

**Excelsior Fire District Board
EFD Governing Board Meeting
Wednesday, August 24, 2005**

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

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bauman called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL

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

Also present: EFD Deputy Fire Chief George, EFD Captains Berglund and Heiland; Deephaven City Administrator Young; Excelsior City Manager Whittaker, Shorewood City Administrator Dawson, and Tonka Bay City Administrator Irvine

Absent: None

2. AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Bauman reviewed the Agenda for the meeting. Boardmember Love requested Item 7A and C be moved to Items 4A and B, respectively on the Agenda for this evening.

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

3. MINUTES

- July 27, 2005

Love moved, Saunders seconded, Approving the July 27, 2005, EFD Governing Board Meeting Minutes as presented. Motion passed 4/0/1, with Bolles abstaining due to absence at that meeting.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Special Unit of Government

Boardmember Love thanked the Board for moving this item to accommodate the need for his departure after this item, and noted Alternate Wellens would be taking his place at the meeting for the remainder of the evening.

Boardmember Love stated he would provide an overview of the Special Unit of Government discussion that took place approximately 6.5 years ago to the best of his recollection. He stated prior to his election as mayor of Shorewood, Steve Finch of the City of Excelsior, had addressed former concerns from the City of Deephaven by discussing the "special unit of government" concept. This concept was considered for its cohesiveness, long-term agreement, and removal of parochialism and the concept evolved into formation of the EFD Governing Board with an eye of future boards to be kept on the special unit of government. Discussion then ensued by the elected

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officials regarding appropriate representation to the Board, impact of levy limits for each city, as well as consideration of ad Valorem funding. This funding mechanism was considered so that on particular funding formula would not be tied to the special unit of government concept. Several legislators stood ready to propose legislation for this special unit of government, with an understanding that five cities would come together for public safety purposes.

Boardmember Skrede agreed with the presentation of history by Boardmember Love, adding that the examination of this concept was prior to issuance of bonds and financing for the current public safety building. Decisions were made in the interim to create a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) to expedite the bond issue. At that time, consideration of a special unit of government was never meant to be a step in the process of funding the EFD for the future; however, each future Board should be mindful of the philosophical history of this issue as the special unit of government could have financial benefits. The Board, at that time, tabled these issues, but, Boardmember Skrede stated he believed it fair for future Boards to hold discussions on the issue.

Boardmember Love agreed, stating the member cities were looking to find consensus on moving forward with the formation of the District and believed it helpful to leave consideration of the special unit of government to future Boards for additional consideration.

Chair Bauman questioned whether any advantages and disadvantages could be attributed to a special unit of government. Boardmember Love stated representation for each city was considered a "negative" at the time. Boardmember Skrede stated moving the District forward without maintenance with various allocations was considered beneficial, however, a lack of input and control by citizens within each city in the District was considered problematic.

Boardmember Saunders stated he believed the advantages and disadvantages of a special unit of government should be reviewed by future Boards, however, it would be prudent to wait until resolution of those JPA issues associated with the South Lake Minnetonka Police Department (SLMPD) became binding before considering other economic issues for the EFD. Boardmembers agreed.

B. Role of Governing Board and Operating Committee

Chair Bauman distributed a summary of his perspective on the role of the EFD Governing Board and Operating Committee.

Discussion ensued by the Board regarding the general roles and responsibilities of the Operating Committee and its necessary direction to the Board on administrative and operational matters.

After further discussion, the Board agreed to review the JPA sections related to these matters at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Governing Board. In addition, Boardmember Skrede requested Chief DuCharme provide electronic copies of the sections delineating this issue found within the current JPA for the District.

Boardmember Love thanked the Board for amending the Agenda for the evening, introduced Alternate Wellens to the Board, and departed the meeting at 7:30 P.M.

5. REPORT AGENDA

A. Monthly District Review

Chief DuCharme stated there had been 92 fire calls for the month of July and a total of 481 calls for the year thus far. He also noted the breakdown of calls per city as part of the District Review

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for the month. He reviewed the response time averages for the Board as well, noting the average time for the first truck on the scene was 3.56 minutes.

B. Report of Operating Committee Meeting of August 10, 2005

Administrator Irvine reported on the matters discussed and actions taken at the August 10, 2005, Operating Committee Meeting (as detailed in the minutes of that meeting).

Boardmember Skrede questioned whether the Shorewood Economic Development Authority (EDA) had submitted a "recap" of construction accounts as requested in March of this year. He stated he was frustrated to have to wait until the end of the year to close out this matter.

Shorewood Administrator/EDA Executive Director Dawson stated the issues pertaining to closing out the project were complete with the exception of warning flashers and landscape screening in various areas around the Public Safety Facilities. He stated a discussion of allocation of general conditions funding allocations was needed, and there was enough funding available to complete the remaining projects.

Boardmember Skrede stated he was concerned that items had been incurred and paid without Board approval. Further, he stated he was concerned that the approval process had been circumvented. To that end, he directed Staff to provide an itemization and reconciliation of accounts receivable, and a reconciliation and discussion on allocation of resources for Stations 1 and 2.

Discussion ensued regarding potential discrepancies related to final reconciliations of the Public Safety facilities budgets.

Saunders moved, Wellens seconded, Accepting the Report Agenda as presented. Motion passed 5/0.

6. MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR

There were no matters from the floor presented this evening.

7. FIRE CHIEF REPORT

A. General Report

Chief DuCharme explained the general reporting procedures for the evening, noting activities related to the Excelsior Firefighters' Relief Association (EFRA) pension fund, printing related to the EFD Mission Statement, transition plans for the Navarre Station being taken over by the Long Lake Fire Department, and approval of the FY 2006 Operating Budget. Chief DuCharme also thanked the firefighters for their participation in the Deephaven Days celebration, noting all parties present had a great time and were looking forward to the celebration in the upcoming year.

Trustee Hoo provided his report at this time, noting he was working with Boardmember Saunders on the Skip Sweeney Award. Boardmember Saunders stated he was happy to continue to work as a sponsor from the Board, however, he suggested a team of firefighters would be better suited to ascertain the merits of the Award.

Chief DuCharme then noted activities of the EFD firefighters at the Minnesota State Fair, as well as the dates and activities for Fire Prevention Week, held October 10 through October 14 of this year, as well as several firefighter anniversaries with the District. He congratulated Trustee Hoo

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on his dedication and efforts of 36 years of service and noted all firefighter anniversaries were special.

Chief DuCharme stated Lieutenant McCarthy was present this evening to provide information on the committee review of the pumper truck slated for purchase for Station 2 as explained in the CEP. A full proposal was anticipated in the next few weeks.

Chief DuCharme then reported on fire prevention activities for the months of July of this year. He reviewed the monthly reports for public education, volunteer hours, inspections, investigations, and burn permits issued for the month. He noted there had been 10,543 public education/fire prevention contacts for the year thus far.

On behalf of the City of Deephaven, Boardmember Skrede thanked the firefighters for their efforts in assisting with the triathlon as part of the Deephaven Days celebration.

B. Operating Report by the Deputy Chief

Deputy Chief George reported Station 1 and 2 reports would be covered as part of the next item on the Agenda.

C. East, West, Navarre

Deputy Chief George reported Station 1 currently housed 29 firefighters, with two holding probationary status. He reported Station 2 housed 16 firefighters with nine members currently holding probationary status and one on military leave. Station 3 housed 15 firefighters with 13 holding probationary status, and one on military leave. Deputy Chief George also stated all apparatus was currently functional at all Stations.

In general, Deputy Chief George stated, the County Road 19 Intersection project continued to proceed and he appreciated the cooperation of the contractors working on the project. In addition, he explained Station 2 would be handling medical calls without Station 1 support, unless needed, in the near future.

District Chief Heiland stated, of the fifteen firefighters at Station 2, three had completed EMT training, with final results pending. He also explained three new lieutenants had been appointed, and congratulated Greg Fasching, Jake Wenmark, and Pat McCarthy on these achievements. In addition, he reported Hennepin County representatives had installed new speakers and antenna service at the Station. Cell phone reception and "Murphy beds" had been installed as well. He also stated the firefighters had appreciated being part of the Deephaven Days.

Captain Berglund reported, of the fifteen firefighters at that Station, four were EMT certified. He also reported no new future recruiting would be taking place, two new apparatus pieces were anticipated for arrival from Long Lake, and he also congratulated John Hall, on becoming a lieutenant at that Station.

Deputy Chief George then reviewed the request before the Board for consideration of purchase of a four wheel drive, all terrain vehicle (ATV) for the District. He stated firefighters had taken action at their business meeting demonstrating \$4660 of the Orono monies would be put forth for purchase of this vehicle with purchase of a second vehicle being funded by the District if needed. He noted fundraising efforts would be completed in the near future for two vehicles, however, substantial cost savings would be realized with purchase of both vehicles at this time.

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Boardmember Saunders stated he believed there were two questions present in this discussion. First, he noted the decision needed to be made whether to purchase one or two vehicles. The second aspect involved a discussion on funding. He suggested the Board split half the cost of the ATV from the Board's discretionary funding and half the cost from the firefighter's discretionary funding as outlined in the Orono allocations formula.

Boardmember Skrede stated he would be more in favor of purchasing one vehicle at this time to determine if there would be justification for a second vehicle based on firefighter use and input.

Alternate Bolles questioned the need for the purchase of the ATV, noting he was concerned about operator injuries after a discussion with Hennepin County Water Patrol deputies regarding their usage of all terrain vehicles.

Deputy Chief George clarified that the vehicle proposed had been heavily researched, was quite different from a standard ATV that the Water Patrol utilized, and that training of all operators would be an integral part of proactive and progressive department use.

Chair Bauman stated he agreed with the proposal brought forth by the firefighters through Deputy Chief George, and that he appreciated all the efforts put into the research for this purchase. He also stated he believed the firefighters should receive credit for the donated portion of the monies collected for funding the ATV, and the allocations should reflect that amount.

Chief DuCharme stated it would be appropriate at this time to review the 2004 Orono revenue report as it would provide additional information on funding and allocation for this purchase.

Discussion ensued on this topic.

Chair Bauman recessed the meeting at 8:50 P.M. and reconvened at 8:53 P.M.

Further discussion ensued by various Boardmember regarding the historical perspective of the funding as well as the location of the direct expenses and allocated expenses that should be found within the Orono funding formula.

Chair Bauman stated this formula had already been determined and needed to be utilized in this case, but could be revised in the future if need be.

Saunders moved, approval of the purchase of a single ATV in the amount of \$16,160, subject to firefighter membership approval, with the firefighters contributing \$6160 toward the purchase of the ATV with one-half of the \$6160 from the District Governing Board discretionary fund and the remaining one half from the firefighters discretionary fund, as well as retention of the snowmobile by the District.

Chair Bauman stated there were easier ways to formulate this purchase that would include the donated funding of \$5000 from firefighter fundraising efforts.

Saunders withdrew his motion.

Deputy Chief George expressed frustration for a lack of support for this purchase, and stated he wished to continue fundraising for the ATV by the firefighters without requesting any funding from the Board at this time. District Chief Heiland agreed.

Chair Bauman stated he was concerned that goodwill between the firefighters and the Board was in jeopardy, that he continued to support the purchase, and that he understood the proposal for the

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ATV purchase was received from the firefighters with the understanding that Board would support such a purchase.

Boardmember Saunders stated the purpose of the funding formula was to provide truthfulness in that purchase. At its last meeting, the Board had expressed an interest in working with the firefighters to purchase this vehicle. He was concerned that there was a shift in the goodwill also, but there did not need to be any loss of goodwill at this time.

Saunders moved, Wellens seconded, purchase of a single ATV, keeping the snowmobile and ice rescue equipment, thereby making the purchase price of the single ATV \$14,360.00. Of this amount, \$5000 was to be provided from donations already raised, and the remaining \$9360.00 was to be funded at 50% from the District's discretionary fund, and the remaining 50% from the firefighter's discretionary fund from the Orono revenue formula for funding.

Without objection from the seconder, the maker of the motion also invited the firefighters to make a counter proposal if desired.

Chair Bauman stated he continued to support the motions made in good faith of the firefighters request for this purchase.

Motion passed 5/0.

In response to Boardmember Saunder's question, Chief DuCharme stated the signage for Station 2 would be placed at the Station in the near future.

D. Fire Prevention

This item had been reported as part of Item 7A.

E. Trustee Report

This item had been reported as part of Item 7A.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

A. New Business

No new business was presented at this time.

9. NEXT MEETING

A. Board Meeting September 28, 2005; 7:00 P.M. WEST SIDE STATION

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

10. ADJOURNMENT

Wellens moved, Saunders seconded, Adjourning the EFD Governing Board Meeting of July 27, 2005, at 9:42 P.M. Motion passed 5/0.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

**Sally Keefe,
Recording Secretary**