



**Long Lake Fire Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
November 15, 2023**

Roll Call of Attendees

The meeting was called to order by Fire Chief Heiland. Please note that members in attendance:

Long Lake

Scott Weske
Mike Heiland
Charlie Miner
Jahn Dyvik

Orono

James Van Eyll
Rich Crosby
Maria Veach
Ron Olson
Adam Edwards

Medina

Scott Johnson
Jason Nelson

Minnetonka Beach

Jennifer Halverson

[Audio Recording Link](#)

Welcome & Introductions

Dyvik noted that this meeting was an additional Fire Advisory Board meeting scheduled at the request of Orono.

Minutes from September 18, 2023 Meeting

Dyvik noted that usually the FAB meetings did not follow things like *Roberts Rules of Order*, however, at the last meeting, the recording had not worked, so the minutes were generated by a combination of himself, Scott Weske, and Charlie Miner, from notes that they had taken.

Veach stated that she had also taken a few notes at the last meeting and noted some changes that she would suggest on page 3, 5 paragraphs from the bottom. She noted that she did not believe she had said she would 'like to see Chief Van Eyll used' but believed she had said that she thought using Chief Van Eyll could be an opportunity.

Crosby asked what had happened to the recording.

Dyvik explained that it had simply not been turned on.

Miner noted that for today's meeting they were recording it with two separate devices to ensure that type of thing does not happen again.

Crosby stated that he had a problem with the last paragraph because he does not remember saying that no matter what he would vote yes on the budget.

Dyvik suggested that they complete the review from Ms. Veach before moving on to other changes.

Veach stated that there had been a discussion about current members serving on two departments. She asked what Chief Heiland had said and if he felt it was an issue or not.

Chief Heiland stated that there are currently four individuals that serve on two departments and noted that at just four it is not a problem but feels that, at some point, it needs to be limited.

Veach continued asking Chief Heiland some of the questions that she believed were asked at the last meeting and asked him to repeat his answers. She asked about hiring someone with past certifications and if that meant you could forego some things in the process.

Chief Heiland confirmed that could be the case when there are past certifications.

Veach asked if that also meant that Chief Van Eyll could have been a possibility. She stated that she thought he had also said something about that decision being made before his time and thought he was going to revisit it with leadership.

Chief Heiland repeated his statements and clarified that one of the areas she was questioning him about was instructing on Blue Card and with everything going on, they were not comfortable using Chief Van Eyll for that instruction. He stated that he had run it up the flagpole about him doing duty crews with the Long Lake Fire Department and it received the same response as what was given for the Blue Card instruction. He stated that at this time it is just too awkward for everyone.

Veach stated that they had also discussed membership and leadership and asked if it was common for them to have a role in hiring decisions.

Chief Heiland stated that it is very common, but noted that the process can move more quickly if they have their credentials, a background check, and have passed their psych evaluation.

Veach noted that the last portion of the minutes she wanted to change was that she had said that she would support the positive conversation that was had and that the middle ground was found and could stand behind the logic that got them there, but does go to meetings to listen and could not commit to a vote. She explained that she does not commit to a vote because she wants to hear if new information comes up.

Dyvik stated that he could speak to that statement because he has a very clear recollection about this item. He stated that at the end of the meeting, he wanted to find complete clarity of where they stood. He noted that they had gone back and forth on some numbers and he felt that it was a good meeting and that compromises had been made. He stated that he first pointed to Mr. Crosby and asked him if he would support this budget based on the numbers that they had come up with, without any other conditions about using Mr. Van Eyll because Chief Heiland was going to run that up the flagpole with the Department. He stated that Mr. Crosby stated that he would support the budget.

Crosby stated that he does not recall ever saying 'yes'. He stated that there was a discussion on the phone and what he said was that it made him not want to vote for the budget. He stated that he doesn't agree with trying to quote him later from a recording that they do not have is wrong because it is just somebody else's recollection and doesn't hold a lot of water with him.

Dyvik clarified that they are talking about the minutes right now.

Crosby stated that different things were said during their discussion on the phone and his response was that without the sense of cooperation and moving forward, it makes him not want to vote for the budget. He stated that he felt then Mr. Dyvik went around spreading the word that he had said he would never vote for the budget and those things are not congruent.

Dyvik denied that he had said that and explained that Mr. Crosby had said that he could not vote for it because Alisa Benson was not going to vote in favor of it.

Crosby stated that was not what he had said that if she did vote for it, it would probably make it look like he should not vote for it.

Dyvik stated that they should return to discussion of the minutes and reiterated that he had specifically turned to Mr. Crosby and stated that he had come up with the new duty crew budget line.

Crosby noted that they had also had discussion on working together and possibly having the chief cover the other duty crew position.

Dyvik stated that at the end of the meeting he wanted to make it completely clear and also did not want any other conditions included related to approval of the budget and Mr. Crosby stated that he would vote yes. He stated that he then asked Ms. Veach the same question and he is will to emphatically state that she also said yes she would vote for the budget as they came up with that day, without any other conditions and if they are going to disagree on this point, they will just have to.

Crosby stated that he would love to have a recording of it so they could go back to the exact words.

Dyvik reiterated that they did not have a recording, but would emphatically state once again, what he recalls being said at the last meeting.

Crosby noted that he could state things as emphatically as he wants, but without the recording, they have nothing, nor do they have the context of the conversation.

Dyvik stated that they are talking about the minutes of the September 18, 2023 FAB meeting and that he was willing to state, under oath, that Mr. Crosby stated that he would support the budget.

Crosby stated that just because someone says something under oath does not make it a fact.

Dyvik reiterated that he had turned to both Mr. Crosby and Ms. Veach at the end of that meeting and they had both said that they would support the budget.

Veach stated that she said she would support the discussion.

Dyvik stated she had stated that she would support the budget and vote 'yes'. He stated that at their Council meeting the question was raised about what would happen if there was a 2/2 vote. He noted that she had also gone on to say that they had a good FAB meeting and they had agreed and Alisa Benson stated that she supported it. She stated that because Mr. Crosby was not there she was raising the question about the possibility of a 2/2 vote to which Denny Walsh replied that it would not pass and the Orono Council tabled this item. He reiterated that at the

September 18, 2023 FAB meeting both Mr. Crosby and Ms. Veach stated that they would support the budget and that was what they had spent that meeting working towards.

Veach stated that in conversation she said she would support which she feels is different than saying she would vote 'yes'.

Dyvik stated that his specific words were, 'will you vote yes?'

Veach stated that she did not know where they go from here.

Crosby stated that they could go back and forth, but without a recording, what is just being stated by Mr. Dyvik is his feeling of what somebody had said.

Dyvik disagreed and stated that it was not about what his feelings were, but rather what the facts were.

Crosby stated that his feelings were not representative of facts without it being a recorded fact and is simply somebody's opinion of what was said, which does not make it a fact.

Dyvik stated that it is unfortunate that they do not have the recording, and reiterated that it was not an opinion.

Miner stated that what Mr. Dyvik has been saying is what he heard.

Crosby stated that it would be what they heard or what they felt like they heard. He stated that Mr. Dyvik had heard something when they were having a conversation while he was on vacation. He stated that he doesn't know if he will vote for the budget and noted that he would like to see the cities working together and moving ahead for the future. He stated that he felt that would show they have good sense and that along with the possibility of Chief Van Eyll covering Station #2. He stated that he would also like to see Chief Heiland address the Orono City Council, which he feels is a reasonable request.

Veach noted that she feels they could go round and round and suggested that they go around the room and see how everybody else remembers this or they could just eliminate that portion of the meeting notes.

Miner stated that if they have things that are contrary to what was written, he would suggest that they send it via e-mail to Scott Weske or himself. He explained that they then can paste in comments such as, ' Councilmember Veach disagrees and this was her recollection.'

Veach stated that would be difficult and would not reflect on how the meeting was, in her opinion. She clarified that she did not feel that would be the best approach for them to take. She reiterated that she had suggested that they either choose to omit this portion of the notes or go around the table and ask what other people's recollections were of this portion of the meeting. She stated that she cannot say for certain what was said, but knows her sentiment and explained that when she walked away she feels what she has tried to say to everyone who has asked about this is that she does not talk about how she will vote.

Miner stated that he remembers it as clear as day and she may have used the word 'support' and not the word 'yes'.

Veach reiterated that she had said she would support the conversation.

Dyvik stated that he had not asked her about the conversation, but had asked her about the budget. He asked if she had gone into her Council meeting with the anticipation of approving the budget.

Crosby stated that there are times where following a discussion their opinions can be altered about items.

Dyvik agreed and noted that he had expected them to have this discussion with their Council.

Crosby clarified that he was not in attendance at that meeting.

Dyvik stated that Ms. Veach was there and tried to go down that road.

Veach stated that she feels everything reflects what she said she would do.

Dyvik stated that it appeared as though she went in with the intention of approving the budget and voting 'yes', because she specifically asked what would happen with a 2/2 vote. He stated that if Mr. Crosby had been there, he assumed that he would also have voted in favor of it and it would have been passed by Orono. He stated that he wanted the FAB to focus on their charter which is to approve budgets for the Long Lake Fire Department. He noted that he did not feel that their purpose was to look at the mess that is going on around them and the differences between the two cities and just focus on what the firefighters need for next year and get the budget approved.

Crosby stated that he thinks it is also vetting budgets and not just approving them.

Dyvik agreed and believes that they can be adjusted, which is what they did at the September meeting and noted that Mr. Crosby and Ms. Veach both had input in those changes.

Crosby stated that he thinks it is important that when there is a discussion in this room and get to Council that there is the understanding that they will also have discussions with their Council, which means that things could change. He stated that it does not mean that just because they support some here at the FAB that will always be the case.

Dyvik stated that the various members from the different cities represent their cities on the FAB, and he feels that means that they should then go back with that representation of what they had collectively agreed on. He stated that Ms. Veach made a statement at her Council meeting that there was agreement. He stated that means that sometimes they may need to go back and work on their Council's and explain that the FAB had worked hard on this and worked to get it approved by the Councils.

Veach stated that she agreed and liked everything that he had just said, but the task at hand, right now, is the minutes and what should be done. She explained that she had wanted Chief Heiland to speak to some things that were omitted from the minutes. She noted that she feels having a version of the minutes that is red lined and reflects her thoughts versus somebody else's thoughts takes away from everything that they did at the last meeting.

Dyvik stated that he feels they people were being given the opportunity right now to make adjustments to the draft minutes.

Crosby asked how had written the minutes since they did not have the recording.

Dyvik reiterated that it was a combination of himself, Mr. Weske, and Mr. Miner.

Miner stated that about a week after the meeting they had begun.

Veach clarified that she thought it was actually three weeks after the meeting.

Crosby asked if the minutes were put together based on their recollections.

Weske clarified that he actually takes notes at the meetings.

Veach expressed frustration because the minutes were not sent to them, but were just put up on the website.

Dyvik noted that he had asked Mr. Weske to remove the minutes when he heard about Ms. Veach's concern related to the minutes.

Veach stated that she appreciated that and feels that shows there is middle ground because that meant something to her.

Dyvik stated that he would just like everyone to give the firefighters what they need. He stated that there had been talk at the Orono City Council meeting that there was a \$140,000 increase for Orono, but there were no comments that 80% of that amount was for the pay raise that Mr. Crosby and Ms. Veach had both supported, and also for the duty crew that he thinks they support. He stated that this budget is not just for frivolous increases and is mostly for the pay that the firefighters deserve. He stated that when Councilmember Johnson and Orono Mayor Walsh talk about it, they make it sound like Long Lake is just putting a big increase on Orono without any justification.

Crosby stated that the duty crew discussion comes into play with Chief Van Eyll being at Station #2 also because that would relieve some of those costs.

Dyvik stated that Chief Heiland had run it by the Department and that is not a good choice right now.

Veach stated that the Relief Association put out a statement that is available on the Long Lake website right now and asked if their wishes had changed.

Chief Heiland asked if she was referring to the statement from last November.

Miner stated that he believes the statement was from June 12, 2023.

Veach stated that the Relief Association said that they wanted to keep it whole and asked if utilizing Chief Van Eyll was, perhaps, a way to keep it whole. She asked if just going to the senior leadership was actually going against what the Relief Association is saying.

Miner asked if she was referring to whole thing or just having Chief Van Eyll work the duty crew.

Veach clarified that she was talking about all of it and asked if that should play into the decision or not. She explained that she did not know, but was just asking the question, but, to her, it appears that it does. She stated that this statement is out there as something that is pertinent to the City and she felt that stopping at just the leadership was a disservice.

Miner asked if she meant she wanted the entire Relief Association to vote on whether or not Chief Van Eyll works the duty crew.

Veach stated that if not, then perhaps they need to amend their statement. She addressed Mr. Miner and stated that this was the second time he is doing a smirk which she finds very condescending. She stated that she was just trying to ask questions and not trying to push anything.

Dyvik stated that they said at the last meeting that Chief Heiland would run this issue by the firefighters. He noted that he is personally open to that consideration if Chief Heiland ran it past the firefighters, but their answer was 'no'.

Veach stated that she did not believe Chief Heiland had actually run it past the firefighters. She asked Chief Heiland who he had run the idea of using Chief Van Eyll on the duty crew.

Chief Heiland explained that he had run it past the officers.

Crosby stated that, in his opinion, that is not the firefighters.

Dyvik disagreed because it is the leaders within the Fire Department.

Veach stated that if they were saying that and if that was the FAB's purpose, she questioned what the FAB actually is.

Miner read aloud the from the contract to clarify that the FAB is comprised of two members from each city and 'the Fire Services Joint Advisory Committee shall meet no less than four times per year to discuss and make recommendations regarding concerns or problems identified regarding the provision of fire service and to periodically review budget updates. Fire Services Joint Advisory Committee shall have the specific task of reviewing the Fire Department's operating capital budget proposals for the next calendar year and arriving at a consensus on the annual fire services operating budget and annual fire services capital budget by August 15th of each calendar year.' He noted that he read that aloud as a refresher for the members of the FAB.

Crosby noted that they are discussing situations that involve the budget.

Miner stated that he believes some of the issues would actually fall under 'operational'.

Veach asked what the objective is of a duty crew.

Crosby asked if the Board was done discussing the minutes. He stated that he thinks the minutes need to be reviewed more.

Veach suggested that they try to find some middle ground and reiterated her suggestion of polling the people in the room to see how they remember this conversation going and what was

said. She stated that if they choose not to do that, she would suggest just leaving the last part out.

Dyvik stated that if they wanted to leave out the last part, he was okay with that, but would state, emphatically, at this meeting that Mr. Crosby and Ms. Veach both said that they would support the budget as it was drafted at the September meeting and would vote 'yes'. He noted that he is not typically a confrontational person, but he wanted it to be clear which is why he went out of his comfort zone a bit and directed those specific questions to each of them.

Crosby stated that he will not fully support anything before having a discussion at Council, so he feels that is irrelevant. He gave the example of liking something, but then following discussion at Council, he may change his position, so, what he may or may not have said at the FAB meeting is irrelevant. He stated that he is open to discussion, later and noted that he did, overall, support what the FAB was doing at the September meeting. He stated that he felt like they were going in a good direction and also felt, at the end of the meeting, that things were moving in a positive, unified direction, which later did not turn out to be the case. He stated that in his view, there were a lot of olive branches being extended, but they were never picked up. He stated that even if he winds up supporting a budget, he will still have a discussion at Council, that will still have give and take, because that is the way Orono does it. He suggested that for the sake of the minutes, if they strike the words 'and if they would vote yes', then the minutes would accurately reflect what they thought.

Veach stated that she thought that meeting had gone really well and mentioned words used in the minutes such as 'concerned'.

Dyvik suggested that she could go through and redline the draft version of the minutes. He explained that he was not trying to be facetious and wanted Ms. Veach and Mr. Crosby to have their thoughts reflected in the minutes as well.

Dyvik stated that he is willing to strike the words 'and if they would vote 'yes' from the minutes, but reiterated that he stands by his statement that they had actually said those words.

Crosby stated that he had a conversation with Mr. Weske today and asked him to work on a Plan B for a situation where Orono does not support the budget. He stated that he would like to see what that figure would look like.

Weske stated that he tried pulling this together but it will be rough.

Crosby stated that a ballpark figure is reasonable.

Dyvik stated that he didn't think they needed to go there and urged the FAB to just agree to a budget. He stated that it is getting close to the end of the year and would like to get this approved so they don't have to deal with a backup plan.

Crosby stated that if there is a complete refusal on being able to use Chief Van Eyll on duty crew at Station #2, then he feels that by putting someone else in, then he thinks they should cover the costs of that other individual.

Veach suggested that they talk about that issue later in the agenda when they are talking about the budget. She noted that she felt they had handled the minutes and can move on within the agenda.

Rumor Control Discussion

Dyvik explained that at the Future Fire Services meeting they have a running agenda item on discussion on rumor control that he thought would be a good addition to the FAB meetings as well. He stated that he wanted to ask Chief Heiland about the rumor he has heard that there is bullying going on among the firefighters and that there is a toxic environment.

Chief Heiland stated that they made a policy at their officers meeting that it is like religion, politics, or abortion. He stated these are all things that they can have strong feelings about on either side, but they believe they should be kept to themselves. He stated that if someone is going off on how they feel about Orono or Long Lake they should keep it to themselves.

Veach stated that she understands that it is a 'policy' but believed Mr. Dyvik was asking if this kind of thing was actually happening.

Chief Heiland stated that they do not tolerate it.

Veach reiterated her question of whether this was actually happening.

Chief Heiland stated that he has not witnessed any of that behavior, he hadn't seen anything in writing, nor had he heard of this kind of thing going on.

Veach asked if he had seen any of the e-mails that had been sent.

Chief Heiland declared that he didn't read that 'crap', if she was talking about things like NextDoor.

Veach explained that she was referring to the internal e-mails within the Fire Department.

Weske noted that if they are not sent to Chief Heiland he would not be able to read them.

Veach stated that she believes they were sent to all of the membership and she had assumed that would include Chief Heiland.

Chief Heiland asked if she had any specifics she was referring to.

Veach stated that there were a lot of things and noted that there may be things from before Chief Heiland's time with the Department. She asked if Chief Heiland had asked the Department if this kind of behavior was happening.

Chief Heiland explained that he felt they were a pretty tight group and noted that if someone on the Department signed up to also serve in Orono, that is absolutely fine and they have not beat them up over it. He read aloud a letter he received from Shane Gardner that explained his planned retirement from the Department effective December 31, 2023. He stated that wanted to read this letter to the FAB because this resignation is a direct casualty of what is going on in the Department. He stated that Shane Gardner will be starting with Mound on January 1, 2024.

Veach stated that Mr. Gardner is not the only one which is why she brought up the comment about Chief Heiland actually asking because she knows, first hand, people that have heard things that they do not need to hear.

Chief Heiland stated that he was doing everything he can to hold the Department together and it has been extremely difficult.

Dyvik stated that when they were discussing the minutes they made repeated comments about the need for evidence and asked where the evidence was now for what Ms. Veach has been sharing. He stated that if there are actually e-mails, he asked that they be shown to the FAB.

Weske stated that if the membership has issues he questioned why they were not going to Chief Heiland.

Chief Heiland stated that he will not tolerate any of that behavior.

Veach stated that she understands that, but the membership is prideful and they are a tight knit community and this is why the FAB should be concerned because they care so deeply for each other that this type of little side comments hurt.

Dyvik asked if there were just a few people making these comments.

Veach stated that she stays out of a lot of that, but things are said and gave the example of someone coming in and they receive a 'quack'.

Dyvik asked what a quack meant.

Veach stated that is a good question, but Orono's logo is a duck, so she assumes it refers to that. She stated that it is little things among a brotherhood that is so tight that all they want to do is stay together. She stated that seeing people like Shane Gardner leaves her with deep concerns because he is a great firefighter and has done a lot for the Department and their communities. She stated that she feels it is clear that it is happening because they wouldn't be doing these things, including leaving for another department, if there weren't underground conversations.

Chief Heiland stated that when he first joined the Department, he talked to Shane Gardner and he said 100% he was going to Orono and had accepted that fact. He explained that he was that way for the first few months, but noted that he had been conflicted and went back and forth. He stated that the bottom line is that he lives in Mound, so it would be difficult for him to respond to calls in this area.

Veach explained that losing someone like Shane Gardner, personally weighs on her.

Chief Heiland stated that he felt Shane Gardner was a 1 in 100 kind of firefighter.

Veach stated that he is a lifer and she did not think that you have to hear it from people that are telling you to just watch them.

Dyvik asked if she was implying that Shane Gardner left because of bullying.

Veach stated that she feels it was because of the 'atmosphere'.

Dyvik noted that he felt the cities could be blamed for the atmosphere in the situation because they are playing tug of war with the Department. He stated that he did not think Shane Gardner left because of some internal toxic environment among the firefighters.

Chief Heiland stated that Shane Gardner was leaving because Station #2 will be gone so he didn't really have many options other than to join the Mound department. He stated that it is not a toxic environment within the Department.

Veach suggested that Chief Heiland do an anonymous poll, she thinks he may find out differently.

Chief Heiland asked where she was getting her information.

Veach explained that she was married to a firefighter and was part of the community. She reiterated that she did not think it was big things that were happening and were little things.

Chief Heiland noted that Ms. Veach's husband was one of the individuals who was super down about Long Lake and can't seem to understand when others push the other way. He stated that he had asked him the other day to talk about the Future Fire Services meeting and his response was that it was just a joke and he didn't know why they even did that kind of thing. He stated that he felt they all got a lot out of the Future Fire Services meetings. He stated that he thinks that someone should look in the mirror a bit before they accuse them of bullying.

Crosby asked if Chief Heiland would be willing to do an anonymous poll.

Veach stated that she felt they were getting off track in their discussions.

Chief Heiland stated that he was willing to do some kind of anonymous poll of the firefighters.

Crosby stated that he agreed that this kind of thing shouldn't happen on either side and noted that a casualty like Shane Gardner is tremendous.

Dyvik stated that he believes Chief Heiland was very connected with the firefighters and is not sitting in his ivory tower ignorant of everything that is going on. He stated that if they feel an anonymous survey is important, he would be okay with that.

Miner asked if they knew who had been calling into Long Lake to complain about this issue.

Crosby stated that he did not want to get into naming names individually.

Veach reiterated that the firefighters want to stay together and calling someone out does not accomplish that goal.

Miner stated that he was not talking about individuals, but noted that Orono Mayor Walsh had stated that they had been calling Long Lake and nobody has returned the phone calls regarding bullying that is happening so he would like to nail that down.

Veach stated that she was not sure what he was referring to.

Crosby agreed and stated that he also did not know what Mr. Miner was referring to.

Miner explained that it was in the Letter to the Editor that Orono Mayor Walsh wrote a few weeks ago. He read aloud from the Letter to the Editor.

Crosby stated that no matter where it is coming from, he believes everyone in the room agrees that it needs to stop. He suggested that Chief Heiland conduct an anonymous survey asking the firefighters if this was happening and, if so, it needs to stop and then they can move forward. He stated that obviously Orono was going to be moving in a different direction and so will Long Lake, but these people will need to work together down the road and things will need to be cohesive. He noted that the more these kinds of things can be mended now, the better it will be for everyone down the road.

Dyvik stated that he had heard that there was unity among the firefighters and that morale was good.

Crosby stated that he still thinks an anonymous survey should be conducted so they can see what happens. He stated that he thinks this would benefit both departments.

Veach agreed and stated that she was just trying to convey that this kind of thing matters.

Dyvik stated that he had a few other items to discuss in this agenda item. He stated that Orono Mayor Walsh continues to say that Chief Heiland had missed two out of the last three FAB meetings, which is not true. He explained that Chief Heiland had missed one meeting, due to a family commitment, during his whole tenure with the Department.

Veach asked where Mayor Walsh had said this.

Dyvik stated that he had said it in numerous Council meetings. He stated that Mayor Walsh had also made some statements at the Coffee with the Mayor about firefighters showing up who didn't have a key for the boat and made it seem like a Keystone Cop kind of situation where nobody knew what was going on.

Miner stated that Chief Heiland had looked into it and it sounds like it was something back during the spring time that was not an emergency call.

Dyvik asked if there were any other rumors that could be cleared up.

Veach stated that she has asked Mr. Weske to get her the two July work sessions and noted that there was one about Chief Heiland from a work session too. She explained that she would just like to have everything from July.

Duty Crew Update

2024 Operating Budget

Dyvik explained that Ms. Veach had asked for a number of things that Chief Heiland and Mr. Weske had gathered.

Chief Heiland reviewed the data for the last three months and the general schedule. He noted that Station #1 seems to be easier to fill shifts for than Station #2. He pointed out the shifts that were getting filled and the payroll breakdown. He stated that this is a pilot program that is growing and evolving. He stated that they are getting to the point where lots of people are

signing up and they are having to limit things, which is where they are right now. He stated that the next step will be having to bid for shifts. He explained that, so far, for the day time duty crew shifts that the calendars and shifts are filling up more. He referenced page 7 of the packet that outlines response and on scene times.

Veach asked if this information was the duty crew or the truck.

Chief Heiland stated that it was either/or.

Veach stated that it was not necessarily the duty crew.

Chief Heiland explained that was how it comes in the CAD notes as well.

Veach stated that if he had the whole thing they would be able to tell if it was the truck or the duty officer.

Chief Heiland stated that he had printed out each call depicted in the packet.

Veach asked if this was all the calls.

Chief Heiland stated that they weren't and explained that he had just pulled calls that came in during duty crews.

Crosby asked about the September response time of 8 minutes 22 seconds and if that actually depicted a non-duty crew response.

Chief Heiland stated that ironically that happened when they were in court at the mediation and was a morning where there wasn't a driver here which can happen when there isn't a full crew on site.

Veach stated that she had asked for Mr. Weske to clarify the standard operating procedures of a duty crew. She asked for an explanation of the rules of the duty crew and how they had changed from the handout they had gotten about how the program would work.

Chief Heiland stated that nothing has really changed from there and noted that it was just from the crew evolving. He stated that if there are two people on the duty crew at the station, one of them needs to be able to drive on the reds and one has to be a competent officer. He explained that they have spent the last month or two getting everyone cross trained. He stated that last Friday was a paid holiday so he was not in, but there were six calls and the duty crew handled them all. He stated that for the initial response, everybody is still coming, so they aren't relying only on the duty crew. He gave the example of a recent situation where there was a power line down and noted that they did not need to page out the whole fire station for that, so they can page them out differently in order to limit the amount of people coming to certain types of calls.

Veach stated that she was referring to the rules and read aloud the portion that stated 'Station #1 – 1 firefighter' and noted that now they have three in the sign-ups. She stated that initially Chief Heiland was going to be one and they would have one which means the cost has tripled at Station #1.

Dyvik stated that he was also going to ask about this because it appears that they are over staffing some of the shifts.

Chief Heiland stated that they have been working on these things and noted that when they see the name 'Amanda', that is their administrative person, which may make it seem like a third person. He explained that she gets the regular stipend for on call.

Veach stated that she believed that Amanda could be the one person also.

Chief Heiland confirmed that Amanda responds to calls with the Department.

Veach reiterated her statement that the budget has been tripled.

Miner stated that he thought this was discussed a few meetings ago there was discussion about if there were vacancies, as long as it wasn't going over the approved dollar amount.

Chief Heiland stated that he believed that he had some latitude to move shifts around and shared examples of how they could split the crew up and send them to the other station.

Veach stated that they could have been fully staffed at Station #2 and shared examples of how that could have happened, but noted that he had chosen not to, which also increased the budget.

Dyvik stated that it did not increase the budget because the Station #2 slots were empty.

Chief Heiland stated that whether it makes logical sense for the crew to be over here training together or not, he asked whether Ms. Veach was saying that he should still send them over to the other station.

Veach asked about the purpose.

Dyvik stated that this is a pilot program that is evolving which means things will be changing as Chief Heiland figures it out.

Chief Heiland agreed and stated that it may not look right on paper, but he feels this is a good thing and they are getting excellent training out of this.

Veach asked if that meant the purpose was more for training and not for making an impact on service times.

Chief Heiland stated that it all comes together and gave the example of everybody showing up on call in uniform and not in shorts and a traffic vest. He stated that they look like firefighters and are getting out of the station quick and getting on scene, which is making a huge impact. He stated that he sees the duty crew as being a positive all the way around. He stated that he will admit that Station #2 is a challenge because they do not have people signing up over there as much as they would like.

Veach reiterated that they could have a crew there which she assumes there must not be a safety issue.

Weske noted that it is also a matter of how they would juggle the equipment as well, for example, should they put their gear in the back of their truck and drive it over to the other station.

Crosby stated that people have done that in the past.

Veach stated that she feels that is very feasible to do. She asked if there was or was not a safety issue.

Chief Heiland stated that he would like to get to the point where they could send more people to Station #2, but as far as the budget issue goes, those people would be there either way and there are still open spots at the other station.

Veach reiterated her question about whether there was a safety risk by not filling these shifts.

Chief Heiland stated that there was not a risk to safety at Station #2 by not filling these shifts. He noted that he communicates with Correy every week and lets him know which shifts are filled. He reiterated that this is a good thing and feels the data that they are getting is good stuff.

Veach stated that based on the information that was just handed out, they are far exceeding the budget and she did not feel they were using the money the way they said they would.

Weske clarified that they had been 'on par' with the budget, until it was reduced at the September 18, 2023 FAB meeting.

Veach stated that they are staffing three people at Station #1 when they agreed to one person.

Dyvik stated that they had agreed to that for 2024 which was how they had budgeted. He stated that in 2023, Chief Heiland is figuring it out and it still has moving parts. He stated that Chief Heiland may decide that having two firefighters training at Station #1 is better than splitting them up. He stated that he will not question how Chief Heiland is running this pilot program and noted that he sees it as a positive thing that this is a volunteer program and there has been this much interest already.

Chief Heiland stated that he is considering a more robust calendar system where it will be easier to plug people in and be easier to present the data to the FAB.

Edwards stated that October shows a fairly high fill rate and asked if Chief Heiland felt that was indicative moving forward.

Chief Heiland stated that it is the end of third quarter so there are people struggling to meet their percentage who were plugging in to try to get their points up.

Orono Chief Van Eyll agreed that there are time limits for people to make up their percentage points.

Edwards stated that the reason he had asked was that if October was indicative of what was to come he questioned whether they needed to adjust their 2024 budget.

Veach stated that was what she was trying to get to and explained that they had budgeted with Chief Heiland serving on a duty crew and asked if he was serving on a duty crew position.

Edwards stated that the FAB had reduced the budget by a percentage based on an assumption.

Weske stated that the assumption at the original 80% was more correct than it is right now.

Dyvik ran through some numbers and stated that at the last FAB, they had dropped the assumption down to 60%.

Weske stated that he questioned, come July 1, 2024, whether there would even be a need for that slot at Station #2.

Veach stated that if there was not a need for Station #2, then she feels it goes back to the budget for Station #1.

Chief Heiland stated that one other thing is that he had thought that when he was here working he could still run calls, but what he has found is that he is in his office and does not have the time to be out training and working with the one other person. He stated that if there are two guys down there working and training, it works out awesome because they can make sure the trucks and hoses are prepared for calls all the time.

Dyvik stated that if October was more indicative of what they could see throughout the year, the budget would be closer to \$72,000, which is between the original budget and the most recent version. He suggested that the FAB may want to make an adjustment to the budget because they are getting more participation than 60%.

Weske stated that they could also roll it over to Station #1.

Chief Heiland stated that as of November 1, 2023 they had someone who had been on a leave of absence for about a year who had been on St. Paul's Fire Department and he has come back and noted that he has signed up for a lot of the duty crew shifts. He stated that he is up for making sure Station #2 is covered beginning on January 1, 2024, but explained that right now he just wanted to make sure they were prepared and have everybody trained and in place to handle the duty crews and noted that he believed they were almost there.

Miner stated that it is tied to the budget so if they can't get an agreement on the budget, then they will have to scale it back significantly. He suggested that the FAB fast forward onto the budget discussion to see if they need to make adjustments to 2024.

Crosby asked if they go with the budget whether they would be exposed because of the six months and the turnover of doing Station #2.

Veach noted that there was already a calculation for that.

Chief Heiland asked what Orono's expectation of Long Lake was at the 6 month time frame regarding the Station #2 area.

Edwards stated that the hope is that Long Lake is a partner with the Orono Fire Department for mutual aid and things like that. He stated that if they are all getting along and singing 'Kumbaya' by then, then perhaps they are training and working together.

Chief Heiland stated that he would just caution that he did not think that by July 2, 2024 they would want to cut ties with Long Lake and thinks they should keep working together.

Edwards stated that he would agree and noted that they did not want to cut ties with any area.

Dyvik stated that they want to remove a service area and explained that he believed what Chief Heiland was getting at was how they planned to serve that area. He noted that was actually an agenda item and reiterated that he would like to know how they planned to service that area starting July 1, 2024.

Orono Service Area Reduction Plan Update

Edwards stated that they are currently building, equipping, and manning a fire department that is able to take over the Navarre area on July 1, 2024. He explained that they had started several months ago working to get to the point where they are ready to do that in July. He noted that at that point, the organizational model that they have is a full time, part-time, paid on-call model with the idea to extend that to the entire area once the full area of Orono is serviced by the Orono Fire Department. He stated that the idea is that during weekday, daytime they will have part-time duty crews that will cover that area and then weekends and evenings the normal paid on-call model.

Dyvik asked where their station would be.

Edwards stated that they would love for it to be the Navarre fire station but explained that their alternative would be a station that they will have to build at the Navarre site. He stated that they just received approval on Monday night to begin to do some design work on that. He stated that they were also looking at using their old public works facility in order to stage equipment and possibly personnel.

Dyvik questioned whether that decision needed to be made pretty soon so they can be ready to go on July 1, 2024.

Edwards stated that the decision from the Orono City Council had already been made and explained that he thinks they will use both facilities. He stated that it is a challenge to contemplate design and construct even a simple structure in an 8 month time period, but that is what they will do. He stated that they have other contingencies that they have been noodling if that building is not available on July 1, 2024.

Chief Heiland gave an example of on July 1, 2024 getting paged out to Casco Point in the Navarre area. He asked if they would be changing the tones in their pager to eliminate that area and explained that they had to think ahead. He noted that one thing he had considered is that on July 1, 2024 they just do an all call for Long Lake and then take that part out and asked if that was what Orono was thinking because he needed to be prepared.

Orono Fire Chief Van Eyll stated that those two zones would not be in Long Lake's response area. He explained that they would page out the Orono Fire Department instead of the Long Lake Fire Department.

Veach asked if Orono Fire Chief Van Eyll had said that was about 60 calls per year.

Orono Fire Chief Van Eyll stated that it has averaged about 100 calls per year for the last 2-3 years and noted that about 60% of those calls happen during the days on weekdays. He noted that about 10% of the calls happen between the hours of midnight to 3:00 a.m.

Veach asked if Chief Heiland had other ideas that he thought would work well.

Chief Heiland stated that he had asked because he needs to plan for this type of thing moving forward.

Edwards stated that it was his hope that the fire chiefs of the abutting communities can have routine dialogue about how that all plays out. He stated that there was no prohibition of Orono Fire Chief Van Eyll talking to Chief Heiland as far as he was concerned.

Orono Fire Chief Van Eyll explained that he had started having conversations with surrounding fire chiefs and Chief Heiland was the only one that has not been brought into the fold regarding mutual and auto aid.

Dyvik asked which chiefs he had spoken to.

Orono Fire Chief Van Eyll reiterated that he had spoken to the surrounding fire chiefs.

Crosby asked if he had all numbers with him for 2023 and asked how many calls went to Station #1 and Station #2 so far this year.

Chief Heiland stated that he did not have it with him, but explained that it would be easy for him to get them following the meeting.

Crosby stated that he would like that information in order to be able to compare it with 2022 data.

Miner asked about financial considerations with the Orono plan for the reduction in service area and what the latest information may be with the PIDs.

Edwards explained that they got that sorted out and were able to figure out the valuation of those and noted that it was challenging working with two different departments in the County. He expressed his appreciation to Mr. Weske for alerting them to a discrepancy because they were only counting half of their parcels. He stated that they were able to go back and recalculate this and get it all put together and works to 2 trillion and something dollars. He stated that it is about 50% or a bit under of the value for those call areas which does have a significant impact on the allocation formula.

Weske stated that he had tried to do those allocations based on the dollar changes and the call volume pull out and all of that stuff. He stated that he has a copy, but had not included it in the packet because he was trying to work more on the 2024 budget they have were working towards from the changes made on September 18, 2023. He stated that he believes that Orono's will decrease and Long Lake's will increase.

Edwards stated that he had just run rough numbers because he didn't have the call piece of the formula, but using the valuation piece, there is a delta to Orono of about \$38,000 based on the current budget, which means Orono's would decrease by \$38,000. He stated that if you don't adjust the budget and just use an allocation formula, then the challenge is that this would then go to the other parties in the agreement.

Dyvik asked if that was before the budget was adjusted.

Edwards explained that if you take the budget and apply the allocation formula to it with the adjusted valuation portion only. He stated that he had broken the year into two and ran the regular one for the first half of the year and then assumed half the budget each and then ran the other allocation for the second half of the year. He explained that there was a delta of \$38,000 between the way it is and the way it first came in.

Weske stated that when he did it, it was a bit higher between \$58,000 and \$61,000 by the time he pulled the other stuff in.

Dyvik stated that they first would need to adjust the budget down which he thought dropped it by about \$50,000 and asked if Mr. Weske had stated that there were 150 calls for the last three years.

Weske stated that there were 161 calls over three years, so dividing it was an average of 50-60 calls per year. He explained that then he had pulled out hours divided by salary, wages, and calls which is everything associated with payroll and then broke that down to get a per call hour times the number of calls.

Crosby asked if he was saying 160 calls for Station #2 for three years.

Weske stated that was what he had gotten from the data.

Crosby stated that seems way off to him.

Weske clarified that it was 161 calls from the addresses and street names they had given.

Chief Heiland stated that right now they have the 'all calls.'

Crosby clarified that this was not quantifying an 'all call.'

Dyvik stated that he thought it was just for the service area that Orono was taking out.

Weske confirmed that it was just for the 2 CAD zones with those addresses. He explained that he had not said there is a municipal line that ran this whole way, but analyzed it in that everything on that street, if there is a call on it, got put in.

Veach asked if they were saying half a year was \$50,000.

Dyvik stated that he thought it was around there.

Weske stated that it was around \$58,000.

Dyvik stated that if it drops the budget by \$50,000, now they have to reallocate the new budget based on that formula.

Edwards agreed and stated that was what he was talking about the last time they met because there are two pieces to this. He stated that they need to adjust the budget and adjust the allocation formula.

Weske stated that he tried to put this together in a way that showed every line item on how it was reduced.

Veach stated that they were not here to negotiate, but stated that she thinks it is silly to be having this conversation because they could staff it right away and find a way to work it out and have Station #2 fully staffed with a duty crew starting July 1, 2024. She stated that they could also figure out a budget where they don't have to keep doing this.

Dyvik stated that he agreed that they could just leave it in the contract and let the contract run to the end, like Long Lake wanted to.

Veach agreed that they could do that and asked if that would be a discussion topic for them to talk about.

Miner stated that it seems like a really good idea.

Crosby stated that he did not think they were on the same page.

Edwards stated that the Orono City Council has gone well beyond that because they have already passed resolutions.

Dyvik stated that he agreed with Ms. Veach that would be the most sensible way to proceed, but unfortunately thinks that ship has sailed.

Crosby stated that he believed the Ms. Veach was being misinterpreted.

Veach asked if she was and stated that she probably was not being misinterpreted.

Crosby stated that Orono was starting Station #2 in July of 2024.

Dyvik stated that they were starting the Navarre service area but they would not be using Station #2.

Veach stated that what she was saying is that they could use the Station #2 right away. She stated that she was saying that here is a building and they could write up a contract which she thinks is pretty good middle ground.

Crosby stated that was what she meant and reiterated that he felt others were misinterpreting what Ms. Veach had said.

Dyvik stated that Long Lake Fire Department is going to continue to operate Station #2 according to the contract until the end of 2025.

Veach stated that she understood that and asked if there would be any way to share.

Dyvik stated that there would not be a way to share and noted that Orono could decide not to take out the Navarre service area and just continue with the contract and they could continue to serve, which is what he thought Ms. Veach had said.

Orono Fire Chief Van Eyll stated that contrary to that, Long Lake could decide that they are covering what was built for Station #2 and since they are covering Station #2 call areas, they will get to use Station #2. He stated that there is no going back to them putting that area back in the

contract and there is no going back to them utilizing that station so he feels that is the end of the discussion.

Dyvik stated that it would be nice to have a kumbaya moment with departments working together, but that will not happen because there is a contract that Long Lake believes everyone should honor.

Veach stated that was right and they also have a contract where Orono could be done, but they could also ride it out. She stated that they could be done July 1, 2024, but they could ride it out in exchange for letting them share Station #2. She clarified that she was only speaking on her behalf, and suggested that in exchange for letting Orono share Station #2 that they will agree to also go out of contract in order to keep the budget clean for 12 months or 18 months.

Dyvik asked if that meant there would be a full budget.

Weske asked if Ms. Veach would become the new person involved in mediation.

Veach stated that she feels that may help them find a full solution and the facts are that there is a big picture that needs to be considered.

Dyvik stated that if there was a way to keep a full budget for the year, then he may be interested in considering that option, but right now they are going to have to chop the budget and slice things out beginning in July of 2024 because of a decision that Orono has made.

Crosby asked if Ms. Veach was proposing that Long Lake allow Orono to use Station #2 and keep it in tact.

Veach stated that she wasn't sure and was just coming up with that idea based on what she heard at the meeting and they would ride out the contract.

Dyvik asked what she meant by 'ride out the contract'.

Crosby stated that Orono would be running Station #2.

Dyvik stated that would be going off of the contract.

Edwards stated that it would have to be a renegotiated contract.

Veach stated that it would have to be renegotiated on both ends and they would say you pay to buy out our contract, which is frequently done and referenced what happens when you end your Netflix subscription.

Dyvik cautioned that that he felt this was getting into negotiation. He reminded the FAB that the purpose of the FAB was to come up with the budget for the Department and not to negotiate.

Veach stated that is how it started they approved it based on the objective of no more than two minutes in service time.

Dyvik asked what she had approved and explained that they had been talked about the 2024 budget numbers. He explained that is how they had run those numbers was with one firefighter in Station #1 and two in Station #2 and because there are moving parts, Chief Heiland is playing

around with moving people around. He stated that they could take the route of telling Chief Heiland how it has to be as of January 1, 2024, or they could ask him what he had learned during the pilot program.

Veach stated that part of this is that they should be updated along the way. She stated that if it has changed, why haven't they heard about it.

Dyvik stated that they are hearing about it now.

Veach stated that it was already a quarter in.

Dyvik disagreed and noted that it was in October.

Veach stated that she thought it was for all three months which means it was the whole quarter which means from the day she got the packet it was already old news. She stated that if budgets are going to change, that is fine, that that is where communication and how they are doing comes in.

Dyvik stated that he asked them to include the three columns because that was what October had. He stated that they did not have three columns for crews in August.

Veach stated that they also did not have it in October and it was done after the fact. She stated that all of it was which is where she was saying it had been utilized that way because they filled Station #1.

Dyvik stated that because there had been people signed up, he suggested that they make a third crew column so that it made sense. He stated that he wanted this information to be clear for everybody. He stated that he questioned why there were some days where he saw three crew members at Station #1, but Chief Heiland has explained that now. He reiterated that this duty crew pilot program is in a trial period and the cost is being covered by Long Lake. He stated that Orono is not being asked to pay for any of this and asked that they allow Chief Heiland to play around with it a bit and then come back to the FAB in January and apply all the lessons that they learned in staffing for 2024.

Veach stated that if the January 2024 is not the last edit that they have, then they should know that before saying what they are spending the money on.

Crosby asked about the different for just doing 6 months at Station #2. He stated that they are discussing approval of the \$26,000 as they pull out the Station #2 call area how it would work and if that \$26,000 would come back to them.

Miner explained that the \$26,000 was based on the original number which was \$70,000 for the year.

Dyvik stated that Station #2 still responds to part of Orono and the call area that they took out is not the only area that Station #2 responds to, so it is not quite that clean to just say Station #2.

Crosby asked if there was a difference that would be paid back.

Edwards stated that he believes that is what they were trying to talk about a few minutes ago. He stated that when they met last time and Orono staff had not been able to get the valuation

numbers over to Mr. Weske by the time they met. He explained that since then, they have done that and gotten that information pulled together and explained his simple calculation is a \$38,000 difference and when you add the call hours it may be more like \$50,000. He stated that using round numbers, there would be a \$50,000 difference, particularly in Orono, in a reduction in what their number would be for Long Lake Fire.

Crosby stated that if they approved the budget for the raises and coverage through duty crews, he asked if it was simply a \$38,000 difference that they should be withholding.

Weske explained that it recalculates right away.

Edwards stated that he thinks they ought to do and what he heard from the rest of their Council was that they wanted to see the budget with those things accounted for which means the reduction in the budget based on only six months of the Station #2 call area being needed by Long Lake and then the allocation formula adjusted for that same period.

Weske stated that would mean that the third and fourth quarter payments would be different.

Edwards stated that the guidance he felt he got from the Council was that they wanted to know the numbers up front before they even approved the budget.

Dyvik noted that he had not really heard that point and explained that he had heard Councilmember Johnson talk about the administrative fee and the Orono could possibly take that over. He stated that he thought at the time that would not be happening because it is in the contract. He stated that he did not hear the Council say that they wanted to have the adjusted numbers before they would approve it, but if they want that, they can give it to him because they have the information now.

Weske explained that he wanted how he 'mathed' out his stuff to be validated by somebody other than himself which was why nothing had been sent out yet.

Dyvik stated that the first half of the year is based on the full budget and for the second half of the year they will adjust by the reduced number of calls from taking out that call area and reallocating .

Crosby asked if Orono paid them quarterly or if it was one payment.

Weske stated that they pay on a quarterly basis. He stated that the unknown is that there are still hearings and court dates coming up and if the judge rules one way or the other, this budget will be going out the window anyway.

Veatch questioned why this budget would be on the line.

Weske stated that it would absolutely go out the window because if, for example, if it is determined that Orono cannot take Station #2 or the firefighters that they have already hired, or any other decision, will completely blow apart this budget.

Veatch asked why that would blow this budget up.

Weske referenced the reduction they were trying to get before they approve the budget. He explained that they were trying to get an approval of the reduction, by December, of what the 2024 contract will look like based on July 1, 2024.

Dyvik stated that was why he felt they should approve the full budget now and adjust it once they know the actual outcome.

Weske stated that was what he had always thought.

Veach stated that the way to control the timeline is to leave the court out of it and figure stuff out.

Weske noted that would mean approving it as it sits and then you figure it out after that.

Crosby stated that he felt Ms. Veach was being optimistic.

Edwards stated that he thinks they would get a budget approved if they could show what the projected budget looks like, based on what they know, which is that the call area has been reduced starting July 1, 2024.

Weske suggested that they sit down within the next few weeks and pull the spread sheets and get it figured out.

Edwards stated that one reason that he wanted to know about the duty crews was because he thinks there may be some room now to revisit that particular line because if they are being really successful with the duty crew that is a different number that they should be using.

Dyvik suggested that they work out what the adjusted budget would be on the condition that the plan going forward would still be the Orono will take out the service area beginning July 1, 2024. He stated that perhaps they should consider two people in addition to Chief Heiland at Station #1 because sometimes he has stuff going on in the office.

Miner stated that would be another \$26,000 and if they factor in the changes to Station #2 after July.

Dyvik asked if the baseline should be two at both stations, rather than one and two, as it is right now and then 60% of that, however the numbers are showing more than 60% .

Veach stated that she questioned that number because the number of days in the month minus Sundays show the same number when she calculates it.

Dyvik asked if she was referring to the 60% of the budget.

Veach stated that even the 60% looks to her that they have, as a percent, a lower amount because the days of the week when it says how many shifts total were available. She stated that if you do the math for the month, it doesn't look like that number adds up.

Dyvik stated that 68% of \$98,800 was \$59,280.

Veach stated that for the statistics it is hard to read these numbers because there are so many available shifts, but on another piece of paper it shows 306 available shifts.

Dyvik stated that her numbers appear to include probationary shifts, which they did not include in the budget. He clarified that the \$98,800 did not include probationary shifts.

Veach stated that she did not believe she had included the probationary shifts in her calculation. She stated that the 306 is assuming three at Station #1 and two at Station #2, morning and night and was where she wanted to reach out and say that none of this was adding up.

Dyvik asked if she was saying that the \$98,800 was not right.

Veach stated that she did not know and explained that the payroll didn't match the days of open shifts.

Weske asked if she was talking about the actual duty crew calendar plus shifts.

Veach stated that she thought so, but suggested that before they dive too deeply into that it be updated to and if, for example, two minute service times were not reachable because they only met them on canceled calls. She stated that within the duty crew outline it says that all calls will be under two minutes and if they are not doing that she thinks they should revisit what they are trying to define because if they are not reachable goals there is no way to know if they have reached success.

Chief Heiland stated that the two minute response time was their goal that they were aiming for and not a statement of what they were doing already.

Weske stated that if they had four guys on site that could leave, the response time would be less than two minutes.

Veach noted that she was told at the last meeting that two was considered having a full duty crew and referenced the objectives that state that the response times for emergency crews would be reduced and would have the expectation that in service time is no more than two minutes and they have not hit that yet.

Dyvik stated that was the 'objective'.

Veach reiterated that she feels that this should be revisited.

Edwards stated that he felt that was the point of doing the trial in order to see if the duty crew was something that should be revisited.

Dyvik stated that the document she is referring to says 'draft' on the top.

Veach stated that she understood and noted that the updated document also stated 'draft'.

Dyvik stated that the objective is still to be under two minutes and had not changed. He stated that if, by December, they see that they aren't even getting close to that number, then he thinks they could consider changing it.

Chief Heiland stated that just because there are two people at the station did not mean that you had a competent crew that could get the truck out the door but explained that was what they were training towards.

Dyvik stated that in September the in-service times were all under two minutes except for that eight minute one.

Veach stated that she had looked at October.

Crosby stated that on an engine they will need a crew of four, at minimum.

Chief Heiland stated that it depends on the nature of the call.

Veach stated that would also be helpful information

Miner stated that the FAB was sort of jumping around in their discussions and he would like to go back to the Orono City Council and the 2024 reduction plan. He stated that from the discussion it appears as though the two administrators will be getting together in the next few weeks to see what they can come up with and agree on and if there is disagreement he assumed that it will be brought back to the FAB. He asked about the timeline for Orono to vote on this budget again.

Edwards explained that there were two opportunities coming on either November 27, 2023 or December 11, 2023. He stated that the December meeting will be the final opportunity to approve the budget in the normal timeline.

Crosby asked if the two of them would come up with an exact figure of what it would be to pull it back out and not prepay for the third and fourth quarter.

Edwards stated that he believes that is what they would do.

Weske stated that he needed to get going, but would send his draft information tomorrow morning.

Dyvik stated that there were around 160 calls for the last three years for that service area, so they will be taking 1/6 of that because that is half a year. He stated that 1/6 of 160 is around 26 calls that they will say will be removed and there is a cost per call that has been calculated. He stated that was where he thinks they said it would be around \$50,000 because it was roughly around \$2,000 per call.

Veach asked if he was referring to Orono.

Weske stated that would be for everything.

Dyvik stated that those numbers reflected the average cost per call. He stated that they will have to agree and explained that this was how they would reduce the budget. He explained that with the rough numbers he just shared, the budget for the second half of the year would be reduced by \$50,000. He stated that the budget for the first half of the year would be on the full budget and allocated as it is now among the three cities. He noted that the second half of the year would have the reduced budget of \$50,000 and now that would be reallocated based on the formula with the property values and call hours.

Weske explained that all he has now is a start up of January 1, 2024.

Edwards stated that when he was first trying to backwards calculate all of this, he divided the year in two for both the budget and the allocation. He stated that he thinks he was saying the same thing as Mr. Dyvik.

Dyvik stated that he wanted to be clear on how they were reducing the budget because he thought at one time they were going down the Station #2 budget line saying that things could be cut in half and 25% of other things.

Edwards stated that his very simplistic way of looking at it was taking the operations line in the budget and referenced line 42285 Station #2 Ops, assuming that, lawsuits aside, the Long Lake Fire Department maintains that building for a full year, then those things should stay at 100%. He explained that he sees this different as the operations piece because for half of the year, those two CAD zones which make up those operations aren't there as far as Long Lake Fire Department is concerned.

Dyvik stated that would not be entirely true because there are still areas of Orono that they will still be responding to.

Edwards stated that then they need to figure out what that delta is.

Dyvik explained that was why he had not agreed with proceeding with that approach and would rather use Ron's approach who worked with Orono Fire Chief Van Eyll when he was the Long Lake Fire Department Chief to figure out how many calls it would be and the cost per call and that was how they increased the budget. He stated that he would like to now do the reverse and have it calculated based on the calls to that area in a 6 month period historically and reduce it by that amount.

Miner stated that this is how the contract lays it out as well.

Edwards stated that he believes Mr. Weske was having trouble with the mechanics of that because he did not believe hours were tracked by CAD zone.

Chief Heiland stated that they can be tracked by CAD zone.

Edwards stated if that was the case then that would be the easy way to pull this together and just pull the data and back those out.

Crosby asked if Chief Heiland could get them that information.

Chief Heiland admitted that it is kind of clunky, but they can get that information. He stated that on this topic he just got a bill in the mail for \$6,000 to have the generator rebuilt at Station #2. He stated that they do not have the money to do it this year and were planning to do it next year. He stated that there are some fairly significant maintenance issues at that building that will need to be taken care of and it would be nice if they could work together on those items. He stated that as far as the July 1, 2024 date, it takes several months to get pager tones switched around and once they are switched they will not switch them back. He explained that there would be no exit ramp at that point, so if they switch the pagers to only tone out Long Lake Fire for this area on July 1, 2024 there is no turning back.

Crosby stated that they had this same conversation years ago when it was Excelsior getting the tones.

Dyvik asked if they were planning to leave the duty crew line where it is now. He stated that it was higher originally and then was dropped a bit at the September meeting. He noted that he thought they had dropped it because they thought they had to do that in order to have everyone agree to the budget, however they apparently did not have agreement on it. He stated that data now suggests that the lowered number is not high enough.

Veach stated that it could be controlled though, especially if this is just a test because they could limit numbers.

Dyvik stated that was correct, but what Chief Heiland is finding is that perhaps they should have two people at Station #1, besides Chief Heiland. He stated he believed Chief Heiland had reasons for why he was overloading one side and noted that after this experiment, they can say they will always have a certain number of Station #1 and another certain number at Station #2. He stated that he was just questioning whether that number should be two for Station #2, instead of one.

Veach stated that if she is approving a budget for a duty crew, she would like to know that their citizens are getting improved service times because they are fully staffed instead of spreading it thin and loading one side and not the other.

Dyvik stated that again, this was an experiment that Long Lake is paying for and explained that it will benefit Orono when it launches in January.

Crosby stated that Long Lake was only paying for it for the next few months and then it will also be on their budget.

Dyvik stated that it will be part of both Long Lake and Orono's budgets.

Miner noted that it would also be part of Medina's budget. He stated that he feels it is better to overestimate rather than underestimate with a budget. He stated that he would be more comfortable over estimating and getting back to the original number that they had discussed at the last meeting which would pretty closely incorporate having two at Station #1 and two at Station #2. He stated that he believes that would be about \$104,000 total if all the shifts were filled.

Veach stated that she comes down to if that was going to be the sticking point on the budget is now necessary if it is not changing. She stated that she understands that this is something good, but questioned if that was the difference.

Miner asked if the difference with the Orono Council was between funding a duty crew or not funding a duty crew.

Veach affirmed that was correct and clarified that she was referring to funding the test.

Miner stated that they will be past the test by January 1, 2024.

Veach reiterated that her question was if that was the difference. She asked if now was imperative and if it was serving the purpose that they wanted it to accomplish.

Miner stated that he believed Chief Heiland has shown them that it has been.

Veach asked if they could take a year off and pass the budget.

Dyvik asked if Ms. Veach wanted them to take a year off.

Veach clarified that she was not saying that, but was asking the question.

Miner noted that it was in the budget and if Orono feels that they need to strike that in order to pass the budget. He stated that they could approve it with the amendment of not including the duty crew budget could perhaps be done.

Dyvik stated that he didn't think anybody actually wanted to strike the duty crew.

Veach stated that that was why she was saying why not just try it at one station to get it clipping. She noted that she thinks it could be cut down significantly.

Dyvik stated that they could choose to do that but he thinks the data is showing that it is working. He noted that she had made a comment earlier about something being off and he had done some additional calculations. He stated that it was \$78,000 for Monday through Friday, three people per shift and then you add Saturdays, which is four people per shift.

Miner stated that he did not believe that the numbers had included Saturdays.

Veach reiterated that it was hard to read.

Dyvik reiterated the numbers he had shared and noted that the Saturday amount would be \$20,800, so the 100% is \$98,800 Monday through Saturday with three people during the week and four people on Saturdays. He stated that at the September meeting they had done 60% off of that and the question that he feels need to be answered is if that will short change the duty crew based on what they are seeing for the response from the firefighters.

Veach stated that her question is if that can be distributed elsewhere.

Dyvik stated that they say \$6,000 for October and that times 12 comes out to \$72,000 which is more than they currently have included in the budget.

Veach stated that she feels that if you can control it, you should.

Dyvik noted that Station #1 has a budget of \$26,000 and he thinks maybe this is a situation where there has been a lesson learned and their budget should actually be \$52,000 because they should have two people at Station #2. He stated that he feels he is hearing Chief Heiland say that is what he needs and doesn't think others should be making the decision about what he needs. He stated that he thinks the FAB needs to have a baseline of where they believe the budget should be and reminded the Board that they were at \$85,000 at the September meeting and then brought it down to \$59,000 which was a \$25,000 difference and suggested that perhaps they split the difference.

Veach stated that then they would reduce call hours.

Dyvik stated that he thought that was one of the goals because they were not doing all calls.

Veach questioned if this program would still be a test then.

Dyvik stated that he did not think it would still be a test, but explained that the program would still be a 'baby' and they were launching it and just starting out.

Veach suggested going a little lower.

Dyvik asked if she was suggesting that they lower the budget even more than they had done in September.

Veach stated that she was because she would rather get something approved.

Dyvik expressed frustration that this budget would not be approved or not based on \$10,000 and noted that Orono was spending millions on setting up their own fire department. He stated that he did not believe it was the money and was something else, such as control and referenced comments made by Orono Councilmember Johnson about wanting Orono to handle the administrative duties so you can save the \$18,000.

Veach stated that, to be fair, that would save everyone.

Dyvik stated that it is in the contract and does not understand how it would save everyone. He reiterated that he was deferring to Chief Heiland who has stated that it would be better to have two firefighters at Station #1, so he thought they may want to increase the budget to support that.

Miner questioned whether the Orono representatives felt their residents would be better served.

Veach stated that based on the numbers, it does not appear that they would be better served yet.

Dyvik noted that they have the in service numbers for October and some samples from 2022 and 2021.

Crosby stated that they will still have Chief Heiland there to qualify as another piece of personnel. He stated that he looks at it as calling for duty crews on a Saturday when most people are available and wonders why they would pay for that. He stated that understands that they are trying out the program and trying to get some buy in, but asked what the time frame would be for the buy in period.

Dyvik stated that was also because some people cannot do Monday through Friday.

Crosby stated that if they cannot do that then, perhaps they don't participate.

Dyvik stated that he understands that they do not necessarily have to participate, but in the name of unity and everyone being part of it, perhaps it is fair to allow them to be part of it this way because many of them have given 15 years of their lives to the Department.

Chief Heiland noted that they are learning that Saturdays are not that popular, but he stated that he had to throw that out there in order to find out.

Veach questioned whether they could just take it off then. She stated that she believed that there is a revision that is needed.

Dyvik stated that he would not support reducing the budget and was hoping to increase it a bit.

Miner stated that he thinks it is important to have a duty crew budget that Chief Heiland can work with.

Crosby noted that the purpose of a duty crew was to have personnel here when it is difficult to get responders. He stated that there has been hemming and hawing about getting ample people at Station #2 and they do not want to bring Orono Chief Van Eyll in. He stated that he thinks the issues are the daytime response times and answering questions that are not issues, such as, weekend response times, where more people are available are not. He stated that he felt that paying more for those answers is not a great way to go.

Dyvik stated that he had asked the question at the last meeting about what number they would be comfortable with and he had stated that he would be comfortable with \$60,000 and Ms. Veach had agreed with it. He reiterated that he had thought they were all on the same page and explained that he would at least like to leave it there and not reduce it further.

Edwards stated that this was the 11th hour and they are trying to get a budget approved and if they are comfortable with the concept of duty crews and having a budgeting number, that will get something on the budget. He noted that there was still ample opportunity throughout the next year to adjust things. He stated that the issue now is getting the budget approved. He asked if the FAB was happy with the concept of a duty crew and felt that what they have penciled in enough to get through the first year.

Dyvik stated that he would advocate that they just leave the budget where it is. He stated that they had agreed to it in September and the actual data now shows that it may be a bit light, but perhaps things can get shuffled around mid-year if they have to. He stated that the thing he doesn't like is that when they end up going over budget and then hear about it from Orono's Mayor complaining that they went over budget.

Veach stated that when they go over meetings by one meeting, they hear about it from Long Lake's Mayor as a negative thing.

Dyvik stated that they have actually gone two meetings over because this was the sixth meeting. He noted that there are reasons for going over budget, for example, more calls and Orono Chief Van Eyll had done some additional training that they hadn't budgeted for. He expressed frustration with comments from Orono that they are now seeing \$140,000 increase in the budget, but they don't say that most of it was for pay increases that the FAB approved and for duty crews that they also support.

Crosby stated that he and Mr. Weske had a nice conversation earlier today on the phone about having Chief Heiland come to their meeting and present to them. He stated that they talked about putting together a list of questions for him to answer ahead of time. He noted that he does not want Chief Heiland to feel like he was being attacked at a meeting and clarified that he would not stand for that if it began to happen.

Dyvik stated that the Orono Mayor has shown that he can assassinate the character of a Long Lake firefighter and asked why Chief Heiland would think anything would be different for him.

Crosby stated that Mr. Dyvik does not know what was said.

Dyvik stated that he knows the firefighter.

Crosby reiterated that he did not know what was said and asked that they not go to the negative side with this. He stated that he believed that they were making strides and did not want to take that back. He stated that they will put together some questions for Chief Heiland such as things like the calls last year broken up between Station #1 and Station #2 and what the Station #2 call area alone looked like. He stated that he had also asked Mr. Weske what the worst case scenario number would be if they didn't approve the budget.

Veach asked what Mr. Weske had said.

Crosby explained that he had been working up the formula but had to leave.

Miner clarified that the budget portion would not be a chief question.

Crosby referenced the notes Mr. Weske had given him and believes that, if he is understanding Mr. Weske's writing, that it would be about \$78,000 less than the current budget. He stated that he wants to go over this with Mr. Weske.

Veach asked if it would be \$78,000 less than the current budget for the proposed budget.

Edwards stated that the way the contract reads is if they cannot come to an agreement on the budget, it would be the previous year's budget, plus a calculation based on the general fund increases of the three partner cities.

Crosby stated that would come to 5.88%.

Edwards stated that would be correct until such time as a budget is approved and noted that there are also arbitration clauses in the contract.

Dyvik stated that he wanted to avoid that because it would just be a hassle. He stated that after what the FAB had discussed today, he hopes that the data shown would show that, at the very least, they should not cut the budget. He stated that he did not see any reason why they should cut the budget and noted that there are objectives that they are working towards. He stated that Orono is planning to do duty crews as well and believes the hope is for faster in service times.

Veach stated that she thought the whole point was to have trucks that are ready to roll.

Dyvik agreed and stated that Chief Heiland is working on training so they can be ready to roll. He stated that they will see those numbers get better and noted that he wasn't sure how long it took in Excelsior.

Chief Heiland explained that Excelsior's program started to roll out, stalled, and then it was brought back to life. He stated that it probably took them about a year to get going and then make changes for better calendars and data.

Veach stated that he was saying that it will be a whole year before they get results.

Chief Heiland disagreed and explained that he could get them results whenever they want. He stated that he is not completely sure what she was looking for, but stated that this duty crew program has been a success far beyond what he thought it would be. He stated that it is truly doing great and he loves it and is very proud of the Department. He noted that they will be serving part of Orono for the rest of this time and believes it would be in their best interest to help serve their people better.

Veach stated that this is new to her so when she asks questions, she really is just asking questions.

Chief Heiland stated that he would like to work with Ms. Veach and see what kind of calendar would get her the information she wanted. He explained that he was not trying to hide or fudge anything in his data.

Dyvik stated that they had brought some of the information the Orono was looking for to today's meeting and asked what that changed for them in terms of support for the budget. He stated that last time they had support what was done in the FAB meeting and now there is more data. He stated that he was willing to say that they should go with the budget that they agreed to last time even though he thinks it should be a little bit higher.

Crosby asked if they would be willing to have Chief Heiland come to the Orono Council before hand and make a presentation with some prepared questions. He suggested that some of the financial questions could be sent over to Mr. Weske so they can have any major concerns answered before they take a vote.

Miner stated that he feels it is up to Chief Heiland and explained that he did not want to put him in an uncomfortable position and feels the Long Lake Council is pretty strongly unanimous in that position.

Chief Heiland stated that the last thing he wants is to be reading about himself in the newspaper.

Crosby stated that he would not be reading about himself in the newspaper. He stated that he wanted this to be an informational process where people could give them questions prior to the presentation so he can gather the data. He stated that Chief Heiland has been in fires that are very hot and stated that he felt that coming to a Council meeting would not be too bad. He stated that he considered Chief Heiland a friend and would not have anybody sit and try to lambast him.

Edwards stated that he wanted to confirm that the FAB was fine if he and Mr. Weske work on the revised budget with the different distribution and removal of the call hour from the base budget. He asked if they were good with that moving forward and noted that there would not be another meeting.

Dyvik stated that he thinks that should be distributed amongst the Board before it goes to the Council.

Edwards stated that he did not think anything they would come up with would be the same budget that Long Lake and Medina had approved, so he imagines that it will need to go back to them as well.

Crosby stated that he thinks the smart way to do this would be to have Chief Heiland appear before Orono because it will help answer any other questions they may have and will get out in front of it. He stated that it would also introduce Chief Heiland to the community because even though he is Long Lake Fire, he also works for Orono, just like Orono Chief Van Eyll did. He stated that he sees it as a true olive branch which he thinks would help because if Chief Heiland answers some of these concerns it would be difficult for people to vote no.

Veach noted that she didn't think she would even call them concerns and would just refer to them as questions.

Miner asked if Mr. Crosby and Ms. Veach couldn't just answer those questions based on what they have learned already.

Veach stated that she feels it is different and noted that Chief Heiland's last statement about how good he thinks the duty crew is and that it is needed said more to her than anything else at most of the meeting. She stated that she will be able to speak favorably at the budget at their Council meeting. She stated that even though the meeting started off a little rocky, she still thinks it was a good meeting and also believes there are solutions and ways to meeting in the middle.

Crosby asked that Mr. Edwards communicate with the Orono City Council to put together a list of questions for Chief Heiland and see if he is willing to address them.

Dyvik stated that the questions need to be limited to those that are within the bounds of the contract and things that are actually things that Chief Heiland can address and not things like asking about taking over the administration.

Crosby reiterated that they are not looking for any 'gotcha' type stuff.

Edwards stated that in the past the Fire Chief has come once a year to provide an update to the city and suggested that could happen in late spring of 2024 as well.

Dyvik stated that under normal circumstances, when they are beyond the legal situation, he would be supportive of that, but he remains concerned about the hostile environment at the Orono City Council.

Crosby reiterated that he considers Chief Heiland a friend and if he saw something that was out of line, he would take it for what it is and reel it in.

Other Topics

Wrap-Up / Adjourn

Miner ended the meeting at 5:12 p.m.