



Fire Advisory Board Meeting Meeting Minutes July 17, 2024

Roll Call of Attendees

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

Long Lake

Scott Weske
Mike Heiland
Charlie Miner
Jahn Dyvik
Cody Farley

Orono

Adam Edwards
James Van Eyll
Marie Veach
Richard Crosby

Medina

Dino Deslauriers
Erin Barnhart

Minnetonka Beach

Jennifer Halverson

Welcome & Introductions

Budget

Receive Minutes of June 4, 2024 Fire Advisory Board Meeting

2024 Operating Expenses as of June

Chief Heiland stated that not much had changed related to expenses since the last time they had met, other than they have not had to repair any of their trucks and noted that, overall, the Department was doing well in all categories.

Mr. Dyvik referenced the year-to-date percentage changes as compared to the budget. He stated that the pagers and radio repairs were budgeted for \$750 but the year-to-date expenses were \$1,400 and asked for more details.

Chief Heiland stated that he had mentioned this at the last meeting, and explained that they were able to sell some of the pagers from the previous year and had also sold some last year.

Mr. Dyvik asked if that was an unexpected number because they budgeted \$750 and if that meant that they had not been intending to buy as many new pagers.

Chief Heiland stated that was correct and noted that this line item was also for radios. He stated that they will be getting pagers back from Orono soon, so they should be good on pagers for a while.

Mr. Dyvik reiterated his question about the difference in budget to actual and if there had been anything unexpected for things like training and instruction materials.

Chief Heiland explained for many items, they actually get reimbursed for through the MBFTE.

Mr. Miner asked if there had been an update from the Mound Fire Chief on the WAFTA show on page 14 of the packet. He stated that he thought he had been working on some potential legislation to get some federal clean-up for that.

Chief Heiland stated that it seems to boil up every now and then, but then just dies. He explained that he did not think the needle had moved at all since they had talked to him last.

Mr. Dyvik referenced Fire Relief Assoc. 2% State Aid and asked why the year-to-date number was so low.

Mr. Weske noted that this usually comes in October and is a one-time payment.

Ms. Crosby asked if it was always paid in October.

Mr. Weske confirmed that it has always been paid in October and explained that as soon as they receive the money they have a certain number of days to turn it back from the City to the Fire Relief Association.

Mr. Dyvik asked for details on the Other Non-Contract Revenue line item.

Mr. Weske stated that he believes that was tracking some of the things that they have sold, for example the pagers and radios.

Chief Heiland stated that he felt like they were going to be okay this year and should be able to end on budget.

Duty Crew Update

Chief Heiland reviewed duty crew data for the month of June. He explained that when he calculates this, he goes through every call to see what calls they had when they were staffed with a duty crew. He stated that they had 10 of those calls in June and noted that 87 of the 200 available shifts were filled, which equates to 43.5%. He stated that their average in-service time for the duty crew shifts was 2 minutes and 13 seconds and the average on-scene time was 7 minutes and 23 seconds.

Ms. Veach asked about the fill rate and if the total of 87 included the probationary members.

Chief Heiland stated that it did include the probationary members.

Ms. Veach asked if that meant that the available fill rate should be 300, if they included the shifts. She stated that the 200 referenced by Chief Heiland would be how many firefighter shifts were available.

Chief Heiland noted that he can throw in additional data that outlines how many probationary members were included.

Ms. Veach stated that would be fine but noted that she just wanted to make sure that they were consistent in how they were measured. She noted that she felt that the available shifts should actually be 300 and not 200, if the probationary members were included.

Chief Heiland stated that he can look into that more closely.

Mr. Dyvik stated he would rather see the probationary members not count because they cannot work alone. He asked if the percentage of filled duty crew shifts had settled in around 43%.

Chief Heiland stated he believed it has and noted that it has generally been between 43-50%.

Mr. Dyvik stated that if they pulled the probationary members out it would really show that there were 79 out of the 200 shifts filled.

Assistant Chief Farley stated he did not think the probationary members were counted in the 87.

Mr. Weske stated that he believed that the 87 included the Saturday shifts.

Ms. Veach explained that this was where it was hard to follow along and suggested that they track this, even retroactively, so they know the percentages.

Mr. Dyvik stated that it should be 87 out of 232 shifts were filled by duty crews, if they include the Saturday slots.

Chief Heiland noted they can also break down the data to show which ones received the full \$50 stipends and which are the \$25 stipends. He stated that he would say that of those calls there are probably about 10 of the 87 that 'work from home', for people who can bring their laptop and work from the station. He stated that he will include that number within the data in the future.

Ms. Veach stated that Chief Heiland had made a statement at a recent meeting that he was hoping for more participation at Station #2 and noted that she had not seen any breakdowns between the stations and suggested that also be added to the data.

Assistant Chief Farley stated that he felt it was important to point out that it was not necessarily a priority to make sure to put a duty shift in at Station #2, especially as of July 1, 2024 when 95% of their calls will be up in this part of the call area.

Ms. Veach stated that at the June 18, 2024 City Council meeting, Chief Heiland had said it was important. She stated that he had also stated at that meeting that the Department had filled a duty crew shift at Wayzata and asked how that worked.

Chief Heiland explained that the Department was a stand-by crew for Wayzata and had not filled a duty crew shift. He stated that they are also doing a stand-by crew there tomorrow night as well and noted that it just kind of a thing that different cities do for each other.

Ms. Veach asked if there were plans to do duty crews moving forward.

Chief Heiland stated that they have talked about it, but there was nothing concrete at this point, but noted that they were training together a little bit.

Ms. Veach reiterated her question on whether there were plans to do duty crews moving forward.

Chief Heiland reiterated that they have no plans to do duty crews, at this point. He stated that he had a few additional updates for the Board and noted that Paul Bullemer had resigned, who was a 20 year member of the Department. He noted that Mr. Bullemer had been a great member of the Department and would be missed. He stated there are 2 firefighters who have

completed Firefighter #1 and #2 and will be starting their EMR and EMT training soon. He stated they had also hired a firefighter from Excelsior who lives in Tonka Bay who had already taken the BCA, medical, and psych evaluation and has been responding to Station #2. He stated that there is also one individual in school taking Firefighter #1 and have also completed 2 background checks for 2 new applicants as well and noted that they were currently setting up their medical and psych evaluations. He explained that they were awaiting BCAs for 2 others and also have 1 other application in process. He stated that currently their membership is at 40 and depending on the outcome of the various evaluations, they could be up to 45 members.

Mr. Deslauriers asked if that meant that there would be 5-6 new members and whether they were also at Orono as well.

Chief Heiland stated that those individuals had just put in an application for the Long Lake Fire Department. He stated that, as of today, they have completed 260 calls compared to 275 calls on this date last year. He noted that they have been doing their own hose testing which is a cost savings, provides good training, and it keeps the duty crews busy. He stated that on July 8, 2024, the Department trained on Electric Vehicles (EVs) and fire blankets for extinguishment and containment.

Assistant Chief Farley stated that the EVs have created a whole new world for the fire industry all around the world.

Mr. Dyvik asked what they do when they throw a fire blanket on the EVs.

Chief Heiland explained that they leave it on until they load it up on the flatbed and take it out.

Mr. Dyvik asked about an extraction situation where there may be high voltage. He asked if there were also new procedures for that kind of scenario.

Chief Heiland stated that they got a demonstration on a new tool that can be used in the charging location to essentially shut down the power to the vehicle.

Mr. Crosby asked if that tool was also how you would be able to tell if the electricity was running.

Assistant Chief Farley stated that is one way to know and noted that EVs have a cut location in order to cut all power to areas that would be a danger to a passenger or rescuer.

Mr. Crosby asked about the possibility of using something like a dry bomb and whether that would work well for an EV.

Chief Heiland stated he did not think it would help because everything was so internal in the EVs and all they can really do is let them burn out. He stated on July 15, 2024 they also had their mandatory bloodborne pathogens right-to-know hazmat refresher and terrorism training.

Mr. Dyvik mentioned the Fun Run.

Mr. Miner encouraged the Board to register for the upcoming 5K on July 27, 2024.

Draft 2025 Operating Budget

Mr. Weske shared details of the preliminary 2025 budget and noted that it reflected the reduction in some of the service area. He noted that some of that impact will show up in the fire

call pay and noted that the 5,000 hours was an assumption based on call numbers. He explained that it is looking like it will be a 25% decrease of about \$26,000 for that line item. He stated that most everything else is close to the same and noted that the 60% of duty crew pay may be a bit high since they have been seeing between 40-50% thus far, for 2024.

Mr. Dyvik stated that last year, he had \$98,800, for duty crews, but questioned whether they was from the final version.

Mr. Miner stated that he believed that the \$98,800 was for the full amount if 100% of the duty crew shifts were filled.

Mr. Weske explained that the largest increase will be for workers compensation insurance, but explained that the number, at this point, was just an estimate.

Mr. Edwards stated that they have had discussions with their Finance Department and had heard that overall, for the State, that was supposed to go down significantly.

Mr. Weske stated that he would welcome a decrease.

Mr. Dyvik asked where the information came from.

Mr. Edwards stated that the information came from DLI.

Mr. Dyvik asked if this was something Long Lake received as well.

Mr. Weske noted that Long Lake coverage is through the League of Minnesota Cities.

Mr. Edwards stated that he would suggest that they don't change this line item, but keep an eye on it, just in case it changes.

Mr. Weske noted that other reductions were for motor fuels and professional services/Lexipol ladder testing.

Mr. Dyvik asked why there had been a reduction in professional services/Lexipol ladder testing.

Mr. Weske stated that they had pulled out the hose testing, but still need to have their ladders tested. He stated that he was conservative with his reduction because he did not know exactly what the ladder testing would cost.

Chief Heiland noted that the same company used to handle both the hose and ladder testing.

Mr. VanEyll stated that he believes that Chief Heiland had shared a previous meeting that he expected the cost savings to be about \$6,000-\$7,000 because of the hose testing.

Mr. Weske stated that they will be able to get hard numbers once they come out and test the ladders this year. He noted that other changes were related to a reduction in physicals and other medical and a slight increase in legal fees.

Mr. Dyvik asked for more information on the projected increase in legal fees.

Mr. Weske stated that they have seen a lot more worker's compensation and explained that they have legal review that information to ensure that nothing has been missed.

Mr. Miner stated that he felt this was important and shared that there is a large worker's compensation issue happening in the West Suburban Fire District right now.

Ms. Veach asked if they were talking about legal or worker's compensation.

Mr. Miner explained that it was worker's compensation but also had a legal component.

Mr. Weske explained that the 800 MHz radio Admin. Fee had also been reduced.

Mr. Dyvik asked for more details about that reduction.

Mr. Weske explained that was the County radio fee and noted that the reduction in radios on the lease program, changed the quantities. He stated that overall, the 2025 budget is \$19,438 less than 2024.

Mr. Dyvik stated that the budget for last year was \$824,000 but believes they came in under budget and asked for details of the difference.

Mr. Weske stated that he could not remember the exact numbers off the top of his head.

Mr. Miner stated that he thought it was around \$40,000.

Mr. Dyvik stated that meant that they were a little bit above last years actuals.

Mr. Weske stated that was correct, but would be based off the 3 cities and not the overall budget.

Mr. Dyvik stated that he was trying to look at the \$824,000 from last year and the number from the 2024 budget which shows \$1,500,000. He stated that he would assume that number did not include the Relief.

Mr. Weske stated that was correct and explained that there is a summary that is overall for all line items and this was just operational. He stated that the Fire Relief 2% was just a pass-through. He stated that it would not match up exactly because they would also need to take the difference between Minnetonka Beach and the actuals.

Draft 2024 Capital Improvement Plan

Mr. Weske explained that per the contract, they have to submit a 15 year CIP, but noted that is a bit irrelevant.

Ms. Veach interjected and stated that she had a few things to say about the budget before they moved on to the next agenda item.. She asked if next time the budget could include the 2023 actuals and explained that she would also like to know if, moving forward, the thought was that this was a firm budget.

Mr. Dyvik noted that they may be able to add data on both the 2023 budget and actuals.

Ms. Veach stated that last year around this time they had a budget and then it had changed a few times and reiterated that question about how 'firm' they felt this budget was.

Mr. Dyvik noted that this was a preliminary budget for the Board to review and the final budget should be presented in early August, per the contract. He stated that this is the time for them to give feedback to Mr. Weske.

Ms. Veach asked if this was also Mr. Dyvik's first time seeing these numbers.

Mr. Weske clarified that nobody had seen the budget numbers other than he and Chief Heiland. He continued the discussion related to the CIP and reiterated that per the contract they have to do a 15 year CIP which seemed like a silly exercise, considering the current situation. He stated that there have been two items highlighted that have changed a bit since he put this out for a re-roof and new a/c units. He explained that they felt it would be easier to repair the roof because they should be able to get another 10-15 years out of it. He noted that the a/c units were original to the building and were at their life expectancy. He stated that the 2 a/c units and the roof patching will be well under the \$250,000 that was in the CUP, but noted that he had received the estimate yet.

Mr. Dyvik asked if they would have firmer numbers by their next meeting.

Mr. Weske stated that they would absolutely have firmer numbers by the next meeting. He stated that the number for refurbishing B11 may be a bit higher than it needed to be. He noted that he personally did not think that it would actually need a new motor and explained that he would like to get a better quote and a more firm number of the actual refurbishment costs.

Ms. Veach asked if he was saying that nothing was urgent.

Mr. Weske stated that he would not say that anything was actually urgent, but were things that have been on the CIP.

Ms. Veach asked if there was anything that would put things as a safety risk.

Mr. Weske stated that as far as he was concerned, he did not believe so.

Mr. Dyvik reminded the Board that there is a new engine and a new utility/rescue truck that are still coming this year. He noted that they were not reflected on this document because Long Lake was paying for them.

Mr. Miner stated that he believed that delivery of the utility truck had been pushed back into 2025.

Mr. Weske stated that the latest report was for February of 2025.

Mr. Dyvik asked if the engine would still be delivered in September.

Chief Heiland confirmed that the engine was still expected to come in September.

Mr. Weske reiterated that he should be able to get some harder numbers so the Board can discuss this at the final budget stage.

Mr. Edwards stated that when he was looking back through his old notes, these 2 items were further out on the CIP in the past and asked if there was some need that was pulling them in sooner.

Mr. Weske stated that he would not say 'sooner', but explained that it was just the way things have recalibrated and noted that rather than spending \$800,000 on a new engine perhaps they could move up things like the boat repair.

Mr. Dyvik noted that he did not see any big ticket items included in the CIP.

Mr. Weske stated that pretty much anything after 2030 was a crap shoot and, in his opinion, was not something that they should be spending very much time on. He reviewed details from the allocation formula and stated that this reflected the reduction in service area and also shows the reduction in market value. He stated that if they want to include the CIP from 2024 to 2025, the increase for Orono would put it at \$883,747, Long Lake would be at \$152,231, and Medina would be at \$104,437. He stated that if they choose not to do any of the capital expenditures, the overall reduction from 2024 to 2025 would be \$39,845.

Mr. Dyvik stated that he felt they should be talking in terms of the operational budget.

Mr. Weske stated that just the operational budget only would show a reduction for Orono of \$39,876, Long Lake of \$5,318, and Medina of \$2,449.

Mr. Deslauriers stated that he would like to see the Medina calls for 2022 and 2023.

Mr. Weske asked if he would like to see totals or types of calls.

Mr. Deslauriers gave the example of call volume for 152 Excelsior Boulevard. He stated that going from 307 to 614 hours was a pretty big increase from 2022 to 2023 and explained that he would just like to understand that increase better. He stated that he would also like to see where they are at in 2024, in comparison, and if they would be coming in closer to 300 or 600 hours.

Mr. Dyvik stated that the hours doubled because the calls look they had also doubled.

Mr. Deslauriers explained that he just wanted to see the details that supported those numbers.

Mr. Weske stated that he can pull all that information together, but noted that it may take a bit of time.

Mr. Dyvik asked if the allocations for Long Lake and Medina were correct.

Ms. Barnhart explained that they had started at \$45,000 and there was the addition for July 1, moving onward which brought them to \$62,232. She stated that she was curious because she was not quite tracking the increase that is going on top of that and noted that she felt like she was missing something.

Mr. Dyvik stated that they saw the increase for half a year and now they have to factor in a full year of the new percentage split.

Mr. Weske stated that their percentage of the market value had also changed as a weight for 2025.

Ms. Barnhart stated that she understands what the increase is.

Mr. Weske encouraged Ms. Barnhart to send him an e-mail and they can walk through the details that way.

Ms. Barnhart stated that there are a lot of things in transition right now for Medina and reiterated that she just wanted to make sure that she wasn't missing anything.

Mr. Dyvik encouraged the Board to contact Mr. Weske if they had any questions, comments, or concerns.

Mr. Weske stated that the Board was welcome to contact him and suggested that they do it as soon as possible because they are supposed to approve the budget by August 15, 2024.

Mr. Miner noted that the next FAB meeting would be August 7, 2024.

Other Topics

Mr. Miner stated that he just wanted to touch base to see if there were any dispatch issues that needed to be addressed. He noted that it was probably more of an operational thing but believed that there had been some hiccups that may have been the County's fault earlier this month. He asked if this was anything that should be discussed here to make sure that the dispatching is smooth.

Mr. VanEyll stated that it appears as though the issues have been taken care of and noted that, eventually, they will transfer everything over off of 75F.

Assistant Chief Farley stated that there was a question at the last meeting regarding morale and explained that he just wanted to encourage the use of proper verbiage. He explained that in the recent past, there had been comments made, by the City of Orono, that kind of degraded the efforts that have been put forth in the Navarre area, up to this point. He stated that those kinds of comments can be hard to look past, as a firefighter, who is conserving and still trying to serve that area. He gave examples of comments like 'best service the area has ever received' and comments about quantities of firefighters. He stated that there are still 40 active members that are serving the area. He asked them to use verbiage that would still support both groups of firefighters. He noted that he had already received some comments regarding the Culvers post that went out earlier today and explained that there were definitely some phrases in there that were divisive and showed one camp versus another camp, in the way it was put out. He stated that this is just another example of an area where they could do better in supporting both groups of firefighters and not putting the divisive nature of the situation front and center.

Ms. Veach stated that she appreciated that Assistant Fire Chief Farley had chosen to speak directly to them about this issue.

Wrap-Up / Adjourn

Mr. Miner reminded the Board that their next meeting would be August 7, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.

Chief Heiland adjourned the meeting at 4:50 p.m.