

WEST METRO FIRE-RESCUE DISTRICT

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

October 11, 2017

Approved

A. Call to order

President Gary Laurant called the regular meeting of the West Metro Fire-Rescue District Board of Directors to order at 6:30 p.m. on October 11, 2017, at Station 3, 4251 Xylon Avenue N., New Hope, MN.

B. Roll Call – The following Directors were present:

Gary Laurant	Representative at Large, President
Anne Norris	City Manager, City of Crystal, Secretary
Kirk McDonald	City Manager, City of New Hope, Vice President
Jeff Kolb	Council, City of Crystal
John Elder	Council, City of New Hope
Mary Serie	Citizen Representative, City of Crystal
Eric Lammler	Citizen Representative (Council), City of New Hope

The following staff members were present:

Fire Chief Sarah Larson
Assistant Fire Chief Adam Wodtke
Assistant Fire Chief Joel Nelson
Assistant Fire Chief Josh Kunde
Battalion Chief Sean Watson
Deputy Fire Marshal Shelby Wolf
District Counsel Roger Knutson
Recording Secretary Amy Juntunen, JASS

C. Minutes

1. Approve the July 12, 2017 Board of Directors Minutes

Motion by Elder, second by Norris to approve the minutes as presented. **Motion carried.**

D. Open Forum – None.

E. Consent Agenda

1. Approve June Expenditures totaling \$254,504.42
2. Approve July Expenditures totaling \$161,131.87
3. Approve August Expenditures totaling \$149,172.66

Motion by Serie, second by Elder to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. **Motion carried.**

F. Chief's Report

As of September 30, 2017 there have been 1459 calls for service. This is a few hundred calls over the same time in 2016, mainly due to the EMS standby service. Sundays were added to EMS

standby in October 2016. EMS standby is staffed by two firefighters on shift, not paid-on-call, so it shouldn't have a large impact on the overall staffing budget. Kolb requested an "other" column be added to the Calls for Service report to detail calls outside the District.

Chief Larson continues to meet with the City Managers monthly to discuss the 2017 budget status, agendas for Board meetings, implementation of the new records management software, and the upcoming open house. Chief Larson also attended council meetings of both cities re the 2018 budget. The District is running slightly over budget due to a grant received and legal activity directed by the Board. Officers and full-time staff also meet monthly to coordinate training and events.

Since May the District has responded to four vehicle crashes for stabilization or extrication, including a multi-vehicle crash on Highway 169. This is unusually high since there are no highways in the District's jurisdiction.

The District participated in over 17 events this quarter. Three firefighters have taken a Leave of Absence and have since moved out of the district, so their resignations will occur in 2018 at the expiration of the maximum one-year LOA term. One retirement of a 22-year member of Station 1 was recently received.

The District has been participating in Radiological Emergency Preparedness (REP) training with eight other agencies at the Monticello nuclear power plant. In August the District crew, along with other participants, received a positive evaluation from FEMA who was so impressed that they will be using the planning and implementation developed in Minnesota to implement the program in other areas of the country. This program with FEMA unlocks \$35,000 per year in grants and funding opportunities. An additional \$10,000 was made available in 2017. These funds are only available for the LSU trailer and REP program. The funds have been used to purchase lights, generators and other equipment. Equipment can be used in the District for other purposes, but must be made available to the LSU trailer in case of nuclear issue.

The Honor Guard continues to train on the last week of every month. They participated in the annual Fallen Firefighter Memorial Service and presented the colors at a Vikings game.

The Employee Recognition Party took place on September 16. Firefighters were able to nominate each other for peer awards and nearly every firefighter received at least two nominations. A list of awards, including anniversary milestones, is in the meeting packet.

Planning for the 2018 Fire Academy is underway. Robbinsdale and Brooklyn Center have now joined the Academy on a permanent basis. Two recruits elected to take the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training, while the remainder will take the Emergency Medical Responder training, both of which will be completed in December.

The West Metro CERT team added four new members, three in Plymouth and one in Richfield.

The Tech Rescue team continues to train monthly with seven fully-trained members now. This team will not replace Edina Rescue as it is expensive to keep up with training, but we can begin prior to their arrival. In 2016 there was one call to Golden Valley for a steep hill rescue.

The Explorer Program with local youth has continued training on a variety of topics. Several Explorers role-played in the summer recruit trainings.

Crystal purchased a four-plex property that the District will use for training. The required annual OSHA training will occur in December. Staff has been pulling data from the current Firehouse system in preparation for the new records management software implementation. Staff has met with a LOGIS software engineer to learn how to write forms, as well as some coding and back-end management. The new software is on-track to go live January 1. This will allow a full month of training for end-users and working out bugs. Staff is also working with LOGIS to identify a more economical version of work station computers.

The new website is live and getting a lot of traffic, with the most time spent on pages for apparatus, staff, and board packets.

Staff is working with the City of New Hope re the new city hall complex. The current generator will be upgraded and be shared by both city hall and the fire station.

The new tower/aerial is in service at Station 1. The old aerial has been picked up by the buyer. All new equipment for the new tower was purchased through Relief Association funds. Staff is working with Hennepin County to reprogram and update all 54 portable radios and 23 mobile radios. Reprogramming of all firefighter-issued pagers has been completed with the addition of a County-wide ALL CALL page.

The District trains on vehicle extrication on the first Thursday of each month. The instructors would like to thank Jack's Towing for donating, delivering and picking up two cars per month over the past two years for training. There will also be an extrication training vehicle demonstration at the open house. The instructors would also like to thank the City of Crystal for letting the District use their Public Works site for extrication training purposes.

There have been 644 inspections conducted through September 30. The focus has been on rental and licensing, as well as new construction and remodel inspections. The hood cleaning program in Crystal has been working well, with many restaurants pulling permits and getting cleaned. The Home Safety Survey is also booming, surpassing the goal of 30 for 2017, with three to four requests weekly. An informational flyer on the program was included in the Crystal utility billing in August. The Red Cross partners donated 30 smoke alarms in July for use in the program. The District also received a grant from Center Point Energy to purchase smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors, fire extinguishers and nightlights/flashlights for the program. Since the inception of the program in 2013, surveys have been completed in 126 homes and 630 smoke alarms were installed.

Eight fire prevention events have been held between July 1-September 30. Six fire investigations have been performed in the same period.

2017 2nd Quarter Financial Report. The general fund balance as of June 30, 2017 is \$174,451.30. Donations by the Relief Association total \$42,356.59, with \$17,673.41 out of that fund being spent on equipment for the new tower, conference travel costs, employee appreciation, and promotional items. The Capital Fund balance was \$632,604.11 and an additional \$337,000 will be added to the

balance from the sale of the aerial. In 2017, \$217,745 was budgeted for capital expenses. Of that, \$112,198.89 has been expended thus far. The Pension Fund balance has increased from \$128,183 at year-end 2016 to \$228,182.96.

G. Old Business

1. 2018 Budget

At the July 12, 2017 meeting the Board unanimously recommended approval of the 2018 budget of \$2,295,850. Staff presented the budget at work sessions of the Crystal and New Hope councils in August. Both cities approved the budget as presented.

H. New Business

1. Extension of the contract with Abdo, Eick & Meyer (AEM) for financial services for years 2018-2020

The District contracted AEM, the same provider used by member cities, for financial services in 2016. The District is happy with their services, especially the auditors, and recommends extending the contract for an additional three years from January 1, 2018 – December 31, 2020. The average cost and percentage increase per year are detailed in the meeting packet, with an average increase per year of 2.84%. This expense is included in the District's 2018 budget. Motion by Serie, second by Elder to approve extending the contract with AEM Financial Solutions, LLC for the years 2018-2020. **Motion carried.**

2. ISO Public Protection Classification (PPC) Summary Report

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) evaluates the District and classifies fire protection on a scale of 1-10, with 1 being the best and 10 indicating no fire suppression available. This scale can be used by property insurance companies. Evaluations for ratings are done every five years. The District received a classification of 3 again. Prior to 2013, the District was rated at class 4. No fire departments in Minnesota received a class 1 rating and only two received a class 2 rating. For the District to receive a class 2 rating, it would need to change to a full-time department model. Comparisons of the District to other departments in the state was included in the meeting packet.

3. Employee Handbook Update for Periodic Physicals

Cancer and heart disease are the largest killers of firefighters in the US. The physical demands of the job can increase susceptibility to injuries related to stress and overexertion. The 2017 budget included an increased expenditure for medical exams to implement periodic physicals for firefighters. The current firefighter force would be segmented into three groups to cover the expense of physicals for each firefighter once every three years to create a baseline and hopefully help firefighters to catch any health issues early. Remediation of any health issues discovered will be between the firefighters and their doctor and is not at the expense of the district for non-work related issues. The proposed changes to the handbook detail this change.

The Board directed Staff to create a written procedure, separate from the policy, to ensure implementation regarding how injuries or failed physicals are addressed is uniform. There are no language changes to the handbook policy needed. The Board directed that the policy changes be reviewed by City HR staff prior to approval. Motion by Kolb, second by Lammle to table this item until the December meeting. **Motion carried.**

4. Capital Purchases

a. Airbag Equipment. The District has a replacement schedule for life-saving equipment consistent with NFPA guidelines and the manufacturer's recommended service life. Lifting airbags have a 10-year lifespan, which has been reached, and are included in the 2017 capital replacement plan. The plan budgets \$20,000 for the replacement of this equipment. Bids have been received for the airbags and fittings necessary to install a low pressure system to fill the bags on Squad 1, instead of using air bottles, for a total of \$10,420.20. Motion by Norris, second by Serie to approve the purchase of airbags and fittings as presented. **Motion carried.**

b. Workstation Computers. The 2017 budget includes \$20,000 for the purchase of six workstations. These are used for completing fire reports and other District business. LOGIS recommended the EliteDesk 705 mini workstations at a cost of \$653.73 each. Staff recommends the purchase of the workstations along with four HP monitors at a cost of \$165.45 each for a total of \$4,584.18. This purchase is on state contract. Motion by Kolb, second by Lammler to approve the purchase of workstation computers as presented. **Motion carried.**

I. Closed Meeting

Motion by Elder, second by Serie to close the meeting pursuant to MN Statute at 7:40 p.m. The regular meeting resumed at 8:00 p.m.

Motion by Kolb, second by Norris to approve the Settlement Agreement. **Motion carried.** Laurant will sign the agreement on behalf of the District.

J. Other Matters and Announcements

The next regular meeting is scheduled for December 13, 2017 at 6:30 p.m.

K. Adjournment

There being no further business, motion by McDonald, second by Elder to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Juntunen
Recording Secretary