

**Excelsior Fire District Board
EFD Governing Board Meeting
Wednesday, May 25, 2005**

**24100 Smithtown Road
Conference Room
7:00 P.M.**

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bauman called the meeting to order at 7:05 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Present: Excelsior Fire District (EFD) Boardmembers: Chair Bauman; Boardmembers Love, Saunders, Skrede, and Viesturs; EFD Chief DuCharme; Firefighter/Trustee Hoo

Also present: EFD Deputy Fire Chief George and EFD Captains Berglund; Deephaven: Administrator Young; Shorewood: Administrator Dawson (arrived at 7:30 P.M.)

Absent: None

2. AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Bauman reviewed the Agenda for the meeting. Boardmember Saunders requested Item 7B1 be moved to Item 3 on the Agenda for the evening.

Saunders moved, Love seconded, approving the EFD Board Meeting Agenda as amended. Motion passed 5/0.

3. MISSION STATEMENT

Boardmember Saunders stated he had met recently with EFD Firefighter Tony Farina and Boardmember Viesturs regarding the proposed mission statement for the EFD as discussed at previous Board meetings. He then read the following statement into the record for the meeting.

(Mission Statement is attached)

Chair Bauman thanked Boardmembers and Firefighters for their efforts on this statement, and recommended the Board and Firefighters review the proposed statement and respond with any comments to Chief DuCharme prior to the next Board meeting. He stated the proposed mission statement would be memorialized at the next meeting.

Boardmember Saunders thanked Firefighter Farina and the Mission Statement Committee for its efforts on the statement.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. April 25, 2005, EFD Board Meeting Minutes

Skrede moved, Approving the April 25, 2005, EFD Board Meeting Minutes as amended on Page 3, Item 7C, Sentence 6, change “despite recent comments received from he Deephaven City Council.” to “despite recent flak received from the newspaper and representative from Deephaven,” and on Page 5, Item 8A, Paragraph 7, Sentence 2, change “several months of cancelled call data” to “several items in the cancelled call data” and in the same paragraph,

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Sentence 3, change “determined that there would no longer” to “determined that there was no need for additional reports.”

Skrede withdrew his motion.

Skrede moved, Viesturs seconded, Approving the April 25, 2005, EFD Board Meeting Minutes as amended on Page 3, Item 7C, Sentence 6, change “despite recent comments received from he Deephaven City Council.” to “despite recent flak received from the newspaper and representative from Deephaven,” and on Page 5, Item 8A, Paragraph 7, Sentence 2, change “several months of cancelled call data” to “several items in the cancelled call data” and in the same paragraph, Sentence 3, change “determined that there would no longer” to “determined that there was no need for additional reports.”, and on Page 7, Item 8D, Paragraph 2, Sentence 1, change “situation recently where” to “construction accident that caused a water pressure alarm to be generated.” Motion passed 5/0.

5. REPORT AGENDA

A. Monthly District Review of April, 2005

Chief DuCharme stated there had been 53 fire calls for the month of April and a total of 214 calls for the year thus far. He also noted the breakdown of calls per city as part of the District Review for the month. He also reviewed the response time averages for the Board as well, noting the average time for the first truck on the scene was 2.44 minutes.

B. Report of Operating Committee Meeting of May 5, 2005

Administrator Whittaker reported on matters considered and actions taken at the Operating Committee Meeting of May 5, 2005, (as detailed in the minutes of that meeting).

Discussion ensued by the Board regarding the option of charging residents for emergency ambulance service. Chair Bauman stated the original intent of the discussion on this issue was to possibly recoup the costs to the District for negligence. He stated he appreciated the discussion held by the Operating Committee on this issue, and stated further philosophical review would need to be held at a future Board meeting.

Chief DuCharme stated legally the District was allowed to charge for this emergency service, however, an ordinance would need to be passed by each member City Council allowing for this action to taken place. He also noted further discussion and study of the topic was warranted by the Board at a future meeting.

With regard to a Special Unit of Government issue discussed at previous Board meetings, Chief DuCharme also explained that issue had been tabled at the July 2003, EFD Board meeting with a 4/1 vote. He then outlined the process that was required for the issue to be placed on a future Board meeting agenda. Chair Bauman stated he would like for Boardmembers Skrede and Love to briefly review this issue, including the merits and opposition, for the Board at the next EFD Governing Board meeting. He also stated he would like to have a brief discussion on the role of the Governing Board and Operating Committee, as well as the potential for a quarterly meeting schedule for each, at the next Board meeting as well.

Boardmember Skrede questioned the discussion on response times noted in the May 5, 2005, Operating Committee minutes. Chief DuCharme explained a discussion was held about the location of firefighters in the entire District and the impact of that location on the calculated

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response time average. He also noted the impact the response time average issue made on recruiting efforts. In response to Boardmember Skrede's question, Chief DuCharme reviewed the trends in call times for the District, noting surprisingly that approximately one third of the fire calls happened in each time category analyzed in the past five years worth of data.

Love moved, Saunders seconded, Approving the Report Agenda as presented. Motion passed 5/0.

6. MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR

John Mariani, resident of Deephaven, stated he was concerned with the response times for Station 2. He believed the response times were better for firefighters prior to the inception of the EFD District. He questioned what was being done on this issue, and stated he thought public safety was paramount to the residents of the District. Further, he thought nine months was too long for this issue to remain under study. Additionally, he stated, given the demographics of the City of Deephaven, the residents would not be volunteering for firefighting, and thus, the proximity of the Station would be a problem for the response time standards. He then cited the St. Cloud Fire Department's efforts to bring response times in line with standards. Mr. Mariani then stated he was asking for uniformity of performance throughout the area, and an assurance that response times would improve. He also stated he did not doubt the faith and dedication of the firefighters but wanted his comments to be a part of the record on this matter.

Chief DuCharme noted several differences in the communities being compared as well as organizational differences in the kinds of fire departments being used in the examples by Mr. Mariani. He also noted the response times were much closer to the standard than Mr. Mariani was aware of, and the budgetary constraints were different as well.

7. FIRE CHIEF REPORT

A. General Report

Chief DuCharme explained the general reporting procedures for the evening. He also provided updates for the Board on the equipment from the FEMA grant, the FY 2006 Operating Budget process, and the number of firefighters seeking additional rescue boat training. He also stated a dedication ceremony had taken place at Station 2 for the amazing service project designed and built by Eagle Scout Candidate Brandon Narveson in honor of firefighters and his deceased brother, Derek Narveson. Chief DuCharme also noted Firefighter Mattox would serve as a civilian firefighter on military bases in Iraq for the next year. On behalf of the entire District, Chief DuCharme wished him well in his duties.

B. Operating Report by the Deputy Chief

Deputy Chief George reported probationary firefighter statistics for the Board for each station in the District. He noted all apparatus was functioning properly, and a new HazMat (Hazardous Material) team had been assembled for additional training. The Equipment Review committee was in process. The construction project taking place in front of Station 1 posed some traffic issues that had impacted firefighter response to the Station in recent days. Steps were being taken to remedy the situation, and Deputy Chief George thanked City of Shorewood Engineer Brown for his assistance.

C. East, West, Navarre

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Deputy Chief George reported on Station 2 activities in Deephaven in the absence of District Chief Heiland, noting there were currently 15 firefighters at that station. He also noted the Station was on track with recruiting efforts, and response times were improving. He stated issues with response times at this station were related to the lack of control about where people were coming from to get to the station for a fire call. He also explained that firefighters at Station 2 were in service and on the scene faster than before thanks to the leadership efforts of many including, Firefighter McCarthy, the number of certified responders, and a desire by all firefighters to get to the Station and accomplish the duties of their position. He also stated the firefighters at this station had some of the fastest response times in comparison to the data for a volunteer fire department. He stated continued comparisons could be made as additional data was gathered on response times; however, all firefighters were pushing as hard as possible to reach the station in an expedient manner and still adhere to traffic safety laws.

In response to Boardmember Saunders' question, Chief DuCharme stated firefighters in the District were not equipped with emergency vehicle status, including flashing lights and sirens for the top of their personal vehicles, and thus, had to accommodate all traffic laws.

Boardmember Love noted the successful recruiting efforts for this Station, but questioned the origination of firefighters at that Station. Chief DuCharme stated two were from Deephaven, some were from Greenwood, and others from Shorewood. He noted the average drive time to reach the Station was 4.5 minutes, and that time was reflected in the "First Truck Out" data.

Deputy Chief George explained Station 2 had only been open for nine months, and was considered in its infancy. He stated he was concerned residents of the District believed inadequate service was being provided to the District, and he cautioned everyone about the potential miscommunication that could take place due to comparison of statistical data only. He further explained it was very difficult for recruitment efforts to take place without a station being open. In addition, he cautioned all parties present on the presentation of response time data as the data did not accurately depict a dire situation. He stated he thought the Station efforts were going well, and he anticipated response times would dramatically improve over the next few months.

Chief DuCharme stated it was important to understand how the stations all supplemented each other in a multi-system approach. He stated the theory behind such a system included enhanced service through a broad range of recruits and experience since all stations work together. In addition, he cautioned that people need to be certain there was an understanding of what the data reported. He stated a two-system approach would benefit the entire District including those in Deephaven, as residents had already realized a benefit of premium relief for homeowner's insurance.

In response to a question by Mr. Mariani, Chief DuCharme explained the purpose of mutual aid agreements, station deployment, and impacts from transporting water, as well as issues associated with flowage and response time.

Captain Berglund reported on Station 3 activities in Navarre, noting five of the firefighters at that Station were Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certified, and eight of the new recruits were in EMT training currently. He stated duties had been assigned to all firefighters at the Station, and several were working on a maintenance schedule and manual for the building. He noted response times at that Station had been cut in half since the current firefighters had been receiving additional experience and training as time passed. In addition, some future training would be coordinated with the Long Lake Fire Department. The focus at Station 3 would continue to be on training and recruitment.

D. Fire Prevention

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Chief DuCharme reported public education efforts were underway regarding fire prevention. He reviewed the monthly report for public education, volunteer hours, inspections, investigations, and burn permits issued for the month of April.

E. Trustee Report

Trustee Hoo stated he had nothing to report on at this time.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Request to Change July Board Meeting from Fourth Wednesday to Third Wednesday

Due to some conflicts in schedules, Chief DuCharme requested the Board considering moving the Governing Board meeting in July to the third Wednesday of that month.

Discussion ensued by the Board regarding options and dates available for that meeting. Chair Bauman requested Boardmembers review calendars and schedules so that a final determination could be made at the June 2005 Governing Board meeting.

B. Ongoing Business

1. Flag Pole at East Station (Paul Skrede)

2. Monument Signage at East Station (Paul Skrede)

Boardmember Skrede stated he would be discussing the flag pole and monument signage issues together. He stated there was not any action required by the Deephaven City Council for the flag pole unless the pole required lighting. The monument signage required a Special Use Permit that would follow a standard planning process. He also noted the District's property by the road was limited in space for such a sign and the City's property was limited by the nearby trail also. He stated one other option included placement of a logo on the side of the building that would necessitate a Special Use Permit as well.

Chief DuCharme stated the approximate cost for signage would be \$2000, and was available in the construction budget for the building as noted by Administrator Dawson.

Boardmember Love suggested the Chief and District Officers review this issue and make a recommendation to the Board at the next Governing Board meeting. Boardmembers indicated agreement with this suggestion.

C. New Business

Chief DuCharme complimented Brandon Narveson on his Eagle Scout project, noting it was a very attractive addition to the building.

9. NEXT MEETING

A. Board Meeting June 22, 2005; 7:00 P.M. WEST SIDE STATION

Chair Bauman noted the time and location of the Board meeting in June.

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10. ADJOURNMENT

Love moved, Skrede seconded, Adjourning the EFD Governing Board Meeting of May 25, 2005, at 8:32 P.M. Motion passed 5/0.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Sally Keefe,

Recording Secretary