



St. Tammany Parish Fire Protection District # 3

P.O. Box 849

Lacombe, Louisiana 70445-0847

(985) 882-5977 Office (985) 882-6664 Fax

admin@stfd3.com

Patrick F. Sicard
Fire Chief

Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Commissioners

May 8, 2024

Meeting Minutes

Called To Order:

Chairman Danny Hall called the meeting to order on Wednesday, May 8, 2024, at 6:00PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

Prayer

Roll Call:

Danny Hall, Leo Casanave, Jeanne Hutchison, and Raymond Batiste were present. Murphy Arsenaux was absent.

Mark Waniewski was present for PMI.

Assistant Chief Geissler, and Mrs. McCarthy were present representing the Fire Department. Several members of the public are present. Chief Sicard was present by phone.

Secretary Minutes:

Approve minutes of April 10, 2024, regular meeting.

Approve minutes of April 15, 2024, special meeting.

Mr. Casanave made a motion to approve the minutes from April 10, 2024, regular meeting and April 15, 2024, special meeting. Mr. Batiste seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Treasurer Report:

Mrs. Hutchison stated the following for bank accounts.

-Operating account opened with \$384,370.57, credits - \$131,393.21, debits - \$242,019.20, service charge - \$235.42, Interest - \$4231.57 with an ending balance of \$1,277,740.73.

- Allocated Account opened with \$1,034,282.42, no credits, debits, or service charge, interest paid - \$3363.54, ending balance \$1,037,645.96.

- Capital Asset Account opened with \$2912.53, no credits, debits, or service charges. Interest paid .72 with an ending balance of \$2913.25.

- Sinking Fund account opened with \$1507.31, no credits, debits, or service charges. Interest paid .37 with an ending balance of \$1507.68.

Mr. Casanave made a motion to approve the treasurer's report. Mr. Batiste seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Employee Recognition:

1) BOC award. The Board recognized Captain Michael Guillot for being instrumental in getting a new pay scale for employees and determining what the ambulance costs the department. Capt. Guillot was presented with a certificate and a gift certificate.

2) Anniversary recognition. Mr. Hall stated that he would like to recognize anniversary dates for employees.

- Taylor Tassin was hired January 2, 2023, he has been here 1 year.
- Captain Marc May was hired January 5, 2010, and has 14 years here.
- Captain Paul Sehlinger was hired February 8, 2016, and has 8 years here.
- Captain Justin Stiehl was hired May 30, 2019, and has 4 years here.
- Assistant Chief Michael Geissler was hired February 20, 2007, and has 17 years here.

3) New employees. Mr. Hall recognized the following new hires.

- Mason Chastant hired March 25, 2024
- Dalton Sances hired March 25, 2024
- Matthew Wade hired March 25, 2024

Chief's Report:

1) YTD incidents: Chief Sicard stated that Year to Date is 650. April is 138. Smoke Detector calls were 4, MVA – 4, Unauthorized burns – 4, Grass fires – 4, auto alarms – 10, vehicle fire -1, animal rescue-1, structure fire -1, public assist – 3, other – 2 that he wasn't certain of what it was.

Mr. Hall asked how many mutual aids were given and how many mutual aids received over the last month? Chief Sicard stated that he didn't have those numbers. Mr. Hall asked if in April there were any times that the Department went without paramedic coverage? Chief Sicard stated that there was a total of 36 hours since the beginning of the year.

Assistant Chief's Report:

1) Admin Building Update. Assistant Chief Geissler stated that he is at the point where he can say the building is almost completed. There are minor touchups that need to be done but the remodel is almost completed. The extensive termite damage has been completely repaired properly. Mr. Hall asked the total cost of the renovation. Chief Geissler stated the total cost was \$62,501.05. It was a little over the quote but that was because of the termite damage that needed to be taken care of. Mr. Hall asked if Station 31 was complete. Chief Geissler stated that it is not complete, the office is being turned into a bunk room. An electrician was out, and it should be complete in a couple months.

2) Station 32. The plans to do a renovation for Station 32 is being discussed and getting ideas from the employees. The roof needs to be repaired, Chief Geissler has already gotten three quotes on that. He would like to have the approval to start on that project.

The holes in the wall behind the microwave area was fixed at one time but needs to be fixed again. Terminix is working on that station as well. The wall will be secured.

The HVAC system will also be looked at to fix any issues that there may be with that system.

Mr. Batiste made a motion to budget \$4000.00 to get the roof fixed. Mr. Casanave seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Chief Geissler stated that he would be working on getting quotes for the HVAC issue.

3) Extrication tools. Chief Geissler stated that there was an incident where a unique situation where a power pole was cut into three pieces. The bottom of the pole was pressed up against the patients' legs. In this situation Chief Geissler stated that he called District 4 for the proper tools and manpower. Chief Geissler showed the equipment that is needed and asked the board for approval for purchase. The equipment needed costs \$5523.25 each, he is asking for three sets to have on three rescue trucks. He stated that there is funding available. Mrs. Hutchison made a motion to approve \$20,000.00 for the purchase of three sets of extrication tools. Mr. Casanave seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Old Business:

1) Annexation of Tammanend.

Mr. Hall stated that it was discussed to annex part of Tammanend because it may be beneficial for the residents in that area. Mr. Hall and Chief Sicard met with Slidell (District 1) and they were hesitant to annex it to District 3. If needed, Slidell would put a station closer to that area. It was agreed that the automatic aid agreements were up to date and District 3 will automatically aid those 15 homes in that area.

New Business:

1) Amendments to Board of Commissioner By-Laws.

Mr. Hall stated that when the Board appointments were received from the Parish Council they were staggered, and the Board needs to adjust the by-laws to reflect the terms in office. The by-laws currently read "The Board members term of office is concurrent with the Parish Council and Parish President". Mr. Hall asked if there were any other changes needed. None proposed. Mr. Hall made a motion to change the by-laws from "Board members term of office runs concurrent with the Parish Council and Parish President" to read Board members term of office will be established by the Parish Council and Parish President. No further discussion. Mr. Casanave seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

2) 2024-011: BOC Resolution (Adopt LLA Travel Expensed Requirement) "Resolution to require the Chief to have leave, training, conferences, seminars, or similar events approved". Mr. Hall stated that the Chief had under his own discretion to go on any trip that he wanted. Checking with the LLA this is not the best process, although there has been no abuse. It was recommended that the Chief follow any process anyone else in the department must follow. Mr. Hall recommended that the Board designate a person to make the approval for his travel so if it is needed quickly the board does not have to convene to approve. Resolution 2024-011 reads as follows:

Resolution of Board of Commissioners of St. Tammany Fire Protection District No. 3 Relating to the Adoption of the Louisiana Legislative Auditor's Travel and Expense Reimbursement Requirements for District No. 3. The Board finds that it is in the best interest of the District, its employees, citizens and taxpayers to implement a program and procedure whereby the District has determined that is in the best interest of the District to adopt the Louisiana Legislative Auditor's ("LLA") travel and expense reimbursement requirements for District No. 3;

1. The BOC wishes to adopt the LLA travel and expense reimbursement requirements for District No. 3, as follows:

A. Employee travel shall be approved in advance by the chief executive, or designee in advance and in writing,

B. Chief executive travel shall be approved by the BOC or designee, the BOC chairman, in advance and documented in the board minutes.

C. BOC travel shall be approved in advance by the full board and documented in the board minutes.

D. Travel advances shall be approved by the chief executive, or designee in advance and in writing.

2. To the extent that prior resolutions or acts of this Board conflict with this Resolution those prior resolutions and actions are superseded by the Resolution.

Mrs. Hutchison made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-011. Mr. Casanave seconded. Discussion took place regarding the resolution. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

3) 2024-014: BOC Resolution (Adopt 2024 pay scales) Compression – BOC seniority pay increase and longevity. Resolution of Board of Commissioners of St. Tammany Fire Protection District No. 3 Relating to the Approval of the 2024 Pay Scaled for District No. 3.

1) The BOC wishes to adopt the 2024 pay scale effective with the payroll cycle starting on June 3, 2024 for District No.3, with the following parameters:

A. Longevity will be applied for the years 1-21 of seniority, and

B. BOC approved pay increase for years 1-21 of seniority in the amount of 0.50%.

C. BOC approved pay increase for the years of 22-30 of seniority in the amount of 2.50%.

D. Suppression pay scale shall comply with LRS 33:1992 ("Minium Salaries").

2) To the extent that prior resolutions or acts of the Board conflict with this Resolution those prior resolutions and actions are superseded by this Resolution.

Mr. Waniewski reviewed all proposed pay scales with the board. They are compliant with Statutory Law. Pay scales for 2%, 2.333%, and 2.5% pay scales. Discussion of all pay scales took place. Mrs. Hutchison made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-014 with the 2.5% longevity pay scale. Mr. Casanave seconded. No further discussion. This will be looked at annually. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Chief Geissler stated that the previous Resolution was not complete. An individual was not determined. The BOC decided that a designated person should approve the Chief's leave. Mr. Hall
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stated he would be available. Mr. Wanieski will amend the Resolution to stated that the Chairman would be approving the Chief's leave and travel.

4) 2024-013: BOC Resolution (Approve Commercial Property, Casualty and Automotive Insurance). Mr. Waniewski stated it was \$4000.00 above the budget projection. They are the only carrier writing for Fire Department's under \$10,000.00 -\$12,000.00. Mrs. Hutchison made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-013. Mr. Casanave seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

5) LLA Policy and Protocol Review and Employe Handbook Review. Mr. Hall stated that he had been talking with Chief Sicard and the Department has been operating on an outdated set of policies and procedures. There are also missing policies and procedures recommended by the LLA. He has discussed with Chief Sicard about getting these policies and procedures completed. He would like to have these done, PMI go over them and be out by August 1. At the August meeting he would like an update under the Chief's report on these updates. He would like a motion to require that the administrative policies and procedures and best practices completed, reviewed by PMI, placed in service, training if required and acknowledgement that the employees received and understand the information by August 1, 2024. Mr. Casanave made the motion. Mr. Batiste seconded. No further discussion. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

6) Correct Chief Sicard's retirement date. Mr. Hall stated that when Chief Sicard was originally hired there was a delay enrolling him in the FRS program by 7 months. His hire date was August 31, 2004. He was entered into the FRS March 2005. There will be a legal buyback. Mrs. Hutchison made a motion. Mr. Casanave seconded. Chief Sicard stated that this information will be taken to the appropriate office to get the appropriate buy back amount from 2004. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

7) 911 Medical Response. Mr. Hall stated that the Department took over the responsibility providing ambulance service to Ward 7 on March 3, 2005. On April 13, 2005, the Department became the sole provider of ambulance service. This ambulance has always been difficult to staff. Statistics from the 911 dispatch were as follows:

2023 – No unit available – 5 times

No unit available for unknown reasons – 32 times

No unit available due to being on a call already – 73 times

FD3 provided assistance 14 times

2024 – No unit available – 7 times

No unit available for unknown reasons – 12 times

No unit available due to being on a call already – 33 times

FD3 provided assistance – 2 times

He would like a special meeting to make a decision whether the department will be in the ambulance business or not. If so, the people, resources and funding should be available to get it done. Mr. Hall made a motion to have a special meeting on May 22, 2024, at 6:00 pm to make this decision. Mrs. Hutchison seconded. No further discussion. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

8) Part time pay. This was tabled until the above is determined.

9) Kern's leave buy-back. Kern's PTO buy back. Mr. Hall just wanted to mention since it would be a large number. No action taken.

Mr. Casanave made a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Hutchison seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 8:08.