

Western Lakes Fire Board
Monthly Board Meeting
June 22, 2020

Call to Order

- George Morris called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. Board members present were George Morris, Jeff Roemer, Kent Lorenz, Bill Riemenschneider, Mike Tompkins, Lisa Mellone and Jimi Hall. Also, in attendance were Chief Brad Bowen, Assistant Chiefs Tom Schuetz and Matt Haerter, Deputy Chiefs Tim Meyer, Brad Ingersoll, and Chris Igl, Division Chief Alex Konen, Oconomowoc Finance Director Lauri Sullivan and Administrative Assistant Michael Krug.

Announcement of Closed Session:

- George Morris announced that the fire board would be meeting in closed session pursuant to section 19.85(1)(c), Wisconsin State Statutes, “To consider employment, promotion, compensation, or performance evaluation of the District’s part-time and full-time employees, over which the Fire Board exercises responsibility”.
- The fire board will convene into open session at the close of the closed session.

Proof of Notice

- Mike Krug announced that the notice was posted June 18th to the district web site, newspapers and at stations 1 and 2.

Pledge of Allegiance

- Chief Bowen led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

- George Morris opened the meeting to comments from the public, of which there was none.

Swearing in of Officers

- The meeting was moved from the conference room to the apparatus bay for the swearing in of the new captains.
- The following were sworn in:
 - Captain Brian Dorn
 - Captain Josh Paral
- President Morris completed the swearing in. At the completion of the swearing in ceremony, the board members returned to the conference room to continue with the board meeting.

Approval of Minutes

- A motion was made by Bill Riemenschneider and seconded by Jeff Romer to approve the minutes of the June 3rd meeting as written. Motion carried.

Fire Chief Brad Bowen’s Report

- Chief Bowen stated that we had EMS bills flagged as unbillable due to incomplete or missing information. Those have been corrected and resubmitted for billing.
- We have applied for additional COVID reimbursement from FEMA for \$22,000 and the CARES act for \$38,000.

Assistant Chief’s Reports

- Assistant Chief Schuetz had nothing to add to his report and there were no questions.
- Assistant Chief Haerter had nothing to add to his report and there were no questions.

Bureau Reports

- Deputy Chief Meyer (fire bureau) had nothing to add to his report and there were no questions.
- Deputy Chief Kami Warren (EMS bureau) was not at the meeting and there were no questions.
- Deputy Chief May (fire prevention bureau) was not at the meeting and there were no questions.
- Deputy Chief Ingersoll had nothing to add to his report and there were no questions.
- Deputy Chief Igl (fleet and facilities bureau) had nothing to add to his report and there were no questions.
- Division Chief Konen (training bureau) had nothing to add to his report and there were no questions

Operations Presentation

- Included with the board materials was a presentation on the Fire District. Chief Bowen went over the responsibilities of each of the newly created bureaus.
- Jimi Hall asked if the fleet and facilities bureau was going to be reaching out to offer maintenance to outside departments to help pay for our equipment. Chief Bowen stated that we were planning on looking into extending our services, but first we needed time to acquire the equipment and experience in handling our own fleet.
- Kent Lorenz asked if the bureau chiefs were going to be responsible for creating their own budgets and being accountable for maintaining their budget. Chief Bowen stated that the bureaus are new and that the chiefs needed time to work into their new roles. All of the chief officers are currently part of the budget process.

Discussion – Emergency Declaration / Hazard Pay Policy

- Included with the board materials was documentation on the use of hazard pay during an emergency Declaration. City of Oconomowoc Alderman Lou Kowieski brought this up at the joint owners meeting on June 3rd. We have no policy in place on Hazard Pay, and have no funding in place to pay for any type of stipend or additional pay. Chief Bowen was looking for direction if we should develop such a policy. There is no guarantee that there would be grants available for future declarations to reimburse the district, and if a policy is in place, we would need to adhere to the policy, regardless if we were going to be reimbursed so we would need sufficient money budgeted for future emergency declarations. Chief Bowen was going to check with other departments in the state to see if any of them have a current policy we could reference. The consensus of the board was to have Chief Bowen work on such a policy which would be presented at a future meeting for approval.

Discussion – Fund Balance Policy

- Our Auditor, David L. Maccoux, recommended that as our budget amounts increase, so should our Fund Balance, and recommended we increase our Fund Balance to 20%. The purpose of the fund balance is to be able to pay about three months of expenses during a time where our revenues have decreased. We had been working to hit 15% and if the amount in the Fund Balance exceeded 15%, we would use it for capital projects to lessen the impact on the tax levy. A discussion between the auditor, our treasurer Kent Lorenz and Chief Bowen came to the consensus that we could continue to keep a 15% Fund Balance as long as we maintain our \$200,000 line of credit. The Fire Board does not feel we need a new Fund Balance Policy, but to update our Line of Credit policy to increase our Fund Balance by 1% each year. Chief Bowen will work on that policy and bring it to a future meeting for approval.

Discussion/Action – 2020 Capital Budget Amendment

- Chief Bowen stated that the current capital budget for 2020 included \$40,000 to refurbish the rehab trailer.
- With the consolidation with Okauchee, we have the opportunity to use the old Okauchee Dive truck, which is not currently part of the Western Lakes fleet, as the rehab unit. Chief Bowen is recommending we utilize the \$40,000 to refurbish the dive truck.
- A motion was made by Jeff Romer and seconded by Mike Tompkins to amend the Capital Budget to use the \$40,000 budgeted amount to refurbish the old Okauchee Dive truck. Motion Carried.

Discussion/Action – Therapy Dog Program

- Assistant Chief Haerter included a draft document on the program. It included requirements of the handler and the K-9. The plan would establish a contractual agreement between the district and the handler for the use of their K-9. The handler would receive an annual stipend to offset their costs, estimated at \$800.
- George Morris asked Assistant Chief Haerter if he was aware of any other fire departments that had a therapy dog program. He was not aware of any departments, but did reference the Walter Reed Medical Center.
- A motion was made by Jeff Romer and seconded by Lisa Mellone to approve of a Therapy Dog Program. Motion carried.

Discussion/Action – 5-year Capital Improvement Plan

- Chief Bowen included proposed updates to the 5-year capital plan based on changes in immediate needs and as a result of changed equipment from the consolidations. To help flatten the peaks in the capital plan, we would use funds in the fund balance to offset the tax levy increases with inflation to remain under a 1% increase annually.
- A motion was made by Jeff Romer and seconded by Bill Riemenschneider to approve the 5-year capital improvement plan as presented. Motion carried.

Discussion/Action – Ambulance & Highway Refunds

- There were no ambulance or highway refunds so no action taken.

Discussion/Action - Payment of Bills

- A motion was made by Jimi Hall and seconded by Kent Lorenz to approve the bills totaling \$283,650.30. Motion carried.

Closed Session

- At 6:01 pm the Fire Board convened into closed session by roll-call vote.

Open Session

- At 6:13 pm the Fire Board reconvened into open session.

Discussion / Action – Full-time employee reviews

- A motion was made by Mike Tompkins and seconded by Kent Lorenz to move Assistant Chief Haerter off of probation and move to step 8.

Adjournment

- At 6:15 pm, a motion was made by Bill Riemenschneider and seconded by Jeff Romer to adjourn. Motion carried