

Western Lakes Fire Board

Monthly Board Meeting

September 27, 2021

Call to Order

- George Morris called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. Board members present were George Morris, Kent Lorenz, Michael Tompkins, Bill Riemenschneider, Charlie Shaw, and Eric Jensen. Board members Jeff Roemer was excused.

Proof of Notice

- Chief Bowen announced that the notice was posted September 24th, 2021 at 2:14 p.m. to the district web site, newspapers and at stations 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6.

Pledge of Allegiance

- Eric Jensen 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.

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 August 23rd, 2021 regular Fire Board Meeting
 - Payment of Bills
 - Ambulance and Highway refunds
- A Motion to approve consent agenda as presented including minutes from August 23rd, 2021 Fire Board Meeting, and payment of bills in the amount of \$313,091.78 was made by Bill Riemenschneider and seconded by Kent Lorenz. Motion carried.

Fire Chief Brad Bowen's Report

- Chief Bowen introduced Eric Jensen as the new Fire Board representative for the Village of Summit. Eric is a business owner in the area, and has lived in the Village for many years. Eric brings knowledge and experience to the board as a business owner, as well as historical history of the communities. Eric will serve the remainder of Lisa Mellone's term on the Fire Board.
- Chief Bowen thanked Lisa Mellone for her time spent on the Fire Board. Unfortunately, due to her obligations with her full-time position she did not have the time to commit to the Fire Board at this time. Lisa brought significant knowledge and experience to the board and was a true asset to the board and municipalities. Her past experience as a City Alderman was beneficial with regards to operations, budgeting, and service levels.
- The District responded to 663 calls for service in the month of August, which is a new record for the District. This is the second month in a row that the District's call volume has increased substantially. The call volume is nearly 100 calls more per month than the average.
- Chief Bowen reviewed the monthly financial reports with the board including revenues and expenses. Currently the District is within the budget projections for the year.
- The Chief provided updates on various meetings with State Legislatures, and municipal leadership in the region with regards to sustainable Fire/EMS funding and staffing. The WI Fire/EMS Service is going through a transition from predominately free labor to paid labor, like many other service industry or public service.

Assistant Chief and Bureau Chief Reports

- The Fire Board reviewed the reports from each of the Assistant Chiefs and Bureau Chiefs for the previously month.
- George Morris, recognized Assistant Chief Bill Lincoln for his years of service to the communities served by the District. Morris thanked Lincoln for his leadership to the District, and his assistance with the consolidation of Okauchee Fire and Western Lakes.

Discussion/Action – 2022 District Health Insurance Plan and Contributions

- Chief Bowen discussed with the board changes to the Wisconsin ETF Insurance Plans for 2022. The District participates in the WI Health Insurance Program which offers health insurance to the District's employees that are eligible for health insurance. Open enrollment begins this week, and closes the end of October. For 2022 the lowest cost provider has significant increases, which has changed the overall premium amounts for health insurance.
- The Chief reviewed with the board the current 2021 employer and employee costs for health insurance and the proposed 2022 costs for the employer and employee. The District currently participates in the PO4 plan which includes health and dental insurance.
- Chief Bowen provided the board with the recommendation of maintaining the PO4 plan with the District covering 86% of the lowest cost plan.
- A motion to continue offering the WI Health Insurance PO4 Plan to eligible employees with the District covering 86% of the lowest cost plan to the full-time employees in 2022 was made by Kent Lorenz and seconded by Mike Tompkins. Motion carried.

Discussion/Action – District Health Insurance Policy 600.003

- Chief Bowen reviewed the current District Health Insurance Policy with the board. Karen Mundt the District's Human Resources Manager has reviewed the policy and made recommended changes to the policy.
- A motion to approved the revised District Health Insurance Policy as presented was made by Kent Lorenz and seconded by Mike Tompkins. Motion carried.

Discussion – Employee Benefits Policy

- Chief Bowen reviewed the current employee benefits policy including changes that are recommended with regards to the District's internship program, sick time accrual for sworn full-time employees, and off duty response to incidents.
- The Chief will work on amending the current policy and bring it to a future meeting for discussion and action.

Discussion/Action – 2022 Operational and Capital Budgets

- Chief Bowen reviewed the current draft budget for 2022 with the board. The amended budget includes changes to the District's internship program, and changes brought forward from the joint owners meetings on September 15th.
- If approved by the board, the revised budget will be distributed to the municipalities served by the District for discussion/action at their regularly scheduled meetings on October.
- A motion to approved the current 2022 Operational and Capital Budget and forward to the municipalities for discussion/action was made by Kent Lorenz and seconded by Bill Riemenschneider. Motion carried.

Discussion/Action – RFP for Consulting and Communication Services for potential Fire/EMS Staffing Referendum in 2022

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board the draft RFP which has been developed seeking proposals from marketing firms to provide education and communication services for a

possible referendum in 2022. The draft RFP was developed using materials previously used by the City of Fond du Lac, South Milwaukee, and Fort Atkinson for similar services.

- The RFP would be shared immediately with known firms, and also advertised on the WI League of Municipalities website. The workgroup evaluating the possible need for a referendum will review the proposals and make a recommendation to the board and municipalities in November.
- A motion to approved the RFP for consulting and communication services for a potential referendum in 2022 was made by Charlie Shaw and seconded by Mike Tompkins. Motion carried.

Future Agenda Items and Meetings

- Joint Owners Meeting – TBD
- Monthly Fire Board Meeting – Monday, October 25th, at 4pm at Fire Station #1

Adjournment

- A motion was made at 4:53 pm by Kent Lorenz and seconded by Charlie Shaw to adjourn. Motion carried.