



St. Tammany Parish Fire Protection District # 3

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Patrick F. Sicard
Fire Chief

Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Commissioners February 14, 2024 *Meeting Minutes*

Called To Order:

Interim Chair Danny Hall called the meeting to order on Wednesday, February 14, 2024, at 6:00PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:

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

Chad Danenhower is present for PMI.

Chief Sicard, Assistant Chief Geissler, and Mrs. McCarthy were present representing the Fire Department.

Mr. Hall stated that at the February 8, 2024, Council meeting, the following members were voted in.

Mr. Murphy Arsenaux will have a one-year term.

Mr. Leo Casanave will have a two-year term.

Mr. Danny Hall will have a two-year term.

Mrs. Jeanne Hutchison will have a one-year term.

The Parish President appointee, Mr. Raymond Batiste will have a one-year term.

Mr. Hall stated that on the May 8th meeting, to add a change to the by-laws regarding the term for Board members.

Oath of Office:

Mr. Chad Danenhower swore in all Board members and an Oath of Office was signed by each.

Election of Officers:

Mr. Hall stated that there are four seats to fill. Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Chairman. Mr. Arsenaux nominated Danny Hall for Chairman. Mr. Casanave seconded. No further discussion. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Vice Chairman. Mr. Casanave nominated Murphy Arsenaux. Mr. Hall seconded. No further discussion. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Secretary. Mr. Hall nominated Leo Casanave. Mr. Arsenaux seconded. No further discussion. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Treasurer. Mr. Arsenaux nominated Mrs. Hutchison. Mr. Hall seconded. No further discussion. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Mr. Raymond Batiste is the **Commissioner at Large**, appointed by the Parish President.

The Resolution from the PMI report was moved up in the agenda to cover the Election of Officers. Resolution 2024 -001: BOC Resolution (BOC Election of Officers). Mr. Casanave made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-001. Mr. Arsenaux seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Secretary Minutes:

Approve minutes of January 10, 2024

Mr. Casanave made a motion to approve the minutes from January 10, 2024, regular meeting. Mr. Arsenaux seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Treasurer Report:

Operating account – opened with \$1,188,550.45 credits of \$1,289,842.69, debits \$1,221,504.48 service charge of \$205.68 interest paid \$4362.69 with an ending balance of \$1,261,045.67. Mrs. Hutchison stated that the analysis fee, which was discussed a few months ago, was added to the new contract which gave the Department a better interest rate.

Mr. Hall asked about the Misc. payments on 1/2 and 1/4 which were explained that those were insurance payments made for EMS patients. He also asked about the 1/3, 1/17, 1/18, and 1/31 Invoices for PMI which were explained as payroll. He mentioned that adding those numbers it is \$176,545.58 and payroll on the PMI financials came up to \$162,708.20 which leaves a difference of \$13, 837.00. He wanted to know what the difference was, which is being looked into to see everything included in this payroll amount.

Allocated Funds - opened with \$25,105.83, credit of \$1,000,000.00, interest paid \$2487.87, with an ending balance of \$1,027,593.70. This credit was transferred from the Operating account per Chief Sicard after the December 2023 meeting discussions.

Capital Asset account – opened with \$42,907.08, a debit of \$40,000.00, interest paid \$4.02. with an ending balance of \$2911.10. \$40,000.00 was transferred from this account into the Operating account to cover the purchase of two pickup trucks and \$20,000.00 each.

Sinking Funds – opened with \$1506.19, interest paid .38, with an ending balance of \$1506.57.

Mr. Batiste made a motion to accept the Treasurer report. Mr. Arsenaux seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Chief's Report:

- 1) YTD incidents: 230 year to date calls
- 2) January incidents: 164 for the month of January as follows:

CALL TYPE	JANUARY 2024	YEAR TO DATE
Fire	5	11
Rescue & EMS	133	183
Hazardous Conditions	3	4
Service Calls	11	15
Good Intent	4	8
False Alarm & False Calls	8	9
TOTAL	164	230

3) Sale of Old U-32. Chief Sicard stated that the 2006 pickup (old unit 32) was sold at the agreed private party value for \$7000.00 to a wild land fire department in Colorado.

4) Upgrades to Station 31. Chief Sicard stated that recruitment and retention issues include the condition of the stations, mainly station 31. In January everyone was moved out of St. 31 to St. 33. Capt. McQuilkin started painting with help from other crew members cleaning and helping where needed. Old lighting, Vanities, vents etc. have been replaced.

Assistant Chief's Report:

New software update. Assistant Chief Geissler stated that at the last meeting he presented some software that the Board approved to purchase. Samsara was a GPS program. The hardware is in, and he is working with M. Parish to assist with the install and hopefully it will be going soon.

Streetwise was the paging app for the phones and has been installed on most phones and two med units and he also did in person training, so the employees fully understand the ins and outs of the software and app on the phones and tablets. Emergency Networking is the program the Department is switching to which replaces Emergency Reporting, which is the database of calls, equipment, inventory etc. He is currently working with them to get information and data transferred to the new software.

New Business:

- 1) New apparatus purchase process (D. Hall). Mr. Hall explained about the aging fleet and the consideration of fire suppression and growth. Chief Sicard stated that depending on which type of truck the Department wants to purchase, other than demos that may be available, it could be lead times up to four years. Chief Sicard asked that the Board form a committee to help in the research

that will need to be done deciding which company will be used and meet with salesmen. He would like help deciding what truck would be first, which would include looking into maintenance history, the age of the vehicle, what the firefighters want. He would like the Board to approve a committee which would include the two Chief's, a firefighter, and board members.

Mr. Hall made a motion to establish a committee to explore the options and specifications for the Fire Department apparatus. Chief Sicard would like to have information to update the Board at the March meeting. The committee would consist of the two Chief's, Mr. Casanave, Mr. Arsenaux, a member of the public, Mike Ricks and a firefighter representative. Mr. Arsenau seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

2) Ambulance Billing (D. Hall). Mr. Hall discussed the number of medical transports and the cost and what is received from billing. There is a perceived gap and the Board needs to look at options to close the gap if there is one. Mr. Hall made a motion to establish a team to evaluate the amount of funds that go uncollected, specifically for the ambulance and if the amount of uncollected funds is appropriate to establish a collection plan that is fair and equitable to the community. The committee would consist of Chief Sicard, Assistant Chief Geissler, Mrs. McCarthy, and Mr. Hall. Mrs. Hutchison seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

3) Establish of District Chief (D. Hall). Mr. Hall discussed this with Chief Sicard and thinks that the fire department is severely understaffed. Discussion took place as the need for more firefighters/emts. He would like to hire a District Chief for Lacombe. Mr. Arsenaux feels that three would be needed, one each shift. He feels that would also give a command structure at night and another level of accountability. Mr. Arsenaux suggested discussing with Mr. Waniewski how much it would be to promote three and hire three new people. Chief Sicard stated that the D.C. would also take some his and the Assistant Chief duties. Discussion took place about what the responsibilities could be. Mr. Hall made a motion to get with Mr. Waniewski to look at the feasibility of getting 3 District Chiefs and 3 subordinates and report the results to Chief Sicard and come up with a plan to hire. Chief Sicard asked for a committee to be formed. The committee for this will be Chief Sicard, Assistant Chief Geissler, Mr. Hall, Mr. Batiste. Mr. Batiste seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

4) Recruitment of Fireman (M. Arsenaux). Mr. Arsenaux stated that we need to understand what appeals to young people today. He made suggestions on how to reach young people to show brotherhood, and comradery and a sense of belonging. A discussion of different programs and options were discussed on recruitment. No action taken.

5) Administration building repairs and upgrades (D. Hall). Mr. Hall asked Chief Geissler to brief regarding the repairs and upgrades to the Administration building. Chief Geissler stated that we are trying to update the exterior soffit and fascia which are rotting, prime and paint, and add a gutter system. Interior repairs would be patching, painting, carpet, hall, bathroom and kitchen floors, lighting and electrical work, the west wall of the Chief's office with termite damage, door hardware, exterior lighting, and window replacement for one with a crack and replace the tint in that one window. He has worked with three companies, and has received two quotes and anticipates the third

quote will be higher than the current lowest of the two he has received. He is asking for a small cushion in case there is something not fully covered. He is asking for \$45,000.00 to cover all repairs. Mr. Batiste made a motion to allocate up to \$45,000.00 for the Administration building repair and remodel. Mr. Casanave seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

PMI Report:

2024-002: BOC Resolution (Professional Services Vote of Confidence) Mrs. Hutchison made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-002. Mr. Arsenaux seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

2024-003: BOC Resolution (Professional Services Vote of Confidence – Legal Services) Mr. Casanave made a motion to accept Resolution 2024-003. Mrs. Hutchison seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

2024-004: BOC Resolution (Approve 2024 Funding of Bond “Debt” Payment) Mrs. Hutchison made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-004. Mr. Casanave seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

General Comments: Mr. Danenhower stated that there was no requirement to amend the 2023 budget.

VFIS: Mr. Waniewski is preparing the 2024 renewal questionnaire for release.

Adjournment:

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

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25.