

Western Lakes Fire Board
Monthly Board Meeting
February 28, 2022

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, Bill Riemenschneider, Mike Tompkins, and Charlie Shaw. Eric Jensen was excused.

Proof of Notice

- Chief Bowen announced that the notice was posted February 25th at 2:47p.m. to the district web site, newspapers and at stations 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6.

Pledge of Allegiance

- George Morris led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

- George Morris opened the meeting to comments from the public, of which there was none.

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 January 24th, 2022 regular Fire Board Meeting
 - Payment of Bills - \$2,060,711.30
 - Ambulance and Highway refunds
- A motion was made by Jeff Roemer and seconded by Kent Lorenz to accept the Consent Agenda items including meeting minutes from January 24, 2022 Fire Board meeting, and payment of bills in the amount of \$2,060,711.30. Motion carried.

Fire Chief's Report

- Chief Bowen reviewed the District's call volume for January and current trend for February. Increased calls for service have normalized after the peak of COVID in fall of 2021 and January of 2022. Staff has been busy, and are getting tired. The increased calls are being handled by the current daily staffing, including shortages due to illness and limited staffing.
- Chief Bowen updated the board on work being done for sustainable staff with the task force and Mueller Communications. The Chief reminded the board of the upcoming meeting on March 9th which is when the Options Assessment will be presented regarding staffing and funding options. The community survey is also being drafted at this time and will be sent out the end of March/beginning of April.
- Chief Bowen informed the board that one of the Districts recent full-time hires informed him that they will be leaving. This will create two full-time vacancies. Background investigations are currently being completed to fill these vacancies. Exit interviews will be completed, and information from them will be used to improve the District. Chief congratulated Ben for his success and thanked him for his service to the District. Ben started as an Explorer with the District, and upon graduating high school became an intern before being hired as a full-time firefighter/paramedic.
- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board recent structure fires and calls for service and informed the board of the review process of these incidents.

Assistant Chief and Bureau Chief Reports

- The Fire Board reviewed the reports from each of the Assistant Chiefs and Bureau Chiefs for the previously month.
- Further discussion occurred regarding CPSE accreditation and that this is only for individuals seeking to do this on their own, and not the District requiring or pursuing this. Also discussed the new dispatch procedure that is underway regarding closest unit dispatching based on GPS location. Roemer requested the revised EMS operational plan and protocols be shared with the board once completed. Roemer expressed concerns with fire inspections being completed on time due to the delays of transitioning to ESO. Staff is currently completing inspections with paper forms to ensure inspections are completed on time. Discussed ongoing challenges with recruitment of personnel for intern program and part-time. DC Igl informed board of three ambulances from 2017 purchase going in for warranty paint work. The manufacturer is repainting the units due to defects under warranty. The WI dealer has the most paint warranty claims in the country, this is being driven due to ice detouring applications in the State.

Discussion/Action – 2021 Funding Carryover Resolution

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board items that are in the 2021 funding carryover resolution. Due to delays in obtaining supplies and products in 2021 capital projects that were budgeted and approved as part of the 2021 capital improvement plan were not completed and paid for in 2021. These delays were out of the control of the district and are included as carryovers into 2022 when the projects will be completed. The specific items not completed in 2021 include the remaining expenses for the ambulances, station 5 garage door replacement project, station 6 HVAC, lighting, and remodeling project, replacement of the District's main IT server and network, and refurbishment of the rehab unit. The funds have been validated as surplus funds at the conclusion of 2021 and are itemized in the resolution for carryover into 2022.
- A motion to approve resolution 22-001 for capital improvements approved in 2021 however unable to be completed due to supply delays in the budgeted year and to carryover the funds in the amount of \$124,288.64 for these projects was made by Roemer, seconded by Tompkins. Motion carried.

Discussion/Action – Allocated Fund Balance

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board the District's current allocated fund balance at the conclusion of 2021 in accordance with the District's Fund Balance Policy. At the conclusion of 2021 the allocated fund balance associated with the District's Health Retirement Account for employees that have unused sick time according to the District's Employee Benefits Policy is \$16,298.00
- A motion to approve allocated fund balance of \$16,298.00 for year ending 2021 to be used for Health Retirement Accounts of employees that have exceeded sick balance at year end was made by Roemer seconded by Riemenschneider. Motion carried.

Discussion/Action – Employee Benefits Policy

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board proposed changes to the District's employee benefits policy. These changes were brought forward by Human Resources and the Personnel Bureau. After reviewing, the changes have been incorporated into the policy and are recommended for approval. The proposed changes include a change to submission for vacation time from three weeks prior to the date, to one week prior with approval being dependent on the staffing and needs of the District. The second change was to personal time which is (1) day being part of the policy without proration. The last change was to allow for more than one employee to be off at a time, pending staffing levels.

- A motion to approve Employee Benefits Policy 600.010 with changes as presented by administration was made by Roemer, seconded by Shaw. Motion Carried.

Discussion/Action – Intern Repayment Agreement

- Chief Bowen discussed with the board the revised intern repayment agreement for tuition while part of the intern program. Several changes were made at the end of 2021 due to requirements from the US Department of Labor. The program went through a significant revamp and with implementation of the revised agreement the areas for adjustment have been identified by Human Resources, the Personnel Bureau, and Chief.
- Due to the diverse makeup of intern candidates, the tuition received, and length of the internship varies greatly. The varying length of the program, cost, and availability of courses has proven to make setting the end date for the entire program and balance costs difficult. The previous materials required repayment of the current semester, and staff is requesting to amend materials to reflect this as it will allow for agreements to be fairly and consistently executed by staff. Recruitment is also at an all time low for these positions. This is a sign of the current competitive market for candidates, and decline in candidates as a whole in the industry.
- A motion to table this agreement and for staff to bring forward a draft with changes at the next meeting was made by Shaw, seconded by Tompkins. Motion Carried.

Discussion/Action – Station 6 Furnace Replacement

- Chief Bowen reviewed with the board a quote from Delux Heating and Air Conditioning to replace the heaters in the apparatus bay at Station 6 in the amount of \$13,798. During the December 2021 board meeting the board approved a quote from Delux for the replacement of the furnaces and HVAC equipment in the living quarters of the building. At the time quotes were not available for the apparatus bay heaters due to supply chain delays due to covid. Delux was the low bid for the living quarters, and has done other work for the District.
- A motion to approve bids for replacement furnaces from Delux Heating and Air in the amount of \$13,798 was made by Roemer, seconded by Lorenz. Motion carried.

Future Agenda Items and Meetings

- March Fire Board meeting will be held at Fire Station #6 on Monday, March 28, 2022 at 4pm
- Joint Municipal Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 9, 2022 at 6pm at the Oconomowoc Area School District East Campus.
- Roemer requested that board materials be distributed on Fridays, to provide the board with time to review.

Adjournment

- A motion to adjourn at 4:49p.m. was made by Lorenz, seconded by Roemer. Motion Carried.