

Western Lakes Fire Board

Monthly Board Meeting

February 27, 2023

Call to Order

- George Morris called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. Board members present were George Morris, Jeff Roemer, Kent Lorenz, Mike Tompkins, Bill Riemenschneider, Dan DeBehnke, and Scott Carter.

Proof of Notice

- Chief Bowen announced that the notice was posted February 24th at 3:06 p.m. in accordance with open meeting laws.

Announcement

- George Morris announced, The 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;" *Executive Management Plan; Specific compensation and benefits related to specific employees.*" The Fire Board will not reconvene into open session at the conclusion of the closed session.

Pledge of Allegiance

- Karen Mundt led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Following the Pledge of Allegiance, a moment of silence was held in honor of Chief Yandre.

Public Comment

- President Morris opened the meeting up to public comment. Morris reviewed the rules for public comment during WLFBD Board Meetings: 1) Those wishing to provide public comment to the board, fill out a form with their name, address, and topic of discussion. 2) Public comment is limited to two (2) minutes. If speaking on behalf of a group will be allowed three (3) minutes. 3) Complaints about specific employees will not be heard during public comment. 4) Public comment as a whole is limited to fifteen (15) minutes as a whole. Also, a note that the board cannot have discussion during public comment, and the board cannot discuss items not on the agenda.
- Scott Carter asked if the policy is approved since the municipalities haven't adopted the policy following the boards approval. Jeff Roemer explained per the intermunicipal agreement the Board approves District policies and they do not have to be approved by municipalities. If the board made changes to the intermunicipal agreement or governing documents those would need approval of the municipalities.

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 January 23rd, 2023 regular Fire Board Meeting
 - Payment of bills February in the amount of \$413,253.63
- A motion was made by Jeff Roemer and seconded by Dan DeBehnke to accept the Consent Agenda items including meeting minutes with correction from January 23rd, 2023 Fire Board meeting and payment of bills in the amount of \$413,253.63. Motion carried.

Fire Chief's Report

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board activities over the past month. Chief provided an update to the board on software upgrades to the District's accounting software and banking software. Staff is currently preparing for the annually audit of 2022.
- Chief reviewed trainings currently being completed by Chief Officers, Company Officers, and those interested in future promotional opportunities. Members are completing an online training program geared towards company officer development along with battalion chief development. Others upcoming trainings include The Anatomy of a Conflict, Self and Social Awareness, and Strategies for Providing Critical Feedback.
- Chief reviewed the revised swearing in program for newly promoted and full-time employees. Special recognition to Captain Dorn for leading this conversation and his shift for putting everything together. The next swearing in will be Friday, March 3rd.
- Included in the packet is a fact sheet from the Wisconsin Officer of Rural Health following a state-wide survey completed in fall of 2022. The survey evaluated the status of the Wisconsin EMS System with regards to staffing and funding. The results found that 29% of Departments in the State do not have enough funding to operate following 2023. It also found that 41% of departments are staffed with less than 6 personnel.

Assistant and Bureau Chief Reports

- Reports from the Assistant Chief and Bureau Chiefs were included in the packet.
- Jeff Roemer made comment regarding the amount that the District has done the past month. It is clear that everyone is busy and working hard to serve the communities.

Presentation – Staffing Updates (DC Ingersoll, HR Mundt)

- Presentation regarding staffing solutions and programs completed the past six months.
- Historical review of staffing programs.

Discussion/Action – Resolution 23-001 Requesting the Legislature and Governor to Work on Solution to Increase Funding for Shared Revenues Program for all Wisconsin Cities, Villages, and Towns.

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board similar letters drafted by local municipalities regarding shared revenue and the need for additional public safety funding. Currently, the State has over a \$7 billion surplus and shared revenue funding to local municipalities has declined over the years.
- A motion was made by Jeff Roemer seconded by Kent Lorenz to approve resolution 23-001 directing the legislature and governor to work on a solution to increase funding for public safety including fire, emergency medical services, and law enforcement for all Wisconsin cities, villages, and town. Motion carried.

Discussion – Lexipol Policy Development

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board a program called Lexipol which creates, manages, and provides training on District Policies. This was brought forward by the District's insurance carrier at time of renewal as they provide reimbursement to agencies that utilize the program. The program has policies specific to Wisconsin Fire/EMS providers and regularly updates the policies. It also requires training to be completed and tracks this training. Several neighboring agencies utilize the program and highly recommend it. Prior to further investigation the Chief requested feedback from the board on pursuing this as there is an initial start up cost and ongoing annual subscription fee. The costs would be offset with reimbursement from insurance, and reduced legal costs reviewing current policies.
- Jeff Roemer is familiar with the program and feels that it is beneficial. The rest of the board supports staff further investigating the program and bringing forward a proposal.

Discussion/Action – Code of Ethics Policy

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board updates to the District’s Code of Ethics Policy. The policy was updated jointly with representatives of management, human resources, and legal.
- A motion was made by Jeff Roemer and seconded to Mike Tompkins to approve the District’s Code of Ethics Policy with the revisions brought forward and for the District to implement training for all staff on the policy. Motion carried.

Discussion/Action – Conduct and Station Rules Policy

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board updates to the District’s Conduct and Station Rules Policy. The policy was updated jointly with representatives of management, human resources, and legal.
- A motion was made by Kent Lorenz and seconded by Bill Riemenschneider to approve the District’s Conduct and Station Rules Policy with the revisions brought forward and for the District to implement training for all staff on the policy following final review by legal. Motion carried.

Discussion/Action – Affirmative Action/Harassment Policy

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board updates to the District’s Affirmative Action/Harassment Policy. The policy was updated jointly with representatives of management, human resources, and legal.
- A motion was made by Jeff Roemer and seconded by Dan DeBehnke to approve the District’s Affirmative Action/Harassment Policy with the revisions brought forward and for the District to implement training for all staff on the policy following final review by legal. Motion carried.

Discussion/Action – Organizational Chart

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board the current District organizational chart. Over the past several months staff has been reviewing the current needs of the District and if changes to the organizational chart and positions can be made with the phased addition of daily staffing. The Command Staff and Human Resources jointly created a proposed organizational chart that would eliminate some management positions over the next five years. The positions would be eliminated through attrition as individuals are currently in the positions and until the District is at full staff and workload can be disseminated the positions are necessary. As the District increases daily staffing and improves operations the proposed organizational chart eliminates two full-time chief officer positions.
- Scott Carter wishes for this to be completed sooner as that is direction he has received from the Mayor. Jeff Roemer feels this may occur sooner and will be depended on attrition of staff and placing the right people in the right positions.
- A motion was made by Mike Tompkins and seconded by Kent Lorenz to approve the District’s 5 Year organizational restructuring chart and plan. Motion carried; 6-1, Carter opposed.

Discussion/Action – Lieutenant Job Description

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board the newly created job description for full-time Lieutenants. The position description and requirements were drafted using the Districts current Captain and firefighter/paramedic descriptions as guidelines. In addition, staff reviewed position descriptions from City of Waukesha, North Shore, and Greenfield.
- A motion was made by Dan DeBehnke and seconded by Jeff Roemer to approve the full-time Lieutenant job description as presented. Motion carried.

Discussion/Action – 2023 District Insurance Renewal

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board the proposed annual insurance renewal packet from R&R Insurance through the Wisconsin League of Municipalities. Assistant Chief Schuetz completed the renewal packet and was able to answer any questions the board had.
- Kent Lorenz asked if \$1 million cyber protection was adequate in today's world of cyber events occurring. AC Schuetz indicated this is the recommended amount from insurance, and that he would clarify and bring additional information to the next meeting.
- A motion was made by Dan DeBehnke and seconded by Scott Carter to approve the proposal from R&R Insurance effective March 2, 2023. Motion carried.

Future Agenda Items and Meetings

- The next regular meeting of the board will be Monday, March 27th, 2023 at 4pm. The meeting will be held at Station #1.

Closed Session

- George Morris announced, The 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;" *Executive Management Plan; Specific compensation and benefits related to specific employees.*" The Fire Board will not reconvene into open session at the conclusion of the closed session.
- At 5:47 p.m. a motion was made by Kent Lorenz seconded by Mike Tompkins to move to closed session by roll call vote and invite Human Resources Manager Mundt and Assistant Chief Schuetz to join the closed session. Affirmative roll call vote by all board members.
- At 6:51 p.m. the closed session ended and the meeting was adjourned.