

The Motion was affirmed on April 2, 2019 by Crook County Firefighters Association by a vote of 15-3

**Motion to Acknowledge
Confidence or No Confidence
In the Leadership of Chief Matt Smith**

Each and every career firefighter who works for Crook County Fire and Rescue, and who are members of Crook County Firefighters Association, IAFF Local 5115, chose to become a firefighter because of our love of our community and our desire to protect and assist people during some of the most difficult moments that they will ever experience. We are proud to provide professional Fire and EMS services to Crook County and we love what we do. Our motivation is and always will be service to our community and we will always be here to serve our community.

In the Fire and EMS profession it is vital to have confidence and trust in your leadership. Absent strong leadership, it is difficult to provide the highest level of service that Crook County residents deserve and that we all strive for. A good leader is firm, fair and consistent in their supervision. A good leader is not only open to input from the public and employees, they actively seek and encourage such input and consider various perspectives in making decisions. A good leader is not threatened or afraid of transparency, they understand that it is vital to the public service. A good leader also understands that the employees that are on the line every day are the face of the organization and their wellbeing, health, morale, and safety are important to ensure that the organization functions at the highest level possible. Every shift we experience a steady stream of human trauma, these events cause strains that are not just physical but psychological and emotional. Our families feel these strains and bear this burden as well. In this occupation we are supposed to function as a family and we rely upon our leadership to protect our reputations, our wellness, and our lives.

Good leadership is not easy and leadership is not for everyone. The Executive Board is concerned that, over the past several years, Chief Smith has demonstrated that he lacks many important leadership skills and that he is unwilling or unable to change or improve his approach to his very important position at CCFR. The Association has attempted time and time again to work with Chief Smith to address these concerns and we have suggested many different possible solutions to improve the difficult situation we are all in. Unfortunately, these efforts have yielded no meaningful changes. The Executive Board finds it necessary now to have the membership consider whether Chief Smith has the support of his employees, or whether the employees lack confidence in his ability to lead CCFR effectively.

In proposing this motion, we are using material from legal proceedings such as the ERB ULP hearing from October 15-17, 2018, including ERB's ruling from March 15, 2019, and the evidence, testimony, and exhibits from that process. We are also referencing Crook County Fire and Rescue Organizational Expectations and Values policy.

For the following reasons the Executive Board proposes a vote of **No confidence** in Chief Smith.

“Yes” vote affirms the motion, “No” vote rejects the motion.

1. Chief Smith has shown a lack of regard for the safety of the public and the employees by putting inexperienced and unqualified people in leadership at the organization. This undermines the trust that the public must have in their public servants and in public safety. Operational integrity and function have been compromised while creating an unsafe environment for the public and the organization. The retaliatory nature and actions of Chief Smith have created working conditions that diminish our ability to provide service to the community.
2. Unequal and mis-prioritized staffing have resulted in the public not being served equally or fairly. He has taken away vital 24-hour staffing by adding more chiefs and taking personnel off 24-hour shift work. CCFR currently has nine administrative staff and 18 career fire staff on 24-hour shift work, giving us a ratio of one chief for every three career firefighters. This additional bureaucracy is unheard of amongst other comparable fire departments. This reduces our ability to effectively respond to emergency calls 24 hours a day, and mis-prioritizes the budget for staffing.
3. Chief Smith has shown a flagrant disregard for state and federal laws whether it was related to FLSA overtime pay and receiving back pay compensation or anti-union animus and discrimination against employees for protected activities.
4. Chief Smith has manipulated a mandatory organizational support program, the Employee Assistance Program, to take employment actions and cause further harm to employees through difficult traumatic events and mental/emotional health issues that they encountered.
5. Crook County Fire and Rescue (CCFR) has established a policy of organization expectations and values, number one being, “Members are trustworthy”. Chief Smith has violated this expectation in many ways, he has lied to the employees and the public and has targeted numerous employees in order to end their careers and destroy their reputations. His written “Situation Assessment” to the Fire Board and testimony showed a blatant disregard for the truth, and hostility towards certain employees. We work towards building trust with the community and we have been undermined by our leadership.
6. Chief Smith has intentionally misrepresented the employees to the Fire Board and has actively worked to discourage communication between the employees and the Fire Board. He has tried to politicize and misrepresent our intentions. Our main motivation has always been professional service and a desire for better working conditions.

7. Chief Smith has refused to communicate and collaborate with the union in working towards improved association-management relations. The association has proposed joint trainings with the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) and International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and pushed for a 360-degree evaluation of the organization by an outside consultant. Furthermore, Chief Smith has refused invitations to meet with area Fire Chiefs to discuss improving labor and management relations. During the first contract bargaining Chief Smith refused to attend bargaining sessions and even now is using an attorney for collective bargaining at a steep additional cost to the public.
8. Chief Smith has shown a lack of empathy or regard for employees and their families. His communication skills are deficient and his approach to conflict and interpersonal relations is ineffective and has actually promoted internal divisions and conflict rather than improving relationships. This has kept employee morale in a dismal state and has created an unhealthy work environment for all employees.
9. Public safety and trust have been further compromised because Chief Smith has shown a pattern of favoritism and rewards for those individuals who would disregard the facts and the truth to support him. His actions have contributed to a culture of operational dysfunction and backstabbing while provoking unrest and promoting distrust in order to micromanage and manipulate.