

WEST METRO FIRE-RESCUE DISTRICT

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

April 12, 2023

Approved July 12, 2023

A. Call to order

President Gary Laurant called a regular meeting of the West Metro Fire-Rescue District Board of Directors to order at 6:32 p.m. on Wednesday, April 12, 2023 at Station 3, 4251 Xylon Avenue N., New Hope, MN.

B. Roll Call – The following Directors were present:

Gary Laurant	President
Adam Bell	City Manager, City of Crystal, Secretary
John Budziszewski	Council, City of Crystal
John Elder	Council, City of New Hope
Jeff Kolb	Citizen Representative, City of Crystal
Marc Berris	Citizen Representative, City of New Hope

The following staff members were present:

Fire Chief Sarah Larson
Assistant Fire Chief Joel Nelson
Assistant Fire Chief Josh Kunde
Fire Captain Eric Grimes
Counsel Joel Jamnik, Campbell Knutson
Auditor Bill Lauer, Malloy, Montague, Karnowski, Radosevich & Co., P.A.
Recording Secretary, Amy Juntunen

The Board welcomed new member, John Budziszewski.

C. 2022 Audit Presentation

The District was audited according to government auditing standards. Records were provided in an organized and timely manner for the audit. The auditor gave an unmodified clean opinion on the financial statements and had no comments on the reporting process. No instances of non-compliance with Minnesota law and no deficiencies in the District's internal controls were found.

The auditor reviewed the balance sheet detailing the various funds and the profit and loss statement by fund which details the changes in the balance sheet.

D. Minutes

1. Approve the February 8, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes. Motion by Kolb, second by Elder to approve the minutes as presented. *Motion carried.*

E. Open Forum

F. Consent Agenda

1. Approve January Expenditures totaling \$310,817.58.
2. Approve Resolution 2023-3 accepting Donations.

Motion by Elder, second by Kolb to approve the consent agenda as presented. *Motion carried.*

G. Chief's Report

From January 1 through March 31, 2023 there have been 392 calls for service: 152 in Crystal, 226 in New Hope and 14 mutual aid with an estimated fire loss of \$299,700. Operations in 2022 ran \$95,382 over budget with \$50,000 of that offset by assigned funds.

The 2021 apprentices are currently completing driving training. They will continue to drive with qualified instructors until the beginning of the Apparatus Operator class this summer. This is the last training segment prior to becoming firefighters. New firefighters will be pinned at the December board meeting. Just under 20 firefighters completed train derailment training. All apprentices receive hazmat training in their first year.

Color guard training at Camp Ripley went well this year with 15 fire departments completing the funeral color guard training. This training is planned to be held again in 2024.

Four staff members will be traveling to Pierce for final inspection of the first fire engine tomorrow. A post-delivery inspection will be held at McQueen to run all the pumps, hydraulics, etc. That inspection will take about a week, after which time Grimes and Kunde will install the tools, radios and other equipment on the new engine to prepare it for service within the next month. The last of the four existing engines is for sale on consignment. The District has made more on the resale of the first three engines than the trade-in value.

The District's website is on an outdated platform and LOGIS will discontinue hosting the website. Staff have decided on the Square Space platform and some POC firefighters with website experience will help staff get the new website designed and operational.

There have been 328 fire inspections conducted this year, 117 of which required reinspection.

The food drive was very successful considering the brutal cold and wind of that day, raising \$5,404 and 2,091 lbs. of food donated within four hours. Enough to create 1,884 meals. This year the District brought in the spouses and significant others of firefighters to meet with our counselors to learn about the support available. This was the first time the District held this type of event and it was very well received, with a request to repeat in the future. The District's 25th anniversary is July 6, 2023. Staff are working to bring in food trucks for an open house celebration.

An email was received from a resident regarding a recent housefire and was very complimentary of the District and the fire officer in command of the fire.

One recruit resigned, one apprentice is moving to Australia, and one firefighter will be taking a leave of absence due to a rare form of cancer.

1. Fourth Quarter Financial Report. The report was included in the packet. There were no questions.

H. Old Business

I. New Business

1. Approve WMFRD signing onto Opioid Settlements. In December 2022 the Attorney General's office joined more settlements and asked for participation. The District signed on to the original settlement. This new settlement includes five new agencies. This will allow the District to apply for grants related to opioid addiction. Motion by Elder, second by Kolb to approve signing on to the new opioid settlement as presented. *Motion carried.*

2. Approve Capital Purchases

a. Extrication Equipment. The District currently has four cordless "jaws of life" (combination cutter/spreader) tools purchased in 2012 located on three engines and one on the tower. A complement of gas-powered hydraulic extrication tools are located on squad 1 consisting of a cutter, spreader and ram. Staff recommends replacement of these items with the addition of one cordless combination tool to ensure that each engine and the tower have this equipment. The 2023 capital plan includes \$95,000 for hydraulic tools. The total purchase price is \$114,232. The overage of \$19,232 will come from special funds donated by the Firefighter's Relief Association. Motion by Berris, second by Elder to approve the extrication equipment purchase as presented. *Motion carried.*

b. Nozzles and Fire Hose. Currently all nozzles and hose range in age from 10-25 years old. More hose fails testing each year. Staff put a team together to test multiple nozzles from several manufacturers. After receiving several quotes, staff propose to purchase from Jefferson Fire, who will buy back up to 35 of the District's existing nozzles, at a cost of \$78,684.76. The 2023 capital plan includes \$90,000 for replacement hose and nozzles. Motion by Elder, second by Berris to approve the purchase as presented. *Motion carried.*

c. Turnout Gear. The District replaces several sets of turnout gear each year instead of replacing it all at once. Staff obtained a quote to purchase eight new sets of gear from McQueen and boots from Jefferson Fire at a cost of \$38,584.80. There is \$40,000 in the capital plan for turnout gear. Motion by Budziszewski, second by Bell to approve the purchase as presented. *Motion carried.*

3. 2024 Preliminary Budget. The total proposed budget is \$3,364,000, an 11% increase over 2022. This increase is mainly due to the \$80,000 increase in the lease payment for the engines this year. The lease payments will increase through 2028. Other increases include an additional FT staff person, PERA, workers comp, financial services and communications, as well as a \$20,000 increase to the special pension fund.

The tower lease was signed in 2016, so the first discussion on replacement of the tower will occur at the July meeting. There is a 2-4 year build time on apparatus. The lease for the new engines

expires in 2032. At that point the District can decide whether to replace the engines or buy out the lease. The buyout of the lease is not included in the capital purchase plan. When each of the most recent engines was sold, \$85,000 was paid to McQueen to pay down the lease, in addition to the consignment fee. Any overage from the engine sales is being saved for the balloon payment of the tower.

J. Other Matters and Announcements

1. Work Session of the West Metro Board of Directors May 10, 2023
2. Regular Meeting of the West Metro Board of Directors July 12, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

K. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Juntunen
Recording Secretary