

# Western Lakes Fire Board

## Monthly Board Meeting

### August 10, 2021

#### **Call to Order**

- George Morris called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. Board members present were George Morris, Kent Lorenz, Michael Tompkins, Bill Riemenschneider, and Charlie Shaw. Board members Jeff Roemer and Lisa Mellone were excused. Also, in attendance was Chief Brad Bowen and Jeff Herrmann.

#### **Proof of Notice**

- Chief Bowen announced that the notice was posted August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 12:51 p.m. to the district web site, newspapers and at stations 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6.

#### **Pledge of Allegiance**

- George Morris led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **Announcement of Closed Session**

- George Morris announced that the District Fire Board will convene into 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 not reconvene into open session at the conclusion of the closed session.

#### **Discussion/Action – Motorola Radio FM trade-in**

- Chief Bowen presented the board with a project summary to trade in 85 of the District’s Motorola Radios that were previously supported by Motorola as (FM) rated radios. Motorola will no longer be supporting these radios and offered a one-time trade in of the current units of the District purchases two batteries and accessory equipment for each radio traded. The District’s total project cost including programming costs is \$46,112.80. The Chief recommends approval of this project which will include replacement of the 85 radios, associated chargers, microphones, and programming in the amount of \$46,112.80.
- This is an unbudgeted amount and the Chief recommends using excess capital funds in the amount of \$31,000 from the 2021 budget and \$15,112.80 of fund balance to cover this expense.
- A motion to approved budget amendments to the owners for option #2 of the Motorola FM/UL swap out in the amount of \$46,112.80 and for \$31,000 of available capital funds be used and the remaining \$15,112.80 to be funded using the District’s fund balance was made by Kent Lorenz seconded by Michael Tompkins. Motion carried.

#### **Discussion – 2022 Operating Budget**

- Chief Bowen provided the board with the draft 2022 Operating Budget.
- The items causing the budget increase for 2021 include the transition to a new records management system in 2022 due to the current legacy system being discontinued the end of 2021, increased workman’s compensation costs, and the expenses related to the full-time positions that were added in the middle of 2021.
- The District continues to have an exceptional low mill rate on the tax levy making it increasingly difficult to maintain services at the current budget and increasing call volume placing a larger demand on the staff. The Chief also went through future staffing needs for future budgets.

### **Discussion – Future Staffing and Funding Plan**

- The 7-year staffing plan was presented to the board for review. Based on projections with the continued growth of the municipalities and increasing call volume the District could be responding to over 9,000 calls a year in the next 7 years, which will require additional staffing to meet the growing needs of the community. He also discussed the priority for the next budget process continues to be staffing for the District and competitive wages/benefits.
- The Fire Board agrees that something needs to be done as soon as possible to increase the wages paid to the part-time employees working for the District. The board is concerned that as wages continue to rise around the District that it is going to become harder to attract and retain staff.
- The number of full-time positions is also extremely low compared to other agencies with similar call volumes. This is also outlined in the future staffing plan and requires additional funding to support the positions necessary to maintain services.

### **Closed Session –**

- George Morris moved to convene into closed session by role call vote at 6:31p.m. 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 not reconvene into open session at the conclusion of the closed session.

### **Adjournment**

- Closed session ended at 6:57p.m.