

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SAFETY CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE

In the Matter of the Appeal of)
Nathaniel Ford from his)
suspension by the Seattle)
Fire Department)
_____)

FINDINGS OF FACT,
CONCLUSIONS AND ORDER
OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDING

On March 23, 1987, a hearing was held by the Public Safety Civil Service Commission to investigate the suspension of Nathaniel Ford from his position of Fire Fighter by the Seattle Fire Department. At that hearing, the appellant was present and was represented by Jon Gillis, Second Vice-President of the Seattle Fire Fighters Union, Local 27, and the Fire Department was represented by Deputy Chief Steve C. Bailey. Witnesses for the Fire Department were Lieutenant Dennis Weaver, Captain A.D. Vickery, Fire Fighter John Hill, Battalion Chief Ronald Bluhm, and Deputy Chief Rod Bowers. Witnesses for the Appellant were the Appellant, Fire Fighter Fred de la Cruz, Fire Fighter Robert Halloway, Fire Fighter James Fosse, Lieutenant Jim Hargett, Lieutenant Gary Lindenmayer, Fire Fighter Curt Yamane, and Fire Fighter Anthony Califano. Captain Angelo Duggins and Fire Fighter Steven Roddick were witnesses for both the Department and the Appellant.

Oral and documentary evidence having been received and considered, the Commission having been fully advised now makes the following:

I. FINDINGS OF FACT

1. On December 2, 1987, Fire Fighter Nathaniel Ford while on duty with Engine Company 25 D/2 responded on a service first aid alarm. All other members of the crew were on board when Lieutenant Dennis Weaver hollered out of the window to Fire Fighter Ford, who was standing by the fire engine, "Come on hurry up, let's get going." Fire Fighter Ford then entered the crew cab and the Company proceeded to answer the alarm.

2. As the Company was returning to the station when the alarm was completed, Fire Fighter Ford leaned his head to the window between the driver's compartment where Lieutenant Weaver was sitting and the crew cab and stated that Lieutenant Weaver should not holler at him again and that he was not one of Lieutenant Weaver's little kids. Lieutenant Weaver replied that they would talk about it back at the station.

3. When they arrived at the station and following dinner, Lieutenant Weaver, after consulting with Captain A.D. Vickery, asked Fire Fighter Ford to go into his office. Following a brief discussion of the matter, Fire Fighter Ford stated that he was finished talking and turned to walk out of the room. Lieutenant Weaver said, "Wait a minute, Ford," but he left anyway.

4. After a few minutes, Lieutenant Weaver went to the beanery and asked Fire Fighter Ford to come into the office. Fire Fighter Ford remained seated. Lieutenant Weaver said, "That's an order." Fire Fighter Ford then followed him to the office.

5. In Lieutenant Weaver's office, after additional dialogue regarding the incident, Fire Fighter Ford grabbed Lieutenant Weaver by the chin while making additional remarks. Lieutenant Weaver ordered Fire Fighter Ford to remove his hands. Fire Fighter Ford released Lieutenant Weaver and stepped back.

6. Lieutenant Weaver immediately reported the incident to Battalion Chief Ronald Bluhm.

7. On December 24, 1986, Chief Claude Harris notified Fire Fighter Ford of a one shift suspension for disorderly conduct (major).

8. Chief Harris properly notified the Commission of his action and Fire Fighter Ford made a timely appeal to the Commission.

II. CONCLUSIONS

1. The Public Safety Civil Service Commission has jurisdiction over the subject matter and parties to this proceeding.

2. The conduct delineated in the findings constitutes disorderly conduct (major).

3. The suspension of Fire Fighter Nathaniel Ford by the Chief of the Seattle Fire Department was done in good faith, and for cause.

From the foregoing finding of fact and the conclusions, the Commission determines and concludes as its independent judgement, pursuant to its authority and responsibility under Article XVI of the City Charter and Chapter 4.08 of the Seattle Municipal Code:

III. ORDER

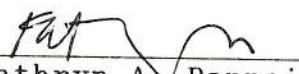
1. The one-shift suspension of Nathaniel Ford by the Chief of the Seattle Fire Department is hereby sustained.

Signed at Seattle, Washington this fourteenth day of April, 1987.

PUBLIC SAFETY CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE



Daniel J. Oliver, Chairman



Kathryn A. Bannai



Maura L. O'Neill