

WEST METRO FIRE-RESCUE DISTRICT

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

December 11, 2019

Approved February 12, 2020

A. Call to order

President Gary Laurant called the regular meeting of the West Metro Fire-Rescue District Board of Directors to order at 6:31 p.m. on December 11, 2019, 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
Brendan Banks	Council, City of Crystal
John Elder	Council, City of New Hope
Mary Serie	Citizen Representative, City of Crystal
Daniel Gates	Citizen Representative, City of New Hope

The following staff members were present:

Fire Chief Sarah Larson
Assistant Fire Chief Adam Wodtke
Assistant Fire Chief Josh Kunde
Assistant Fire Chief Joel Nelson
District Counsel Joel Jamnick
Recording Secretary Beverly Love, JASS

C. Minutes

Motion by McDonald, second by Banks to approve the minutes of the October 9, 2019 Board of Directors meeting as presented. **Motion carried.**

D. Open Forum – None.

E. Consent Agenda

1. Approve September Expenditures totaling \$277,837.26
2. Approve October Expenditures totaling \$178,134.68
3. Approve Resolution 2019-6 Accepting Donations
4. Approve Resolution 2019-7 Credit Card Purchases
5. Approve Resolution 2019-8 Fire Chief as 2019 Purchasing Agent
6. Approve LMCIT Liability Coverage-Waiver Form

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

F. Chief's Report

There have been 1,820 calls for service through November 30, 757 in Crystal and 984 in New Hope. Estimated fire loss is \$1,241,949.

The Chief continues to meet with the City Managers, with the next staff meeting scheduled for January 3, 2020. Discussion topics included the capital plan, crisis communications software, reappointment of Fire Relief Association representatives, December emergency management training (EOC activation), employee review board members, and end-of-year board actions.

Full-time staff met in October and twice in November and are working on promoting recruits to apprentice since they have passed their 1-year evaluation and emergency medical training. Staff is also working on open enrollment for benefits, coordinating annual pump testing and recall on E-One apparatus, implementation of CodeRed crisis communication software, preparing for emergency management training, major apparatus replacement report, performance reviews, honor guard, tech rescue, pump and extrication training, and coordinating fire prevention programs in schools.

Chief Larson will attend both member City Council work sessions in January 2020.

Staff is developing a report on the replacement of major apparatus for presentation to the Board at a future meeting.

There were no retirements or resignations since the last Board meeting. Firefighters participated in seven events the past two months with lots of school and home safety events. A blood drive was held on December 2 in New Hope and another is scheduled for December 16 in Crystal. The Honor Guard is actively preparing for the Honor Guard Clinic that the District hosts at Camp Ripley in March 2020 along with the MN Fallen Firefighters Memorial Association. In November, instructors from Pediatric Home Service in Roseville provided training on how to care for medically complex children. Explorers continue to meet on the first and third Thursdays of each month. Currently there are seven active Explorers and we are adding four new Explorer Advisors to help with training.

The first quarter 2020 training schedule outline was included in the meeting packet. Training will include rope rescue skills, specialized needs for response to targeted hazards identified in New Hope and Crystal, and missing child or vulnerable adult search. The tech rescue team continues to train monthly. December training focused on rescue simulating a worker trapped at elevation.

Staff has begun implementation of CodeRed crisis communication software and are working to identify a marketing campaign to involve residents from both cities. Emergency management training focused on activating the emergency operations center (EOC) for a widespread power outage was held today.

The breathing air compressor at station 1 has been taken out of service due to it overheating when in normal operation. Due to the age of this compressor, and the fact it is in the District's capital plan for replacement in 2020, it may not be worth repairing. All of the 700 feet of hose that failed hose testing has been warrantied by the manufacturer, returned to the District, and placed back in service. Pump testing and servicing has been completed on all four engines. Valve rebuild kits have been ordered for necessary repairs.

Staff have performed 596 inspections, plan reviews and meetings, and 208 re-inspections this year. There is a lot of new construction and remodeling in both cities. This year 43 home safety surveys were completed, far exceeding the budgeted goal of 30. More requests are being received and

three home safety surveys are scheduled for December. Currently, 88 residents have signed up for the Adopt a Hydrant Program. An additional five requests were received from marketing the program through social media and city newsletters. Fire Prevention Education was conducted at six schools in October and November. Each school is dedicated one full week and we reached out to roughly 2,160 kids ages kindergarten through-second grade. Fire investigations are listed in the report.

2019 Third Quarter Report. The report was included in the meeting packet.

G. Old Business

1. Approve Resolution 2019-9 Board's representatives on the West Metro Fire Relief Association Board. This resolution appoints Isaac Sandberg as WMFRD Board Representative to the West Metro Fire Rescue District Firefighters Relief Association of Trustees, to a term expiring December 31, 2020. Motion by Serie, second by Elder to approve Resolution 2019-9. **Motion carried.**

2. Chief's Evaluation. The Board met in executive session prior to this meeting to discuss the Chief's evaluation. The evaluation was very positive. The Board approved a 1% merit increase and to include the Chief in the 3% COLA if approved later in this agenda.

H. New Business

1. 2020 Meeting Schedule. Motion by Elder, second by Gates to approve the 2020 meeting schedule as presented. **Motion carried.**

2. Approve Resolution 2019-5 Carry over and Commitment of Capital Funds. A total of \$747,000 of items to be carried over or committed are listed on the resolution. Motion by McDonald, second by Serie to approve Resolution 2019-5. **Motion carried.**

3. 2020 Health Insurance Rates. The WMFRD is considered a small employer and is able to offer one plan to employees for 2020. Rates are based on age. In 2020 there is an overall 5% increase in premium. Motion by Serie, second by Elder to approve the 2020 insurance coverage rates as presented. **Motion carried.**

4. 2020 COLA. A 3% cost of living adjustment (COLA) for all West Metro Employees is included in the 2020 approved West Metro Fire general operating budget. Historically the WMFRD matches the Crystal and New Hope COLA, and the cities have approved 3% COLA in their 2020 budgets. Motion by Gates, second by Banks to approve a 3% COLA for WMFRD employees in 2020, including Chief Larson. **Motion carried.**

5. 2020 Paid, On-call Pension. Staff recommends a 3% increase to the paid, on-call firefighter's pension to a total of \$8,572.73 per year. Motion by McDonald, second by Elder to approve a 3% increase to the pension contribution. **Motion carried.**

6. Employee Handbook Revisions. Revisions were made to comply with Minnesota statutes, including increasing the amounts for Bids and Quotes requirements, and revising the approval and method of determining the price for sale, conveyance or other disposal of property. Motion by Serie, second by Elder to approve the handbook revisions as presented. **Motion carried.**

7. Approve Resolution 2019-10 Appointment to District Review Board. The District Review Board was established in 2012 by WMFRD to provide a process for certain employee grievances. The New Hope Civil Service Commission selected member Tony Brown to serve as its representative, replacing Mary Arnold who resigned. Motion by Elder, second by McDonald to approve Resolution 2019-10 appointing Mr. Brown to the District Review Board. **Motion carried.**

8. Capital Purchases.

a. SCBA. The current self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) and cylinders are coming to the end of their serviceable life. After reviewing several manufacturers, the safety committee chose the MSA G1 as the SCBA that best meets the needs of the District. They liked the rechargeable single battery system which will save the expense of buying alkaline batteries, and the upgradeable electronic platform with software that can be easily updated without having to replace the entire control module. In an air management drill, the committee found MSA the most comfortable and easy to use. The 2020 approved capital plan includes \$450,000 to replace SCBA, including air cylinders, face pieces, RIT bags and accessories. Motion by Serie, second by Norris to approve the use of capital funds to purchase from Emergency Response Solutions 55 MSA G1 SCBA, 118 high pressure air cylinders, 100 G1 face pieces, 5 RIT bags and the necessary accessories to place the SCBA in service. **Motion carried.**

b. Radio Encryption. In December of 2015 the District bought new Motorola APX two way radios without encryption, unaware of Hennepin County's plans, which are now in place, to encrypt all of the law enforcement radio mains in the county. New Hope and Crystal police departments regularly arrive first on scene and it can take several minutes for their vital updates to dispatch to be relayed to the responding units, having an adverse effect on firefighter's response. Staff recommends purchasing a new encrypting package for a portion of the radios with funding from the approved 2020 Capital Plan \$60,000 saved for replacement of communication equipment. Motion by McDonald, second by Elder to approve use of capital funds for the purchase of encryption upgrades to 28 portable officer radios and 14 mobile vehicle radios from Motorola Solutions, Ancom Communications Inc. **Motion carried.**

I. Recognition of Board Director Mary Serie

A framed certificate of appreciation for her service on the Board was awarded by Laurant to Serie, who has served on the Board since 2014.

J. Other Matters and Announcements

The next regular meeting of the West Metro Board of Directors will be held February 12, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

K. Adjournment

There being no further business, motion by McDonald, second by Elder to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Love
Recording Secretary