



St. Tammany Parish Fire Protection District # 3

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Patrick F. Sicard
Fire Chief

Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Commissioners April 10, 2024 *Meeting Minutes*

Called To Order:

Chairman Danny Hall called the meeting to order on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 6:00PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

Prayer

Roll Call:

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

Chad Danenhower and Mark Waniewski are present for PMI.

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

Secretary Minutes:

Approve minutes of March 13, 2024

Mr. Casanave made a motion to approve the minutes from March 13, 2024, regular meeting. Mr. Batiste seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Treasurer Report:

Mr. Hall addressed the following line items from the PMI financials.

Line 12 – Miscellaneous Receipts - \$70,963.47. This was explained as VFIS payments for vehicles.

Line 27 – Mr. Hall asked if there was enough training being done since this line item was so low. Chief Geissler explained that it would be going up when new hires are sent for training.

Line 29- Mr. Hall

Line 66 – Mr. Hall asked if the department was doing anything to make it better since it is so low. Chief Sicard that Chief Geissler shops around for the best price. Also fuel prices are better than the last two years.

Line70 – insurance – Mr. Hall asked if the department was doing anything to keep those items low. Mr. Waniewski stated that there was zero renewal. Also, when the budget was prepared there was a 10% trend that would affect that line item.

Line 80 – Mr. Hall stated that line item was low and stated that was outstanding.

Line 101 – EMS billing is up. Chief Sicard stated that was based on the 10% fee of revenue collected. This should correspond with Line 8, EMS Income.

Line 107 – This is the Bond payment. Mr. Hall stated that it says Bank Service Analysis Fees. Mr. Waniewski recommended a separate line item for Bond payment. Mr. Hall agreed for clarity for the public. Chief Sicard stated that Line 91 should be the Bond expense.

Line 111 – Building repair and maintenance. This is repairs to Station 31 and the administrative building.

Line 113 – Repair and maintenance – Vehicles (non-EMS). Chief Sicard stated this is high because of a VFIS insurance claim on two vehicles. These payments are under line 12.

Mr. Arsenaux made a motion to accept the treasurer's report with amendments to reclassify the Bond payment at the Bond Expense line item. And to footnote the Miscellaneous Receipts as the VFIS insurance receipts to offset the non-ems vehicle repair and maintenance. Mr. Batiste seconded. No further discussion. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Employee Recognition:

Mr. Hall stated that the Board of Commissioners would be recognizing people for outstanding performance. This will be the Board of Commissioners award which will recognize members of the fire department as well as private citizens for their contributions to the fire department. The first BOC award is presented to Captain Jim McQuilkin. Jim has been with the fire department since it was a volunteer fire department. Jim has never lost that volunteer spirit or his loyalty to this department. It has been said Jim never says no. Jim performs a lot of repairs around the department and gives more than he takes. Mr. Hall would like to recognize Jim for his work. Jim received a certificate and a gift certificate.

Chief's Report:

1) YTD incidents: Chief stated we are on the 511 call this year. No other information is available at this time. Mr. Hall asked how many mutual aids were given. We did give mutual aid and gave mutual aid this month.

Assistant Chief's Report:

1) Training- Chief Geissler stated that four are currently going to Officer 4 at FETA. Firefighter Hummel is in Paramedic school, Captain Sehlinger is finishing his Intermediate EMT, and Captain Stiehl has started paramedic school.

2)Administrative Building update: Chief Geissler stated that we are getting there. A lot has been done and touch ups are being done. The installing of carpet started today. The only concern is more termite damage has been found. At this time two more walls have been completely exposed and need repaired. He is looking for recommendations to move forward. Chief Geissler will have a new quote tomorrow for the new damage repair. It was recommended to get with the contractor to do a thorough look to make sure there is no more termite damage. Chief Geissler stated that he needs more approval from the board for more money towards the project. He stated that he would get with the contractor for his additional quote. It was decided to have a special meeting once the new quote is received. Discussion of the Fire Chief having the decision if under \$10,000.00.

Committee Report:

1) Apparatus Committee: Chief Sicard stated that the committee met with four companies. It has been narrowed down to two and he will get back with those two salesmen. Once he returns from the FDIC next week, he could discuss price and financing. All current trucks are operational at this time.

2) District Chief hiring committee: Chief Sicard and Assistant Chief Geissler met and discussed the potential cost for one individual at this time. The idea of three would be in the three-to-five-year plan. Discussion took place of criteria and time to get certifications if needed. This has been put on hold for the time and recruitment and retention is being looked at first.

3) Ambulance Feasibility: Chief Sicard, Captain Guillot, and Mr. Hall met regarding the ambulance feasibility. Different models were discussed at the committee meeting. Discussion of the mileage and what each one covers was discussed. A separate line item for under labor will be for Pure EMS to track EMS only personnel. Mr. Hall would like to know exactly what it costs to run the ambulance.

Old Business:

1) Hiring and Retention. Mr. Arsenaux stated that the southern average came up and the department fell below that average. Mr. Waniewski stated that District 1 did a study, and their pay is at the medium. Discussion of the wages will be discussed under new business.

2) Ambulance billing committee. Mr. Hall stated that having the ability to balance bill will be happening. A letter has been sent to the billing company on how to sign up for Medicaid that will go out with the bills. All increases that were discussed at last month's meeting was reiterated. All started April 1, 2024.

3) Fireman's Social update. Captain McQuilkin stated that it was still in the process. A date is still being worked on. Donations will be taken if anyone would like to donate.

New Business:

1) Employees pay raise. Retention has been discussed for several months. Mr. Hall stated that full-time employee retention is only 25%. He stated that he asked Chief Sicard to determine the difference in pay between the department and District 1. Chief Sicard enlisted Captain Guillot. Captain Guillot and Mark Waniewski have come up with the numbers. Six areas were looked at. Base pay which is the base hourly rate of pay. FRS EE offset was looked at which affects take home pay. Holiday pay, at some departments, are paid whether you work them or not versus here where you are paid if you work the holiday. Incentives and employee benefits were discussed. The budget will not allow for all to be done at this time. The best way to retain is base pay. It is recommended that the base pay for Firefighter be \$11.00 per hour which would be \$12.10 for a first-year recruit firefighter/operator which would be effective in the first pay period in June. The pay cycle will be June 19, 2024. Resolution 2024-009: BOC Resolution (Approve Base Pay Increase). The Committee will look into FRS EE offset in six months. Mr. Hall made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-009 relating to the approval of a base pay increase for District No. 3. The base pay for a firefighter will be \$11.00 for the pay cycle starting June 3, 2024. Mr. Arsenaux seconded. No further discussion. A vote took place.

Motion carried.

2024-010: BOC Resolution (Approve Annual Pay Study). Relating to the approval of an Annual Pay Study for District No. 3. Mr. Hall stated that he would like to have this study, so we don't fall behind again. Mr. Arsenaux made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-010. Mr. Casanave seconded. No further discussion took place. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

2) Discussion of Board of Commissioner's By-Laws. Mr. Hall asked the Board to look at the By-Laws to see if anything other than the term length needs to be changed.

3) Annexation of Tammanend. Mr. Hall stated that he and Chief Sicard will be meeting with District 1.

Mr. Waniewski would like to get with Assistant Chief Geissler and Mrs. McCarthy to track pure EMS which would be full and part-time personnel that have no suppression responsibilities or skill set. That will be tracked against the 10% mileage.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 7:57.