



**Fire Advisory Subcommittee  
Meeting Minutes  
June 6, 2023**

**Roll Call of Attendees**

The meeting was called by Long Lake City Administrator Weske. Please note that members in attendance:

**Long Lake**

Scott Weske  
Charlie Mayor Miner  
Jahn Dyvik

**Orono**

Adam Edwards  
Denny Mayor Walsh  
James Van Eyll

**Medina**

Scott Johnson  
Jason Nelson

**Minnetonka Beach**

Jennifer Halverson  
Kathleen Martin

**Welcome & Introductions**

**Budget**

**2023 Budget Report as of May 31**

City Administrator Weske gave a brief overview of the year to date 2023 budget report details. He explained that some items were on track for year-to-date and some show 100% spent, such as worker's compensation and liability insurance, but noted that those are one time a year type payments. He stated that there are a few things that looked like they are under budget and is hopeful that overall, things will end up underbudget as long as there isn't anything unseen comes up.

Mayor Miner stated that last year he believes training expenses was over budget towards the end of the year and asked how that was looking for this year.

City Administrator Weske stated that throughout the year when training hours are done, staff sends them to the MBFTE for reimbursement. He stated that not everything is 100% reimbursable.

Chief Van Eyll stated that they need to turn it in by the end of June and noted that there is loads of money right now, but by the end of June it is gone and then it starts over again in July.

Councilmember Dyvik noted that it appears that they bill the Long Lake Administrative fee 100%.

City Administrator Weske stated that is done once a year per the contract.

Mayor Walsh stated that pagers appear to be way over in a few different line items and asked if that was budgeted.

City Administrator Weske stated that those pagers were talked about two years and explained that Hennepin County changed their system to multiple channels and the ones the Department currently has are single channels and they have had to update them as they became obsolete. He noted that they had been getting feedback on some of those channels related to the calls.

Mayor Miner asked if the Department had taken delivery of them or if it was just a change in the rate structure.

City Administrator Weske stated that they were able to fix some of them, purchased some, and are selling some that can be used by other communities, so there will be some revenue offsetting some of those expenses.

Councilmember Dyvik asked if that was reflected in the revenue line.

City Administrator Weske noted that it had not because nothing had been sold yet but will be included when the sales are completed.

City Administrator Edwards asked if there was a market for the old models.

City Administrator Weske stated that there is a market for the old models and explained that what isn't seen is the contract that runs with them for maintenance and repair so they don't go obsolete.

Chief Van Eyll stated that Hennepin County switched to a computer generated paging system so the counties that do not have that can still utilize the single channel pagers. He stated that he thought that they had already gotten rid of all of the single channel pagers.

City Administrator Weske stated that there is still a handful of them that needed to be replaced.

Councilmember Dyvik confirmed that the data being presented was through May 31, 2023 and asked if that mean that overall things should be at around 45%.

City Administrator Weske stated that was true, but noted that the percentage would change a bit because some of the expenses are already at 100% because they are a one-off type payment.

Councilmember Dyvik stated that he was looking at things like motor fuels that was at 36% and asked if that tracking with what was expected.

City Administrator Weske stated that for pagers in 2020 they brought 12 on-line, and had to get 25 more at a cost of \$460/each to get the Department up to 36.

#### Rough Draft 2024 Operating Expenses

City Administrator Weske reviewed the rough draft of the 2024 operating expenses. He explained that \$15,000 was put in as placeholder for discussion related to starting a duty crew for 8 shifts at 4 hours a piece, each week. He referenced the Fire Call and Training pay and explained it was increased about 5% if the call volume stays the same as it did for the last few years. He noted that last year had one of the highest call volumes that they have seen for a while. He stated that medical supplies is something that runs alongside the call volume and explained that they were trying to stay on track and make sure it matches. He explained that they had included small increases for motor fuels. He stated that there was also a bump in turn out gear of about \$2,000 because they are moving 6 or 7 sets of turnout gear on an annual

basis to keep the gear in good standing. He stated that hose testing and ladder testing were also increased a bit. He stated that for auditing and account services, every other year, they need to do the city audit along with the Fire Relief Association audits, so that was included in this line item. He stated that the radio fees shows an increase due to all of the radios that were purchased and moving into the fleet. He noted that this is an assumption that will all the new radios going on line that the County will be charging a bit more for the background service. He stated that radio lease is also increased and explained that instead of owning the radios outright and having them go obsolete, this is under a leasing program to where they are always updated and the software is supported. He explained that this is one way that they can stay in operations without having a capital expense and going through the process of buying and selling, like they have done with the pagers.

City Administrator Edward asked if this number was for the radios that were going obsolete.

City Administrator Weske stated that he believe this will be the lease amount. He noted that he thinks they got 8 radios, 6 were mobile and 2 were portables.

Councilmember Dyvik noted that he believes it was actually 2 mobile and 6 portables.

Chief Van Eyll confirmed that it was 2 mobile and 6 portables.

City Administrator Weske explained that the line item shows the total lease amount.

Councilmember Crosby asked if the rest were owned.

Chief Van Eyll stated that the rest were not owned and explained that there are a few mobiles that are leased. He stated that the majority of the radios were owned by the Fire Department.

City Administrator Edward clarified that this item shows the lease expense for 6 radios.

City Administrator Weske stated that this item shows the lease expense for 8 additional radios.

Mayor Walsh asked if that equated to \$1,000/radio every year.

City Administrator Weske stated that it is a \$150-\$200/month for each lease, and there is 8 leases.

Councilmember Crosby asked what a radio would cost to purchase.

Chief Van Eyll explained that portables are around \$5,500 and mobiles are \$6,500 and noted that they had just purchased some of the ladder truck. He noted that he has not sure how long the lease payments go.

Mayor Miner stated that he thought it was indefinite because they upgraded automatically after a certain number of years.

City Administrator Weske confirmed that was correct and explained that they will keep it rolling. He stated that if anything goes obsolete, they will replace it.

Councilmember Crosby asked how often, on average, the radios go obsolete.

Chief Van Eyll noted that he did not know what this program is because Hennepin County keeps the software updated and the radios. He stated that Motorola likes to turn things obsolete as quickly as possible.

City Administrator Weske explained that the biggest issue was Motorola.

Chief Van Eyll stated that some of the radios last for a few years and some last for 12-15 years and just depends on how long they will keep them in service and for Motorola, creating parts for them. He stated that Hennepin County will keep them on their system for a few years after that until they can't get parts anymore.

Councilmember Crosby asked if it was better to do a lease on all of it so they don't have to worry about it.

City Administrator explained that was kind of where they are heading because then it is a budgeted line item and not just putting it in the capital plan.

Chief Nelson stated that they ran into this before Chief Belland left they purchased radios and two years later he got a notice from Hennepin County that the radios they had just purchased would be obsolete in two more years. He stated that you have no choice but to switch because once they are obsolete, Hennepin County will shut them down.

Chief Van Eyll stated that if you break your radio and bring it to them, if they don't have parts for it, then you are down a radio and now you have to figure out what to do.

Councilmember Dyvik stated that this action is a way to avoid that scenario and the radios will be upgraded when they need to and when they go obsolete they will replace them.

Chief Nelson agreed and noted that they may pay a bit more but it will keep them refreshed and out of the CIP and into the budget line items.

Councilmember Crosby stated that if the break even point is 5 or 6 years, it is probably a similar cost.

Chief Nelson stated that it may be close and explained that it may depend on Motorola and when they decide to come out with a new product. He stated that if they say two years and then come out with a new product. He noted that Hennepin County may say that they will support it for another year or two and then it is end of life which means that they can be left scrambling to try to get a contract, find radios, and explained that it can really be a pain.

Mayor Miner stated that there are service contracts that can be bought, but they are very expensive.

City Administrator Edwards asked if the lease was via Hennepin County or a separate vendor.

Councilmember Crosby stated that he believes it was with Ancon.

City Administrator Weske confirmed that he also believed it was with Ancon, but can double check those details.

Councilmember Crosby stated that he would assume that they build in a service contract so if something fails, since you are leasing it, you should be able to just swap it out.

City Administrator Weske stated that he can send out the contract. He stated that he believes it was a third party vendor that was working with Motorola that had the service contracts. He moved the discussion onto other parts of the draft 2024 operating expenses. He stated that education and conferences were bumped up a bit and stated that one has tended to be over budget. He stated that he bumped it because the trend has been for hotels and airfare pricing to be going up. He stated that there should be a discussion about which conferences and education experiences are actually worth the money. He explained that this item was bumped up but he did not feel they would necessarily use the whole amount of this line item. He stated that he feels this is something that could be adjusted, if needed. He stated that for electricity expenses, Xcel has been going a bit 'goofy' lately. He explained that they had added some premiums and some rate increases in 2020 mostly likely related to COVID and he has not seen that one come down.

Councilmember Dyvik asked if that was \$7,000 over this year's projected actuals.

City Administrator Weske explained that last year it came in way higher than projected.

Councilmember Dyvik asked if he was understanding the information correctly that the 2023 budget was less than the 2022 actuals for electricity.

City Administrator Weske stated that the problem with what they are doing is that they budget so far in advance, that things can change.

Councilmember Dyvik stated that it looks like they increased for Station #2, but decreased on Station #1 for the 2023 budget from the 2022 actuals. He referenced line item 3810 and stated that, on Willow, it went from \$13,500 in 2022 to a budget of \$10,000 in 2023 and for Station #2 is went from actuals of \$4,800 in 2022 to a budget of \$6,000 in 2023.

Mayor Miner stated that they should have theoretically increased in for the 2023 budget.

Councilmember Dyvik agreed and noted that he did not understand why they had dropped Station #1 budget in 2023 unless there was a reason that has not been shared.

City Administrator Weske stated that he would speculate that it may be something that was closer to the budget numbers from 2021.

Councilmember Dyvik stated that this is why it shows an increase of \$7,000 because for this year they had \$6,000 budgeted for Station #2 and \$10,000 budgeted for Station #1 for a total of \$16,000 and now they are at \$23,000 for 2024.

City Administrator Weske stated that natural gas also shows an increase and noted that waste management also tends to have a bit of an increase. He stated that for building maintenance and repair has been used and is quite often right on budget. He explained that they had just added a bit to this item with the knowledge that every year there tends to be a few more things that need to be replaced. He stated that light truck and heavy truck obviously shows a large increase, percentage-wise, due to the age of the fleet and they are seeing more and more repairs. He stated that he thinks, with some of the new opportunities this item may end up staying way under budget, for example the new command vehicles. He noted that he thinks

light truck can be dropped but feels that heavy truck should probably stay due to the age of the fleet. He noted that the 2024 rough draft of operating expenses shows an overall increase of 13% from 2023, but reminded the Commission that this was still a rough draft so everything could be looked at more closely and adjusted, as necessary.

Mayor Walsh asked to go back to duty crew pay and noted that he had never understood the explanation of the \$15,000.

City Administrator Weske explained that his understanding is that the plan is to have 8 shifts a week at 4 hours at a time and they will end up getting a stipend. Mayor Walsh stated that he would like to see that in writing.

City Administrator Weske stated that he understood and explained that this was just some of the things that they were looking at. He stated that he wants to get this broken down and plans to push it a bit harder so he can see things like: what the calendar would look like; what station; what the call will do from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.. He stated that he agreed that this all needed to be highlighted. He stated that it was discussed in 2020, but is not sure that they had it totally 'mathed' out for the stipend and hours.

Councilmember Dyvik asked if Chief Heiland had talked about, as a trial run, doing Friday's or just one day a week.

City Administrator Weske stated that he wasn't sure that the leadership had a good idea yet on what they wanted to do and is still being planned out.

Mayor Walsh stated that his question is more about why now and where is the information coming from that it is needed. He stated that they have done their own stuff about what they believe they need, but he is trying to figure out where this is coming from, out of the blue. He stated that before he would agree to anything like that, he would need to know exactly what this is entailing.

City Administrator Weske stated that he totally respected that thought process and once they get those details together he can pass it along. He explained that he wanted to include it as a line item for discussion purposes. He stated that they are beginning the budget discussions a bit earlier than normal and noted that he did not want to get to August 13th trying to get a budget approved.

Councilmember Dyvik stated that he thinks it is serving as a placeholder for right now and believes that Chief Heiland is bringing some elements and ideas over from the Excelsior Fire District.

Mayor Walsh stated that he would like to see it taken out as a placeholder until they have more information.

City Administrator Weske explained that ultimately there will be an account number created for everything, so this is not in the accounting system, at this point, and was truly just something for discussion.

Councilmember Dyvik asked about the call and training pay and noted that there was an increase in 2022 to \$13/hour. He asked what the increase would be in 2023 and if it was related to a projected increase in call volume. He asked if there was a pay bump planned for 2023.

City Administrator Weske stated that a pay bump has not been discussed. He stated that there was a plan, at one point, to get the firefighters hourly wages up a bit so they were more comparable to the surrounding area, but that has also not been fully vetted yet either.

Councilmember Dyvik stated that he is in favor of increasing the wages because he thinks the Department still has a ways to go in getting the pay where it ought to be. He stated that he thinks they should consider at least an incremental bump for 2024 since there was not one done in 2023.

City Administrator Weske stated that this dollar amount, as of right now, does not show any salary increases and is almost more of a protection in case the call volume happens to go higher than it did last year. He explained that he was just trying to have more of an ability to refund the communities versus keep on asking for more because of call volume changes. He stated that was one of the items that was budgeted a bit light last year, but noted that they were going after call averages.

Councilmember Dyvik stated that he had a meeting with Excelsior Fire District Chief Mackey a few weeks ago and they are trying to increase the fire call pay to eventually get up to \$26/hour. He explained that right now they are at \$15/hour but are planning bumps each year to work up to the higher level. He stated that he thinks they should keep that in mind for this Department.

Mayor Miner suggested that they put together a proposal for this to discuss at their next meeting.

City Administrator Weske stated that the idea would be that if there is a duty crew in place, they may have less hourly pay on the calls, so it would hopefully serve as a 'wash'.

#### Rough Draft 2024 Fire Allocations

City Administrator Weske stated that the draft of the 2024 Fire Allocations show the value if the market did not change, based on the proposed budget. He explained that he had not seen the market value information come in yet so the percentages and dollar amounts will change but noted that the call volumes and call hours were taken from the actual reports.

#### Rough Draft 2024 – 2038 15 year CIP

City Administrator Weske reviewed the rough draft of the 2024-2038 CIP. He stated that in 2024, the only thing that looks to be on the books is for Engine #21 to be upgraded with one from Excelsior for \$100,000. He noted that Engine #22 was 2017 so Engine #11 is also to be replaced.

Mayor Martin asked about the 34% for Medina seems high based on history. She stated that she thought they were down quite a bit.

City Administrator Weske stated that the formula was updated and Medina is now at 21%, but that is still historically kind of high. He stated that the prior formula had the 2022 numbers compared to 2024 numbers which had to be adjusted for 2023 and 2024. He noted that the packet includes the updated formula details. He apologized for the formula error and for not pointing it out before they started the discussion.

Mayor Walsh stated that on that same page there is the engine and rescue included in the CIP and have placed orders. He stated that knowing where they are going, he did not think they

would agree to any CIP for large expenses unless 'you guys' are taking care of those by themselves.

City Administrator Weske stated that he wanted to throw this out for discussion even though he assumed that would be Orono's position. He stated that if they were going to continue with the current contract, which states that Long Lake can buy stuff at 100%.

Councilmember Dyvik stated that because they were being received in 2024, they were included in the CIP and Orono would have the option of accept or reject it.

Mayor Walsh stated we will not accept this.

City Administrator Weske explained that he would be presenting it how it needs to be through the contract and then they can take whatever action they support in December whether it is to accept or deny it.

Mayor Walsh stated that he thinks it would behoove City Administrator Weske to have a separate page that did not include that and just show the budget increases.

Chief Van Eyll stated that would just be a net operating budget increases.

Councilmember Dyvik clarified that the Excelsior engine was to replace Engine #21.

City Administrator Weske wanted to confirm that was the direction that the Chief wanted to go but wasn't able to prior to the meeting.

Councilmember Crosby asked what would happen to Engine #21.

City Administrator Weske stated that is 100% owned by Orono, so any sale of it would be theirs.

Chief Van Eyll stated that if the Department was going to receive it in January, Orono will probably not sell it and just take the vehicle back.

Mayor Walsh asked about Utility #11 and noted that he thought there was another one the Department had been talking about selling.

City Administrator Weske stated that was probably the heavy rescue.

Mayor Walsh asked if the heavy rescue was 73% owned by Orono.

Chief Van Eyll stated that he believes it was somewhere in the 70% range.

Mayor Walsh asked if that was something that they wanted or if they wanted it sold and questioned what they would do with those funds.

Chief Van Eyll suggested that they talk off-line about those details.

City Administrator Weske reviewed the 5 year 'look forward' details and noted that the spreadsheet that follows everything for the next 15 years does not incorporate any sales and it doesn't incorporate any opportunities for used equipment. He stated that this is in everything was on a straight line item depreciation you could see that around \$260,000 is what depreciates



over the course of each year. He stated that currently the contract has them at \$103,000 for CIP and if you look at the whole schedule, you can see that it is always underfunded and has been for a long time. He stated that it also shows that there would need to be about a \$1.5 million balance as of 2023 even if they wanted to move to the different funding level from the \$103,000 to the \$256,000 it would keep it 'mostly' funded, but there are a few years in there that would be negative. He reiterated that it does not include resale value and/or percent increases on annual contributions, or used options. He stated that this presents it as it has been in the past with the knowledge that 2026 is coming, so looking at the next 5 years is probably the most important.

Councilmember Dyvik asked why it shows Engine #21 being purchased in 2029.

City Administrator Weske explained that the idea is that, due to age, the \$100,000 engine is probably going to get them 5 years and they will have to look at replacing it.

Councilmember Dyvik noted that there was not replacement years for the others and just have the year purchased and stated that he feels that one is out of place. He stated that he thinks it should be listed for either this year or next year and then replacement year of 2029. He stated that he feels that the way it is presented is confusing.

Councilmember Crosby asked if the engine the Department is intending to purchasing from Excelsior was the one that was at Deephaven.

Councilmember Dyvik stated that it is the same engine and is currently at Deephaven.

City Administrator Weske stated that this also shows a reroofing of Station #1 in 2028 and Station #2 for 2030, but noted that is just a placeholder and may have to be accelerated depending on their condition.

City Administrator Edwards asked if they had gotten estimates for those costs.

City Administrator Weske stated that they had not gotten recent estimates for those costs.

Councilmember Dyvik stated that he thought the most recent estimate from Mint Roofing a few years ago was for around \$300,000.

Chief Van Eyll noted that they are supposed to do a preventative maintenance on the roof once a year and usually on that report it shows the grade and replacement value.

City Administrator Weske stated that he will plan to highlight details from the duty crew so they can actually see the full plan. He stated that in going through the CIP, due to funding levels, they should look at having a separate facilities CIP. He explained that they have kind of been lumped in together, but believes they should have different values. He noted that these may be conversations that are coming along a little too late.

Mayor Walsh asked what City Administrator Weske meant when he said 'separate facilities CIP'.

City Administrator Weske referenced the big spreadsheet and stated that he would like to have one that shows Station #1 needs and Station #2 needs for things like roofing, carpet, and paint rather than having a large dollar amount that includes rolling stock. He stated that he would like to keep them separate because things can come up more quickly on a building than trying to

take money out of the CIP that has been allocated towards rolling stock. He explained that he just wanted the clarity to be there so they know what they are looking to replace. He stated that they have also talked about selling their rescue which would depend on what Orono decides.

Councilmember Dyvik asked if this should reference selling Utility #11.

City Administrator Weske stated that it should and noted that he had not printed that for them.

Councilmember Dyvik asked if there had been talk about instead of selling it just repurposing it.

City Administrator Weske stated that it has been all over the board and there have been conversations about juggling things around and refurbishing stuff. He stated that he included it here because it might come up but admitted that he was not completely sure what the leadership will decide.

City Administrator Edwards asked if Utility #11 was basically a pick-up truck with staff in the back.

Chief Van Eyll explained that it was the Ford with the fiberglass box and noted that he believes the chassis is from 1998.

Councilmember Dyvik noted that it looked really good for being from 1998.

Chief Van Eyll stated that he wouldn't disagree with him but noted that he had heard that it has had some issues this year.

City Administrator Weske stated that he believed it was small things like the engine not running.

Chief Van Eyll disagreed and noted that he knows that it was up on the hoist a few times.

Councilmember Crosby asked if the pump was not currently working on this vehicle.

Chief Van Eyll stated that he had not heard anything about the pump and explained that his understanding was that it was some front end stuff and some starting issues. He noted that he would be wrong because he had not seen all of it.

## **Shared Services**

### *West Suburban Fire District Update-Medina*

An update was shared that the merger was being finalized effective July 1 and noted that everything is moving forward without any issues.

## **Other Topics**

### *Implementing Duty Crews in 2024*

### *Need for Separate Facilities CIP*

### *Selling of Large Rescue*

### *Selling of Utility 11*

## **Wrap-Up / Adjourn**

City Administrator Weske stated that he would like to meet again in July and August for budgeting reasons.

The Fire Advisory Subcommittee came to a consensus to schedule the next meetings for July 11, 2023 and August 8, 2023.

City Administrator Weske noted that he would send out official invitations to the upcoming meetings.