

## DeForest Area Fire Protection Board Meeting

Wednesday, July 8, 2015 5:00 PM

DeForest Fire Department, 305 E. Holum St.  
Training Room

### Minutes

- 1) **Call Meeting to Order and Roll Call** – The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by President Wipperfurth.

Present were: Judd Blau from the Village of DeForest, Dave Tuschen from the Town of Hampden, Ron Rupp from the Town of Vienna, Bob Wipperfurth from the Town of Windsor, Jim Foley from the Town of Leeds, Chief Paul Nelson, Administrative Assistant Kay Preston and Brett Hofmeister from Johnson Block and Co.

- 2) **Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance** – Led by Tuschen

- 3) **Announcements** – Consideration of motion to adjourn into closed session pursuant to Section 19.85(1)(c) of the Wisconsin Statutes for the purpose of considering the employment status of a public employee over which the Fire District Board exercises responsibility, including discussion regarding employment status of Fire Department employee.

Wipperfurth noted that the Board received a letter from the Village of DeForest.

- 4) **Appearances Before the Board** – The new full-time employees of the department introduced themselves: Trent Gerber, BJ Breecher, Colten Kinnison and Nick Adams.

- 5) **Comments/Volunteer Association** - None

- 6) **Approve Minutes:**

- a. **June 1, 2015** – Motion to approve by Blau, seconded by Rupp. Motion carried 5-0.

- 7) **Finance:**

- a. **Review and Approve Invoices Paid: 6/1/2015 – 6/30/2015** – Motion to approve by Foley, seconded by Blau. Motion carried 5-0.
- b. **Review and Approve Fund/Account Balances** – After the audit was completed, it was determined that there were funds that needed to be moved. An account will be set up for Impact Fee monies and there is \$78,000.00 that will be put into that account. It has been determined that \$80,000.00 will be deposited annually into the sinking fund. Motion to approve by Rupp, seconded by Foley. Motion carried 5-0.

- 8) **Monthly Report/Action Items from Chief Nelson**

- a. **Call Update** – June was a busy month. There was a homicide in Vienna and our EMS crew transported the suspect from that scene to the hospital. There was “suspicious scene” on an EMS call recently, and Chief Nelson is waiting to hear more on what the status of that is.

Active shooter training is taking place today – there was a session this morning and another tonight. This is to learn how to get EMS personnel close enough to remove injured parties from the scene.

There was a car vs. vehicle incident in Madison recently, and our ambulance was first on-scene (while transporting another patient to the hospital). Our department member began administering CPR while waiting for Madison EMTs to arrive. Chief commends our department member for his great work.

Blau asked if there is a debrief/incident update with the membership after these types of calls? Chief Nelson stated that sometimes there are, it depends on the call and the crew. There are also times that the crew discusses it amongst themselves.

- b. Call Response Data** – We are still on track with the number of calls from last year. The last few days have been very busy.

The Board was presented with updated departmental average turnout (from the call coming in to leaving the station) and response times (from the call coming in to arrival on-scene), as well as the 2014 Dane County averages for turnout and response. Wipperfurth asked if the call numbers are based on zip code? Chief Nelson explained that it is solely based on the municipality. He is awaiting the 2015 year-to-date numbers from the county.

There is a plan in the works to ask members that run EMS and live in the Village to stay at the station on their on-call shifts to help improve response times. They are currently able to respond from home.

- c. Review Full-Time Hiring Process** – New employees already introduced themselves.
- d. Year-to-Date Budget Update** – The year-to-date budget vs. actual report was reviewed by the Board. Overall, the department is at approximately 45% of what was budgeted for 2015.

## 9) Old Business:

- a. Budget process for 2016 including 5 year budget plan** – Chief Nelson presented some preliminary budget numbers to the Board for 2016. One version based on 24-hour shift for full-time staff, and one on the 16-hour shift for full-time staff. At this time, the 16-hour shift is still viable. 24-hour shift may be needed in the future.

Municipal dues will be determined when the assessed values numbers come in from the State.

The category with the most significant increase wages. Due to two new full-time positions and additional monies needed in the paid-on-call category. Chief is currently reviewing paid-on-call members to ensure that the department is staying within the IRS 80/20 rule. This rule states that any member (volunteer) who is making more than 20% of what a full-time employee makes, is no longer a volunteer, they are considered part-time. An estimate of \$8,400.00/year is what the paid-on-call member limit would be.

One of the items that has been discussed is the staffing of the second ambulance. Right now, that ambulance has been having one member signed up to staff it most nights (10 pm to 6 am) and the second needed EMT would come in to staff it when a call comes in. Chief Nelson asked the board if they want to staff this ambulance at all times, or make it a strictly on-call unit? There are times when a second person does not come in and the call has to be sent to mutual aid. A minimum crew of two people is needed to staff an ambulance. Chief Nelson didn't have an exact number, but believed that the second ambulance gets out the

door approximately 70% of the time, having one person on the schedule, and relying on a second person to come in when a call comes in. Chief Nelson told the Board that there is a tentative plan to put additional desks in the training room and turn it into office space for the full-time Fire Fighter/EMTs as well as the Fire Inspector. Then, the room that had been the full-timer office would be made into a bedroom to accommodate additional people needing to stay at the station for their on-call time. Blau asked Chief Nelson if the Village of DeForest is aware of this plan? Chief Nelson stated that he did speak to LuAnn Leggett at the Village and made her aware.

EMS Captain Chris Jauch spoke to the Board regarding the proposal to go paid-on-premise for EMS to improve response times. He stated that he is tracking response times by team. The turnout times for teams who have someone who is responding from home are averaging longer than those where the entire team is staying at the station. Approximately five minutes for those teams with a member coming from home, versus 2 minutes for teams who all stay at the station. He indicated that this process "will not be without hiccups" and not all of the members who live in town will want to stay at the station. Jauch reported that 21 of 27 EMS members that he has contacted agreed that they would be willing to stay at the station for their on-call hours. 10 out of the 21 members he contacted live in DeForest.

He also explained that EMS weekend shifts have changed to 24-hour shifts, and the teams seem to like that. Instead of working a 12-hour shift on Saturday and a 12-hour shift on Sunday, it's 24-hours on Saturday or 24-hours on Sunday.

Foley asked how long an ambulance will wait for another EMT to come in before they call for mutual aid? Jauch stated that it could be 3 to 5 minutes. (Strictly referring to the primary ambulance.) Wipperfurth asked about the people that Jauch hasn't contacted yet? Jauch stated that he has encountered resistance from those members in the past regarding this issue, so he wanted to present it to the Board first to get their position on the possible change.

Stacey Hanson asked if the people that Jauch has contacted will stay at the station for \$2.50/hour. Jauch responded that none of the people he talked to brought up the amount of pay. Hanson also asked how calls would be effected/how many more saves would there be by cutting off four or five minutes from the response time? Jauch stated that he doesn't look at the priority of the call when he calculates response time, and every call that the department goes on should be handled as a priority. Wipperfurth indicated that someone calling 911 is an emergency in itself and how everyone may have a different opinion on defining an "emergency". The on-call crews are every nine days and one weekend day per month.

Wipperfurth suggests trying this on a trial basis and reevaluate after three or six months. Chief Nelson stated that he thinks this is the right thing to do to serve our communities.

Foley asked that Jauch contact all members regarding this possible change and Wipperfurth agreed. Jauch will do so. Blau asked if there is a cost difference associated with this change? Chief Nelson stated that the on-call pay amount will remain the same. There will be some cost associated with getting beds, etc., for the new bedroom. Blau stated that if the Board decides to go ahead with this on a trial basis, it can be reviewed to see if it will continue in 2016. People who are adamantly opposed to the idea, can speak to the Board about it at the next Board meeting. Wipperfurth stated that this will be an agenda item for next month. At this time, the Board is not making a final decision and will revisit the subject next month.

Blau asked Chief Nelson to remind him why the significant increase in wages from last year? Chief Nelson responded that due to increased calls and staffing, we went over what was budgeted for last year. He took that into consideration when figuring the wage numbers for 2016. The Board asked for a "Mutual Aid" category to be added to the call data report that they receive.

Clothing allowance, annual physical, paid-on-call training numbers have been increased.

Fire equipment repair and parts numbers have been increased.

Facility maintenance numbers has been increased.

Fire equipment numbers were increased due to SCBA maintenance being needed.

Cable budget was increased due to a probable rate increase from Charter. Blau asked if there has been any thought to using a dish service? Or if there is any type of discount that the department can get due to being a fire department? Chief Nelson explained that we used to get a discount, but they no longer offer that to us.

EMS Billing Service projected cost is based on what Chief Nelson received from LifeQuest.

Capital Equipment for 2016: Fire Equipment - \$250,000 for SCBAs (self-contained breathing apparatus) and some other miscellaneous fire equipment. The department will apply for a grant for the SCBAs, but it is not guaranteed that the grant will be obtained. EMS Equipment – \$20,500 for a second LUCAS automated chest compression device and some "wings" for the cots to assist with patient comfort. Vehicles and Apparatus – \$10,000 for the light tower on Squad 1 that needs repairing. Personal Protective Equipment – \$20,000 gear for the new employees.

Tuschen asked about the expense of the repair on Squad 1. Chief Nelson doesn't have the specifics with him, but can get them for the Board.

Wipperfurth clarified that the plan is to put \$80,000/year into the Capital/Sinking Funds. Chief Nelson stated yes, that is the plan unless the Board would like to change that amount. He suggested that the Board may want to consider a loan for the SCBAs.

Chief Nelson stated that 2016 would be a new ambulance year. The plan is now to put that off for one year, and change the ambulances from a four- year rotation, to a six-year rotation.

Blau asked the benefit of having no debt service balance? Would it be better to always have a balance in debt services, rather than go to zero and then spike the following year when new debt is acquired? Tuschen stated that he feels that the Board is on the right track with what they are doing now.

Blau referred to the letter that the Board received from the Village of DeForest. They are seeking the Fire Board's assistance with some financial forecasts that they are working on. Attorney Dietrich has been out of the office frequently due to family issues, but is still working on the Intergovernmental Agreement. Blau indicated that the Village of DeForest isn't looking for finalized answers on all of the issues, but at least an overall concept of what the Fire Board is looking to do.

In regards to the 5-year budget, Chief Nelson updated some of the numbers based on some changes that were made (i.e. replacing ambulance in 2017 instead of 2016). Blau asked if there is a schedule of when the apparatus need to be replaced. Chief Nelson explained that Brent Foss put together a spreadsheet of this information and it reflects that the Squad will be due for replacing in 2018.

Wipperfurth asked the Board if they want to discuss the 2016 budget at the next Board meeting?

Chief Nelson mentioned that all of the equipment from the Town of Blooming Grove Fire Department is going up for bid. There are radios that will be available and Chief Nelson would like to offer \$800 each for 17 radios. They would sell for \$1,800-\$2,000 each brand new. \$300,000 has been budgeted for new radios to be purchased in the future. Chief Nelson stated that his thought would be to put that purchase off a bit if the radios are obtained from Blooming Grove. After discussion, the Board decided to wait and purchase new radios.

Wipperfurth asked that Chief clean up the budget spreadsheets that were presented to the Board, send it to them for review, and the discussion will continue at the next Board meeting.

Blau stated that the Village has a lot of questions that they want the Fire Board to address (buildings, budgets, etc.), these items are listed in the letter that the Board got, and they requested a response by August 7, 2015. Blau said that the Village also likes to plan five years out, and Chief Nelson stated that this process is included in the Strategic Plan that was worked on in 2013. Chief Nelson feels that the Strategic Plan should be revisited.

Wipperfurth stated that he isn't sure how the Fire Board can come to a consensus on some of the items. For example, the Governance Structure hasn't been completed. Blau stated that the last he knew was that the Village's attorney is working with the Town of Windsor's attorney and the Department's attorney to get this worked out.

In regards to taking over the building that currently houses the Fire Department and the Police Department, Wipperfurth feels that is a discussion that all of the boards from each municipality should meet to discuss that. Chief Nelson asked Blau if the Village charges the Police Department rent for the use of their portion of the building. Blau replied that the Police Department is a Village entity and does not pay rent. Chief Nelson asked why, when the loan for this building is paid off, would the Fire Board continue to be charged rent? The Fire Department serves the community too. Blau indicated that there are maintenance fees. Chief Nelson said that he understands maintenance costs, but why would the Fire Department be charged rent on a building that is paid for? Chief Nelson asked, other than operating costs, the Village doesn't charge themselves rent on the Village hall, do they? Blau said that is correct. The Village Hall is part of the Village of DeForest and the Fire District is not. Chief Nelson stated that the Fire District serves the Village of DeForest. Blau pointed out that the department also serves the four other municipalities of Hampden, Leeds, Windsor and Vienna. Chief Nelson stated that once the building is paid off, there should be some savings to the Board.

Blau asked Wipperfurth if the Sheriff's office pays rent to the Town of Windsor to use space in the Town's building? Wipperfurth stated they had negotiated an agreement with the Sheriff's office and there is still a cost to them. But typically when the building is paid for,

there is a review of the amount of rent. If the Fire Board takes over the entire building, there would be costs associated with the extra space as well as remodeling costs.

Wipperfurth reiterated that he feels this topic is bigger than the Fire Board, and should be reviewed by all of the municipality boards together. There is a lot of money being talked about and policy changes. He stated that the Village won't have an answer on all of the items in the letter by August 7<sup>th</sup>. The Town of Windsor isn't going to put \$1.5 million dollars into a building when Village is fighting them on the other end (in regards to incorporation). Chief Nelson will be presenting to the Town Board information on the services of the district, numbers on rent, and remodeling costs. Blau stated that public safety is not negotiable to him and has no bearing on the Town incorporating, nor on the Village's opposition of the incorporation. He vehemently disagrees with playing politics with public safety. Wipperfurth stated that there is nothing public safety at risk here. He stated that he talked about expanding the building which does not mean adding personnel, it means adding amenities to the District. Blau replied that it means adding personnel because Chief Nelson told the Board that he needs additional space for people to stay. He needs additional space for people to stay to improve response times.

Wipperfurth went on to state that his Board talked last month about the possibility of a satellite station, perhaps in Windsor. He stated that the Village is adamantly opposed to that. All of these subjects are intertwined and that is why he suggested discussing them at joint Board meetings. Blau said that the Village Board has asked for call response times several times. Chief Nelson stated that the Board has been presented to the Fire Board several times over the last few months. Additional information will be added to make the information clearer. Blau asked for clarification between Windsor urban versus Windsor rural areas. Chief Nelson stated that is information that isn't easily obtained, but it can be done. Blau stated that if it's all about response time, then we would need a satellite in all five municipalities. Chief Nelson will have someone work on the call data requested by Blau.

**10) New Business:**

- a. **Audit Review – Brett Hofmeister from Johnson & Block** – Auditor Brett Hofmeister went over the results of the 2014 audit with the Board. A motion was made by Blau to accept the audit. Motion seconded by Foley and carried 5-0.

**11) Convene into Closed Session** – Motion to convene into closed session by Tuschen, seconded by Rupp. All Board members present for closed session.

- a. **With Reference to the Announcements**

**12) Reconvene into Open Session**

- a. **Action Items Resulting from closed session – if any - None**

**13) Adjournment** – The next meeting will be August 5<sup>th</sup> at 5 p.m. Location to be determined. Motion to adjourn made by Blau, seconded by Rupp. Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kay Preston  
Administrative Assistant