

Western Lakes Fire Board
Monthly Board Meeting
September 23, 2024

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, Bill Riemenschneider, Dan DeBehnke, and Scott Carter.

Proof of Notice

- Chief Bowen announced that the notice was posted Friday, September 23, 2024, at 3:49 p.m. in accordance with open meeting laws.

Pledge of Allegiance

- Kevin Laabs led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

- George Morris opened the meeting up to public comment.
- Scott Carter introduced Kevin Laabs to the board as a Town of Merton resident and past member of the Stone Bank/Western Lakes Fire Departments who is interested in serving as a future Fire Board Member.

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 26, 2024 regular Fire Board Meeting
 - Payment of bills in the amount of \$918,251.90.
- A motion was made by Jeff Roemer and seconded by Bill Riemenschneider to approve the Consent Agenda items including meeting minutes from August 26, 2024 Fire Board meeting and payment of bills in the amount of \$918,251.90. Motion carried unanimously.

Fire Chief's Report

- Chief Bowen updated the board on various projects that are currently underway. A significant project includes working with Waukesha County Communications Center on revised response plans and determinant codes. These changes will reduce the number of determinants used county-wide, but more importantly, allow for improved consistency among similar incident types. AC Gscheidmeier and DC Meyer have spent significant time on these along with the Battalion Chiefs. Working with bureaus and committees and remaining capital projects for the current year and beginning to work on next years capital projects to ensure completion in the budgeted year. Working on succession planning and professional development programs for District staff.

Chief Officer Reports

- George Morris asked the board if they had any questions for the Chief Officers on their reports or if any of the Chiefs had anything to add.

Discussion/Action – Merton and Hartland FD Budget Contributions

- Chief Bowen shared with the Fire Board the draft budget received from the Village of Merton and Hartland Fire Departments. The WLFD budget includes the portion of the Village of Merton and Hartland Budgets for services provided in the Town of Merton. The Chiefs of each Department were invited to attend the meeting and discuss the budget requests, however had emergency calls

occurring at the time which prevented them from attending. The Fire Board requested data reports from the two departments as part of the packet for next month.

- A motion was made by Jeff Roemer and seconded by Dan DeBehnke to table this item until next month. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion/Action – 2025 Health Insurance Plan and Contributions

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the Fire Board the proposed Health Insurance costs for 2025. No changes are proposed to the current plan or contribution percentage from the current year. The District participates in the PO4 Program which is the State of Wisconsin low deductible plan with dental coverage. The District covers 87% of the lowest cost plan for full-time employees and 50% or 25% of the lowest cost plan for eligible part-time employees. Employees are responsible for the difference in plan cost and deductible. Included in the 2025 budget was the 9.9% increase to the District. The employee increase for 2025 is also 9.9%.
- A motion was made by Dan DeBehnke and seconded by Kent Lorenz to approve health insurance as presented for 2025 with the District covering 87% of the lowest cost provider for eligible full-time employees, and 50% or 25% for eligible part-time employees according to policy. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion/Action – 2025 Wages

- Chief Bowen presented to the Fire Board the 2025 wages for the District's full-time, part-time, and apprentice employees included in the 2025 budget. Annually, the District completes a wage analysis of internal and external comparables and, as part of the budget process, includes wage adjustments. These wages are included in the budget process with the municipalities.
- A motion was made by Mike Tompkins and seconded by Jeff Roemer to approve a 3% cost of living wage adjustment for the District's Full-time Employees and specific part-time and apprentice adjustments as proposed and approved in the 2025 Operating Budget effective January 5, 2025. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion/Action – Dodge County Joint Powers Agreement

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the Fire Board the 2025 Dodge County Joint Powers Agreement renewal in accordance with Wisconsin Statute 256.35(9) regarding 911 system in Dodge County. No changes to the current agreement have been made and this is an annual renewal with Dodge County for the service area in the Town of Ashippun.
- A motion was made by Jeff Roemer and seconded by Dan DeBehnke to approve the Dodge County Joint Powers Agreement. Motion carried unanimously.

Future Agenda Items and Meetings

- Monthly Fire Board Meeting – Monday, October 28, 4:00 pm at Station 1.

Adjournment

- At 4:52 p.m. a motion was made by Jeff Roemer and seconded by Dan DeBehnke to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.