in the past and he had never been disciplined for it. He also said city commissioners had approved the contract and he merely signed an addendum to it.

Poindexter said he did notify Slezickey of his trip to Washington through a memorandum placed on his desk at city hall. Poindexter said he had secured about \$500,000 worth of federal grants over the last six years during similar trips and that he paid for his travel expenses with his own money.

Poindexter said he could not comment on the appeal.

Written by Firehouse.com

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