

Western Lakes Fire Board

Monthly Board Meeting

June 26, 2023

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, Mike Tompkins, Dan DeBehnke, and Scott Carter. Bill Riemenschneider was excused.

Proof of Notice

- Chief Bowen announced that the notice was posted June 23rd at 2:10 p.m. in accordance with open meeting laws.

Pledge of Allegiance

- Bill Lincoln led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

- George Morris opened the meeting up to public comment. There was no public comment.

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 May 22, 2023 regular Fire Board Meeting
 - Payment of bills June in the amount of \$537,549.53
- Scott Carter informed the group that he would be abstaining from any action items this evening as he hasn't had time to review the materials thoroughly.
- A motion was made by Jeff Roemer and seconded by Mike Tompkins to accept the Consent Agenda items including meeting minutes with correction from May 22, 2023 Fire Board meeting and payment of bills in the amount of \$537,549.53. Motion carried, S. Carter abstained.

Fire Chief's Report

- Chief Bowen reminded the board of the full-time swearing-in ceremony scheduled for 4pm on Friday, June 30th at 4pm.
- Station #1 Open House will be held on Saturday, July 8th from 10am until 1pm.
- A review of the Ixonia Bank sweep and ICS protection of the District's financials was provided.
- Chief Bowen informed the board that all candidates as part of the phase two hiring for 2023 are progressing well through the academy. This is the first academy to include live burn training at WCTC. The experience and knowledge of this group of candidates will be a great addition to the District.
- Chief Bowen provided the board with information on Assembly Bill 002 which was introduced and would reduce funding to the local technical college system. Kent Lorenz shared with the board that he received a call from WCTC President Dr. Barnhouse and spoke highly of the District and Chief Bowen as a leader advocating for Fire/EMS.
- The board discussed the proposed shared revenue bill. In addition to the proposed shared revenue bill, the innovation fund for municipalities that work collaboratively to provide services and limit costs is something the District and municipalities should look into further.

Assistant Chief

- Reports from the Assistant Chief and Bureau Chiefs were included in the packet.
- Jeff Roemer asked DC Warren about the EMS relicensure process and how many still have not completed their renewal. DC Warren indicated that the current number is seven, and contact has been made with all of them.

Discussion/Action – District Purchasing Policy

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board the District's current purchasing policy which was updated in 2017. A copy of both the current WLFD policy and recently updated City of Oconomowoc purchasing policy were included in the packet. Chief Bowen reviewed the recently updated policy from the City. With inflationary changes in the costs of goods and services the current policy requires updating. The current market is also making it difficult to obtain quotes from vendors and time frames have significantly shortened. Many times, budgeted items that are approved and within budget become available, but due to the current policy are not able to be purchased. This causes a delay in obtaining approved goods and services, and with the current delays in approval result in the products not being available after approval, or a price increase.
- Since the last board meeting the revised City of Oconomowoc purchasing policy has been reviewed which was updated recently. The previous policy was very similar to the District's current policy, and found to be restrictive in the current environment. The revisions of the policy will allow approved items within the budget to be made if they are approved and within budget. Internal controls and oversight of the board will remain in place.
- Mike Tompkins asked if the policy should reflect a Finance Department or Finance Office. The board agreed that this should be amended throughout the document.
- Amendments made to reflect Finance Department. Under General to read that "vendors that have stated they have the ability to perform successfully". Amendment regarding purchasing cards to reflect any employee assigned by the Chief. Also, to review and change any reference to City to District.
- A motion to approve the District Purchasing Policy with amendments was made by Jeff Roemer and seconded by Dan DeBehnke. Motion carried, S. Carter abstained.

Discussion/Action – 2023 Fire and Highway Fee Schedule

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the Fire Board materials that have been analyzed by DC Meyer, Fire Recovery USA (District's third-party billing company), and himself.
- The District has fee schedules for Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Special Event Standby's, Fire & Highway, and Fire Prevention services. These fees are for special services provided to specific individuals or businesses. During the December 2022 Fire Board Meeting Fee Schedules were set for 2023. The Fire and Highway Billing Fee Schedule required additional consideration due to changes in billing and reimbursement changes throughout the Country. Staff has worked with the District's third-party billing company to evaluate current best practices for these services and customary charges for these services.
- A motion to approve 2023 fees for Fire and Highway Billing as presented was made by Jeff Roemer and seconded by Dan DeBehnke. Motion carried, S. Carter abstained.

Discussion – Staffing and District Update

- Chief Bowen provided the Fire Board with an update on District Staffing. This included the status of the current full-time academy that graduates on Friday, June 30th and will be sworn in that evening. In addition to the full-time academy instructors have completed orientation and training of newly hired part-time and apprentice employees. This month alone over 120 instructional hours have gone into training newly hired employees. From time of hire to being

able to work shift it takes a minimum of three months and up to six months depending on the employee's availability. This includes application, interviews, background checks, medical physicals, psychological evaluations, and finally onboarding the employee. The training required to become oriented is roughly 120 hours before they are able to function on a scheduled shift.

- Jeff Roemer commended the District for its recruitment and training programs.

Discussion/Action – Executive Management Plan

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board the Executive Management Plan that was completed and adopted in fall of 2022. A summary of the analysis and items completed by the management team was provided to the board. Chief Bowen indicated that the plan will continue to be utilized and updated annually by the management team. The plan has improved communication, team work, and executive of items across the management team.
- Fire Board representatives recognize the effort put into this plan by the Chief Officers and Human Resources to complete and implement the plan. The management team has met the expectations of the board with this plan. The board is happy to hear the Chief's desire to update the plan on a regular basis and make it a living document that is used by management.
- A motion to consider implementation and execution of the Executive Management Plan completed by the Chief and Management Team was made by Kent Lorenz and seconded by Jeff Roemer. Motion carried, S. Carter abstained.

Discussion – 2024 Operating Budget

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board the operational budget priorities for 2024. These include adequate staffing and implementation of the phased staffing plan with phase 2 implementation in 2024. Other operational budget priorities include consideration of Lexipol Policy Development/Maintenance/Training, and consideration of a consolidated administrative building.
- The draft budget will be discussed in July and finalized through the month of August.

Discussion – 5 Year Capital Improvement Plan

- Chief Bowen provided the board with the draft 5-year capital improvement plan. The plan has been updated to reflect cost estimates based on the current costs of apparatus, equipment, and facility costs. The management team, committees, and staff have evaluated the CIP to attempt to minimize the impacts of recent inflation on the budget. This includes further consolidation or elimination of apparatus/equipment. Some projects have been pushed out following an evaluation of the apparatus/equipment usage, condition, and operational benefits to the District. Over the next month the CIP will be further evaluated for final discussion and action in August.

Future Agenda Items and Meetings

- A Joint Owners Meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 12, 2023 at 6pm.
- The next regular meeting of the board will be Monday, July 24, 2023 at 4pm. The meeting will be held at Station #1.
- The Fire Board scheduled a special budget workshop for Wednesday, August 9, 2023 at 4pm.

Closed Session

1. George Morris announced, The Fire Board will convene into closed session pursuant to section 19.85(1)(c)(e), 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;" and "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” for the following purposes:
“*Contract Service Agreements with Municipalities; 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 5:18 p.m. a motion was made by Jeff Roemer seconded by Dan DeBehnke to move to closed session by roll call vote. Affirmative roll call vote by all board members.
- At 6:10 p.m. the closed session ended and the meeting was adjourned.