

# Western Lakes Fire Board

## Joint Owners Meeting

### June 12, 2024

#### **Call to Order**

- George Morris called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. Board members present were George Morris, Jeff Roemer, Kent Lorenz, Mike Tompkins, Bill Riemenschneider, and Scott Carter. Dan DeBehnke was excused.
- Each of the municipalities called their meetings to order.
- Also present was the City of Oconomowoc Common Council, Village of Summit Board, Village of Dousman Board, Town of Ottawa Board, Town of Oconomowoc Board, Town of Merton Board, and Village of Lac LaBelle Board.

#### **Proof of Notice**

- Chief Bowen announced that the district notice was posted at 9:29 a.m. on June 7, 2023.

#### **Pledge of Allegiance**

- The Chief Elected Officials from the Municipalities led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **Introductions**

- Representatives from the Fire Board, Municipalities, and Fire District introduced themselves to the group.

#### **Public Comment**

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

#### **Consent Agenda**

- A motion was made by the City of Oconomowoc, seconded by the Village of Summit to approve the September 13, 2023 Joint Owners Meeting Minutes. Motion Carried.

#### **Presentation – 2023 Annual Financial Audit**

- Chief Bowen introduced Shannon Small from Clifton Larsen Allen the third party vendor that completed the audit of the 2023 financials of the District. The financial audit process began at the beginning of the year by CLA, and included several records requests, site visits, and reports to be completed. Shannon reviewed with the municipalities the draft audit materials which will be acted upon at the next Fire Board meeting. Each municipality received a printed and electronic version of the District 2023 financial audit. Currently, the District's fund balance remains below the recommended 16% due to the use of fund balance in 2022 for internship wages and compliance with DOL rules and the growth of the District's operating budget over the past two years. Staff continues to balance revenues and expenses and is working to build up the fund balance for cash flow purposes. Due to the timing of apparatus ordering there is a carryover of 2023 capital funds into 2024 that will be utilized. The overall audit is reported as a clean audit with no significant findings.

#### **Presentation – District Updates and Overview**

- Chief Bowen provided an update of the District's operations year to date following the first phase of additional positions being added to the District. This included a comparison of deployment times from each of the stations by quarter of 2023 compared to the prior year. All stations have seen a reduction in deployment (out-the-door times) with the changes made thus far. Further detail of scene arrival times of a staffed fire apparatus (engine or ladder) to fire related incidents was provided. With the staggered staffing and funding drastic global changes and improvement won't

be realized until the full plan is implemented in 2025. In 2023 half the original plan was implemented, and in 2024 an additional six positions will begin shift work in July. These new full-timers are currently going through the academy. The Chief provided a breakdown of the various recruitment processes completed to date, highlighting the number of applicants and positions hired with each process. It is a highly competitive market right now for Fire/EMS as there are more jobs available than there are candidates.

### **Presentation – Community Risk Assessment**

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the municipalities the District's completed Community Risk Assessment. This project is the foundation for the Standards of Cover which is actively being completed. Already, the benefits of having a CRA to make data-driven decisions have been valuable. Since January, the team has been working on this weekly to complete the District's first Community Risk Assessment and Standards of Cover. This document is full of data and statistics about the District and Communities it serves. This information is a neutral analysis of the District, Communities, and Commercial Properties and is helpful in making data-driven decisions based on local and National Standards. This process follows the accreditation process. The final Risk Assessment will be presented in June along with the initial Standards of Cover. The document currently is over 150 pages and has a lot of informative information.
- Chief Bowen recognized the work of the team on the Community Risk Assessment. Command Staff, including AC Gscheidmeier, DC Meyer, DC May, and DC Ingersoll, have been meeting weekly to complete this assessment. In addition Fire Inspector Boldt and FF/Med Krueger finished the OVAP and Heron scoring of every occupancy in the District. This has been a lot of work but most importantly a team effort.

### **Presentation – Apparatus Usage and Needs Assessment (Aerial)**

- Chief Bowen provided the municipalities with a needs and use analysis completed this year on the District's fire suppression apparatus specifically aerial trucks. This analysis was completed by Chief Bowen, Assistant Chief Gscheidmeier, Deputy Chief Meyer, Deputy Chief May, Deputy Chief Ingersoll, and Deputy Chief Igl. The team was tasked with evaluating the District's current fleet and completing a needs and use analysis.
- The team completed a comprehensive analysis utilizing several standards and references, including the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), Insurance Services Office (ISO), Commission on Fire Accreditation (CFAI), Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE), and the District's Community Risk Assessment and Standards of Cover.
- Items that were analyzed include the local history of aerial trucks and apparatus, industry standards, use of aerial trucks for fire suppression/rescue/and non-fire suppression, response times and positioning of aerial trucks, firefighter safety, civilian rescue, ISO rating impacts, capital budget plan, and the financial impact of maintaining or eliminating apparatus.
- Upon completion of the analysis the conclusion provided that two aerial apparatus which are currently in use in the District should be maintained. Decreasing the number of aerial trucks in the District would adversely impact the District's ISO protection rating which would result in increased insurance premiums paid by constituents every year. The impact of this is equivalent to the cost of the aerial truck. The average cost per occupancy for 2028 is \$37.93 in the District. Decreasing the number of aerial apparatus would result in increased response times of a single unit, increased maintenance costs, and reduced the current service life of the single truck. There would be limited availability of an aerial during repairs and maintenance and also during training. This analysis does include a recommendation to replace the aging aerial truck at Station 2 in 2027 but also to reduce the number of engines in the District from six to five. The District would maintain two frontline aerial trucks covering north and south, and three frontline engines. Two engines would be maintained as reserve units for training and periods that frontline apparatus are in for repairs and maintenance. Over the coming years further analysis will be completed with regards to station locations and needs as the communities develop and when a fourth frontline engine and additional station is required.

### **Discussion/Action – 2027 Capital Improvement Budget**

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the municipalities the 2027 Capital Improvement budget which includes the replacement of Aerial Ladder Truck 52. The municipalities approved the capital improvement budget of the District for 2024, 2025, and 2026 at their September 13, 2023 meeting but requested a thorough analysis before considering the replacement of ladder 52.
- Mayor Magnus stated that after reviewing the apparatus analysis and plan to maintain two ladders in the District along with three frontline engines and two reserve engines he is in support of the capital plan. The plan presented by Chief Bowen decreases one engine and also shows the municipalities the reduction of fire apparatus the past several years.
- The elected officials appreciate the analysis completed of the district apparatus and feel this was a good process for everyone to go through.
- A motion was made by the Village of Summit and seconded by the Town of Ottawa to approve the District's Capital Improvement Plan as presented for 2027 which includes the replacement ladder and reduction of one engine from the fleet. Motion carried.

### **Presentation – Intermunicipal Agreement Amendment**

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the municipalities the proposed changes to the District's Intermunicipal Agreement that have been draft by representatives of the municipalities. Since December the Chief has been working with municipal representatives on draft changes to be considered with the IMA. In addition to incorporating the Town of Oconomowoc and Town of Merton as owners through the Intermunicipal Agreement, general updates and considerations to the agreement are being proposed.
- The Town of Oconomowoc has requested that payment of municipal contributions be changed from 10% in January and the balance the last day of February, to a new payment plan of 60% in January and the remaining 40% by June 15<sup>th</sup>. Chief Bowen and the District's Finance Manager completed an analysis of cash flow of the District to determine the impacts of this change. With the District's fund balance in a better position than it was a year ago and with the planned improvements to bring the fund balance back to 18% this change will be possible. The municipalities support this change be included in the IMA draft.
- Chief Bowen states the next steps are to get final municipal feedback and then to work with legal on the final draft document. He hopes this can be completed by the September meeting.

### **Future Meetings**

- Fall Joint Budget Meeting – Wednesday, September 11, 2024 at 6pm at the City of Oconomowoc Police Department.

### **Closed Session**

- The District Fire Board will convene into closed session pursuant to section 19.85(1)(e), Wisconsin State Statutes, Deliberating or negotiating the purchase of public property, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session: Contract Service Agreements with other Municipalities and Intermunicipal Ownership Agreement.”
  - Also, in attendance (and noticed separately) will be elected officials from the City of Oconomowoc, Village of Summit, Village of Dousman, and Town of Ottawa.
  - The Fire Board will not return into open session at the conclusion of the closed session.
- At 8:00 p.m. a motion was made by City of Oconomowoc and seconded by Village of Summit to move to closed session. A motion was made by Jeff Roemer and seconded by Kent Lorens of the Fire Board to move to closed session by roll call vote. Affirmative roll call vote by all board members.

- At 7:08 p.m. the closed session ended.

### **Adjournment**

- At 8:36 p.m., a motion was made by Town of Ottawa and seconded by City of Oconomowoc to adjourn the Joint Owners Meeting. Motion Carried.
- At 8:37 p.m., a motion was made by Jeff Roemer and seconded by Scott Carter to adjourn the Meeting. Motion carried