

Western Lakes Fire Board

Monthly Board Meeting

November 23, 2020

Call to Order

- George Morris called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Board members present were George Morris, Jeff Roemer, Kent Lorenz, Bill Riemenschneider, Mike Tompkins and Jimi Hall. Also, in attendance were Chief Brad Bowen, Assistant Chiefs Matt Haerter and Tom Schuetz, Deputy Chiefs Tim Meyer, Brad Ingersoll, Kami Warren and Chris Igl, Division Chief Alex Konen, Battalion Chief Steve Pflanzner, and Administrative Assistant Michael Krug. From the City of Oconomowoc were Matt Trebatoski Administrator and Laurie Sullivan Director of Finance. Fire board member Lisa Mellone was excused.

Proof of Notice

- Mike Krug announced that the notice was posted November 20th to the district web site, newspapers and at stations 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6.

Pledge of Allegiance

- Matt Trebatoski led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcement of Closed Session

- George Morris announced that the board would convene into closed session pursuant to sections 19.85(1)(c) and (e), Wisconsin State Statutes. The fire board would convene into open session at the conclusion of the closed session.

Public Comment

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

Consent Agenda

- Items listed under the Consent Agenda are considered in one motion unless a Fire Board Member requests that an item be removed from the Consent Agenda
 - Minutes of October 26th regular Fire Board Meeting
 - Payment of Bills
 - Ambulance and Highway refunds
- A motion was made by Jeff Roemer and seconded by Jimi Hall to accept the Consent Agenda items. Motion carried.

Fire Chief Brad Bowen's Report

- Chief Bowen reported that our call volume over the past three weeks is up 25% averaging 20+ calls per day. We also have responded to multiple structure fires.
- We have been on more EMS calls with COVID patients. As we return from those calls, the crews need to shower and change cloths before being available for another call and to keep their families safe.
- Chief Bowen stated that our ambulance call volume has gone up although our revenues have not. Andres has been hit hard by COVID and was behind in billings. They have gotten caught up and we should see our revenues up with the November revenues.
- Chief Bowen anticipates we will be receiving \$114,000 from Routes to Recovery grants submitted by our municipal partners. With that grant and our increased ambulance revenue and the sale of the old Okauchee engine, we are anticipating being near our budgeted revenue.

- We are working on plans to administer COVID vaccines to first responders.

Assistant Chief's and Bureau Reports

- The Assistant chief and Bureau reports were distributed earlier.
- George Morris asked if there were any questions regarding the reports. Kent Lorenz asked about our staffing. Chief Bowen stated we are continuing to hire, but also are losing employees. We also are dealing with employees out due to COVID.

Discussion/Action – Tender 95 Fire Pump Repairs

- A power-point presentation was included with the materials on the repairs needed to the pump. The tender is still functional, but the pump is out of service. It could be used in an extreme emergency.
- Chief Bowen advised that the cost of the repairs, estimated to be \$16,991.79, would be taken from the maintenance budget.
- Deputy Chief Igl explained what needs to be done to the pump.
- Kent Lorenz asked if we had solicited bids as this is a large expense. Chief Bowen was directed to attempt to get additional bids. No further action was taken and this item was tabled until the next meeting.

Discussion/Action – Emergency Responder Sick Leave Policy

- Chief Bowen stated that in March, the board adopted a resolution designating the employees of WLFD as “emergency responders” which exempted employees from the EPSLA and EFMLA provisions of the FFCRA. Our partner municipalities have been approving up to 80 hours of paid sick leave in a two-week period to employees that test positive for COVID and are in quarantine.
- A policy was drafted by our attorney regarding Emergency Responder Sick Leave. If adopted and applied retroactively, we would be paying \$9,012.
- A motion was made by Mike Tompkins and seconded by Bill Riemenschneider to adopt the Emergency Responder Sick Leave Policy as presented. Motion carried.

Discussion/Action – Unused 2020 Vacation Time of Full-Time Employees

- Chief Bowen stated that, due to COVID we have full-time employees that have hours remaining in their benefit vacation bank. We did put a hold on vacations due to staffing. Our current policy does not allow for vacation carryover. Chief Bowen provided the following options to the board:
 - Compensate employees for unused vacation at 75%
 - Allow carryover
 - Move unused vacation to employee’s sick leave bank
 - Follow current policy, and if employees don’t use their vacation time, they lose it.
- A motion was made by Jimi Hall and seconded by Kent Lorenz to allow employees to carry over one week and get paid out for any remaining vacation at 75%. This change is only good for 2020. Motion carried.

Discussion/Action – Dedicated property for future fire station (City of Oconomowoc)

- A 1.6-acre parcel of land was donated to the City of Oconomowoc by Bielinski Development with the condition it could only be used for a fire station. The City of Oconomowoc has been maintaining the property. The city wants to know if this location is still a viable location. If so, they will continue to keep it. If not, they would return the property to Bielinski Development.
- The consensus of the board was that the City of Oconomowoc should keep the property as it is a good location for a future satellite location due to the volume of calls in that area.

Discussion/Action – 2021 Part-time Wages

- Chief Bowen distributed his proposed part-time wage rates. The 2021 budget was created utilizing the proposed rates.
- A motion was made by Mike Tompkins and seconded by Jeff Roemer to approve the proposed wage rates as presented. Motion carried.

Discussion/Action – 2021 CIP Staff Car 1

- The purchase of the 2021 Chevrolet Silverado has already been approved. We are now requesting approval for the upfitting of the vehicle. The budget amount for the entire project was \$55,000. The cost of the upfitting and the cost of the vehicle will come in \$122.43 under budget.
- A motion was made by Jeff Roemer and seconded by Bill Riemenschneider to approve upfitting of the 2021 CIP Staff Car 1. Motion carried.

Discussion/Action – 2021 CIP Vehicle Lift

- An apparatus lift was budgeted in the 2021 capital plan. Three bids were received and the recommendation is to go with NAPA. The cost will exceed the budget by \$1,000.
- A motion was made by Jeff Roemer and seconded by Kent Lorenz to approve the NAPA bid at a cost not to exceed \$65,459.36. Motion carried.

Discussion/Action – COVID precautions – meetings and residency

- Chief Bowen asked for direction on future board meeting. Should they be virtual or continue in person. Mike Tompkins suggested we continue in person, but exclude staff unless needed. Jeff Roemer suggested moving the meetings to a larger facility such as the Summit Village Hall, or City of Oconomowoc chambers. Lauri Sullivan stated that if the meetings were to go virtual, it needs to be 100% virtual so all attendees are at a computer so everyone can see and hear those speaking.
- The consensus of the group was to continue to have in-person meetings, but move to a larger facility.
- There was discussion on where we would house an intern if they tested positive for COVID. We have out of state interns so if they tested positive, they would need a place to go as we would not want them to remain at the station and potentially infect the other staying at the station. Chief Haerter is working with local hotels for rates and also checking with other facilities or apartments.

Recess

- George Morris called for a recess at 5:15 pm.

Closed Session

- At 5:21 pm the Fire Board convened into closed session by roll-call vote.

Open Session

- At 6:05 pm the Fire Board reconvened into open session.

Discussion/Action – Human Resources Manager Position

- A special interview committee was established to review the applications and make recommendations to the fire board. They came up with two applicants that they felt met the requirements for the position, with one as their top candidate.

- A motion was made by Jimi Hall and seconded by Kent Lorenz for Chief Bowen to meet and discuss with the top candidate regarding the position and present the candidate with conditional offer of employment for January 2021 start date. Motion carried.

Discussion/Action – Firefighter/Paramedic Position(s)

- A motion was made by Jimi Hall and seconded by Jeff Roemer for Chief Bowen to proceed with the hiring process at the direction of the Fire Commission. Upon completion of the process, Chief Bowen is authorized to hire up to four full-time firefighter/paramedics with a start date in January. Motion carried.

Adjournment

- At 6:30 pm, a motion was made by Jeff Roemer and seconded by Kent Lorenz to adjourn. Motion carried

The next regular board meeting will be December 28th.