

# Western Lakes Fire Board

## Monthly Board Meeting

### October 24, 2022

#### Call to Order

- Jeff Roemer called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Board members present were Jeff Roemer, Kent Lorenz, Bill Riemenschneider, Dan DeBehnke, and Scott Carter. George Morris and Mike Tompkins were excused.

#### Proof of Notice

- Chief Bowen announced that the notice was posted October 21<sup>st</sup> at 1:32 p.m. in accordance with open meeting laws.

#### Announcement

- Jeff Roemer 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 and negotiations strategies; Executive Management Plan; Specific compensation and benefits related to specific employees ."* The Fire Board will reconvene into open session at the conclusion of the closed session.

#### Pledge of Allegiance

- Deputy Chief Igl led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### Public Comment

- Jeff Roemer opened the meeting to public comment of which there was none.

#### Swearing In Ceremony

- The Fire Board moved to the apparatus bay for the swearing in ceremony of Mark Krueger and Daniel Mann. Chief Bowen welcomed everyone to the ceremony and this special day for Firefighter/Paramedic's Krueger and Mann. He thanked their families, friends, and colleagues for joining this evening as they begin the next chapter of their career. Fire Board Representative DeBehnke completed the swearing in oath of office for Krueger and Mann. Following the oath of office, a pinning ceremony was completed. Upon conclusion attendees were invited to stay for refreshments.

#### 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 September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022 regular Fire Board Meeting
  - Payment of Bills - \$308,427.64
  - Ambulance and Highway refunds
- A motion was made by Dan DeBehnke and seconded by Bill Riemenscheider to accept the Consent Agenda items including meeting minutes from September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Fire Board meeting, and payment of bills in the amount of \$308,427.64. Motion carried.

## **Fire Chief's Report**

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board activities over the past month including the annual employee recognition ceremony which was held on September 27<sup>th</sup>. During this ceremony employees were recognized for their years of service, distinguished service, EMS excellence, unit citations, lifesaving, and meritorious service. Special thanks to DC Meyer and FF/Monahan for making the arrangements of the evening. Over the last month the hiring process was also completed for two full-time firefighter/paramedics that were sworn in earlier in the evening. Chief provided the board with updates on efforts being made to improve retention of current employees as well as recruitment of new employees. The Chief is working with the bureaus on a variety of operational and administrative initiatives. Chief also attended the Wisconsin Chief's Education Association Training which provided updates on GEMT, Recruitment, Legal updates, and Diversity/Inclusion as topics. Working with Emergency Management on potential training and equipment grants for 2023.

## **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.

## **Discussion/Action – 2023 Dodge County Joint Powers Agreement**

- The 2023 Dodge County 911 Joint Powers Agreement was reviewed with the board. This agreement is approved annually between the District and Dodge County for the service area in the Town of Ashippun. The agreement is required per State Statute. The Jefferson and Waukesha County Agreements are done between the Municipalities and the 911 Center, where Dodge County has the agreement between the providers and 911 Center.
- A motion to approve the Dodge County 911 Joint Powers Agreement was made by Dan DeBehnke, seconded by Kent Lorenz. Motion carried.

## **Discussion/Action – Adoption of Waukesha County Hazard Mitigation Plan**

- In 2021 Western Lakes Fire District and Office of Emergency Management worked with the City of Oconomowoc, Villages of Summit, Dousman, and Lac La Belle, and Townships of Ottawa, Oconomowoc, and Merton on the Waukesha County Hazard Mitigation Plan. Each municipality completed various documents regarding their specific needs for mitigation, preparedness, and response as well as completed mitigation, preparedness and response items since the last plan. The District and joint Emergency Management Office completed the global submission for all municipalities within the joint Emergency Management Office. Some of the items that were identified for the current plan include backup generators, emergency signage, spill control equipment, emergency shelter, training materials, and a debris site. The various submissions are included in final plan that is up for adoption.
- A motion to adopt the Waukesha County Hazard Mitigation Plan was made by Dan DeBehnke and seconded by Bill Riemenschneider. Motion carried.

## **Discussion/Action – Battalion Chief Job Description**

- The 2023 budget includes the addition of full-time battalion chiefs to manage the daily operations of the District and associated shift. This position will be the primary supervisor for the daily shift and function as the initial incident commander of incidents in the District. The job description was developed after reviewing the District's operations, needs, and expectations of the position. Job descriptions for the position were obtained from the City of Waukesha, North Shore, and Greenfield Fire Departments for comparison and development. Thought the District is evaluating the overall organizational chart and other Chief Officers positions the

Battalion Chief position has been identified as a critical position for the daily operations of the district, consistency of shift leadership and management, and incident command.

- A motion to approve the full-time Battalion Chief with amendments was made by Kent Lorenz seconded by Dan DeBehnke. Motion carried.

### **Discussion/Action – Line of Credit Renewal**

- The District's line of credit with Ixonia Bank has come due for renewal, and is being brought to the Board for approval. The renewal is for two (2) years, and will be brought to the municipal boards again in 2024 for renewal if necessary. The reason for this being a two-year line of credit is at the request of Ixonia Bank. They provide this line of credit to the District at no cost, and to help keep this at no cost they requested a two-year approval. Typically, there is a cost for this, but they have waived the costs due to the District's other accounts with the bank. However, as costs have increased and the bank invests labor and legal costs into the preparation of the line of credit documents they requested a two-year approval to help with some of the expenses.
- Since 2016 the District has maintained a \$200,000 line of credit with Ixonia Bank. This was a recommendation made by the District's Accounting Firm as well as the Third-Party Auditing Firm. The line of credit has not been used to date, but is strongly recommended by both parties in the event of unforeseen expenses or decreased revenues.
- The District maintains of fund balance of 15% to 20% of the annual operating budget to ensure cashflow and operations are maintained throughout the year given the fluctuations of revenues and expenses. A prime example of why the District maintains the fund balance and line of credit is what has occurred this year with the pandemic. This year was a year that could not have been projected and the decreased revenues and increased costs are being balanced with the fund balance to allow the District to continue operations.
- A policy is in place in the event the District identifies a need to utilize the funds available in the line of credit. The policy is attached to this for your reference. Before drawing on the line of credit an emergency meeting would be called to order with the Fire Board and Chief Elected Officials to discuss drawing on the line of credit.
- A motion to approve two-year line of credit as presented by Ixonia Bank was made by Kent Lorenz seconded by Bill Riemenschneider. Motion carried.

### **Future Agenda Items and Meetings**

- November Fire Board meeting will be held on Monday, November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 4pm at a Station #1.

### **Closed Session**

- Jeff Roemer 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 and negotiations strategies; Executive Management Plan; Specific compensation and benefits related to specific employees ."* The Fire Board will reconvene into open session at the conclusion of the closed session.
- At 4:42 p.m. a motion was made by Dan DeBehnke seconded by Bill Riemenschneider to move to closed session by roll call vote. Affirmative roll call vote by all board members.
- At 6:02 p.m. a motion was made by Bill Riemenschneider seconded by Kent Lorenz to move to open session by roll call vote. Affirmative vote by all board members.

### **Discussion/Action – 2023 Wages**

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board the 2023 wages for the District’s employees including full-time hourly and salaried, part-time hourly, intern, and paid-on-call. The wages presented were included in the 2023 budget that was approved in September. The District’s current wages are below market rate and currently are not competitive in the public or private sectors for comparable positions. HR completed a wages comparison for 2022 which provided the District with a range of wages for the various positions. The proposed wages for 2023 adjust the District’s wages to the 65<sup>th</sup> percentile. This analysis will be completed annually to ensure the District remains competitive and able to retain current employees as well as attract new employees. The adjustment for part-time, paid-on-call, and interns will assist with current staffing shortages as the District relies heavily on these employment classifications. As the pool of available employees in all classifications continues to decline the addition of full-time positions is more sustainable.
- A motion to approve the 2023 part-time and full-time wages was made by Dan DeBehnke seconded by Kent Lorenz. Motion carried.

### **Discussion/Action – Station 4 Lease Agreement**

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board the proposed lease agreement with Logemann Investments LLC. The original agreement was for a period of four years; however the current EMS agreement is for the next two years. To bring both agreements in line with each other the agreement is being amended to be for a period of two years.
- A motion to approve two-year lease agreement with Logemann Investments LLC with amendments was made by Dan DeBehnke seconded by Kent Lorenz. Motion carried.

### **Adjournment**

- A motion to adjourn at 6:15 p.m. was made by Bill Riemenschneider and seconded by Dan DeBehnke. Motion carried.