

WEST METRO FIRE-RESCUE DISTRICT

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

October 9, 2019

Approved December 11, 2019

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 9, 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
Deputy Fire Marshal Shelby Wolf
District Counsel Roger Knutson
Recording Secretary Amy Juntunen, JASS

C. Chief's Commendation Chief Larson presented a commendation to Ben Opem, an Explorer, and Todd Yaeger, his stepfather, who noticed smoke coming from a garage. Their quick action prevented the fire from spreading and probable property damage.

D. Minutes

Motion by Norris, second by Serie to approve the minutes of the July 10, 2019 Board of Directors meeting as presented. **Motion carried.**

E. Open Forum – None.

F. Consent Agenda

1. Approve June Expenditures totaling \$329,602.50
2. Approve July Expenditures totaling \$152,546.52
3. Approve August Expenditures totaling \$164,875.19
4. Approve Resolution 2019-4 Accepting Donations

Motion by Gates, second by Norris to approve the Consent Agenda. **Motion carried.**

G. Chief's Report

There have been 1,497 calls for service through September 30, 634 in Crystal and 796 in New Hope. Estimated fire loss is \$892,431.

[Elder arrived 6:34 p.m.]

The Chief met with the City Managers in August and September, with the next staff meeting scheduled for October 14. Discussion topics included the capital plan, crisis communications software, reappointment of the Fire Relief Association representative, emergency management training planned for December, and end-of-year board actions. Chiefs and Officers also met in those months reviewing the manual operation of the new generator at Station 3, touring the New Hope City Hall and Police Department, and training on expectations for a Life Safety Unit call-out.

Full-time staff met in July and September. Staff has been working on the summer recruit training, live fire, honor guard, tech rescue, pump and extrication training, development of training videos, meetings with city staff and crisis communication vendors, coordinating and executing National Night Out/Night to Unite events, coordinating fire prevention programs in schools and other summer events, and attended 9/11 and Fallen Firefighter memorial events. Staff is developing a report on the replacement of major apparatus for presentation to the Board at a future meeting. Staff applied for an FM Global grant for the home safety survey program, but was not awarded the grant.

Chief Larson attended both member City Council work sessions in August to present the 2020 proposed budget. The 2020 budget was approved by Crystal on August 20 and New Hope on August 24, 2019.

In September one firefighter retired and one resigned. Firefighters participated in 24 events this summer and just concluded the best blood drive to date. Seven honor guard members participated in the Fallen Firefighter memorial service. Explorers continue to meet on the first and third Thursdays of each month. The annual Awards Banquet was held on September 13 with eight different types of awards, some awards given to multiple firefighters.

The fourth quarter training schedule outline was included in the meeting packet. Assistant Chief Sean Watson is currently attending the Crude by Rail training in Texas with two other firefighters. Three firefighters were able to attend live burn instructor training to become certified instructors. Ten fire officers will attend the Fire Chief's conference in Duluth. Live fire training was conducted in August with 71 firefighters participating in 62 live fire evolutions. The opportunity for live fire training provides skills that can't be taught without that experience.

The District is testing phone and data plans provided by FirstNet on five lines. If the service meets the District's needs, all other devices will be changed to FirstNet as current plans expire. Elder noted that FirstNet has large dead areas in New Hope and the Minneapolis police department is moving away from FirstNet due to coverage issues. Staff is preparing for emergency management training in December, setting up the EOC with city staff to manage a widespread power outage.

Staff are working with the City of New Hope and contractors to complete a punch list of work to be completed around Station 3 after construction of the new city hall and police department. The safety committee is evaluating SCBA equipment in preparation for the 2020 capital purchase of new SCBA. The 700 feet of hose that failed testing was warrantied by the manufacturer and was received back from the warranty work today. All five E-1 fire trucks have been recalled due to a problem in the exhaust system. The work will be warrantied by the manufacturer, but the work needs to be done in White Bear Lake.

Staff have performed 452 inspections, plan reviews and meetings, and 137 re-inspections through September 30. New construction and remodeling is keeping inspectors busy. The kitchen hood cleaning program implemented in 2018 is working well. Prevention training inspection teams (three teams of two firefighters each) are finishing inspections on apartment buildings now. Twenty-three home safety inspections have been done to date on a budget of 30 for the year. So far in 2019, the district has provided 99 smoke detectors and 23 CO detectors due to these surveys, usually a result of improper placement or no batteries. Several electrical hazards have been identified for homeowners such as using extension cords for permanent wiring, holes in firewalls between the garage and house, dryer vents, blocked gas meters, combustibles near stoves, etc. Main talking points during fire prevention inspections are to close doors when sleeping, fire extinguisher use for cooking fires, having two ways out of the home and teaching parents how to teach their children fire safety. National Night Out was a wonderful education opportunity and word-of-mouth spread about the home inspections.

2019 Second Quarter Report. The report was included in the meeting packet. The 2019 budget through August 31, 2019 was reviewed for each line item over and under budget, and expectations for year-end.

H. Old Business

I. New Business

1. Board Representatives on West Metro Fire Relief Association Board. The Board is required to appoint trustees to represent the Board on the Relief Association Board on an annual basis by Minnesota statute. The current representatives, Isaac Sandberg and Gong Yun, are willing to serve another one-year term. The reappointment for the two representative positions will be on the December meeting agenda.

2. Capital Purchases.

a. Pagers. There are sixty-six pagers in the District to alert firefighters of the type of call and location. Staff recommends using capital funds to purchase ten new pagers from Ancom Communications since the vendor offers a five-year warranty, engraving and a spare battery for each pager. Total purchase cost is \$5,495.00 and the funds will come from the computer/IT replacement. Motion by McDonald, second by Serie to approve the purchase of ten new pagers from Ancom Communications. **Motion carried.**

b. Signage. In 2018 the Board approved new signage for Stations 1 and 3 to replace worn and weathered signs. Station 2 only has one sign on the north side of the station which is obscured by mature trees. The window markings are quite faded and not visible from Douglas Drive. Staff

recommends use of capital funds to purchase and install new signage and address markings for Station 2 by King Signs and Anderson Electrical Contractors for a total cost of \$3,540.00 from the unrestricted fund balance. The existing signage will remain in place. Motion by Serie, second by Elder to approve staff's recommendation. **Motion carried.**

3. Chief's Evaluation. The Chief's job description and evaluation form, as well as a list of accomplishments matched to goals, will be sent to Board for review and completion. An executive session will be held prior to the December Board meeting to review and complete the evaluation.

J. Other Matters and Announcements

The next regular meeting of the West Metro Board of Directors will be held December 11, 2019 at 6:40 p.m.

K. Adjournment

There being no further business, motion by Serie, second by McDonald to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Juntunen
Recording Secretary