

Minutes of the Sparta Fire Board Meeting

January 18, 2018
Sparta Fire Station

Present: Bergman (twp-chair), Momber (twp), Van Patten (village), Goodfellow (twp) & Bradford (twp).

Also, present: Chief Bolen, Deputy Chief Olney

Absent: Dougan (village) and Taylor (village) who resigned.

Bergman called the meeting to order @ 7:02 pm

Bergman read a letter of resignation from Gale Taylor.

Approval of the Agenda:

Motion: Made by **Van Patten** to approve the agenda.

Seconded: Momber

Motion Passed: 5 -0

Public Comment: none

Approval of the Minutes:

Goodfellow noted the following changes were requested to the December 21, 2017 minutes: Under Med 3 hybrid proposal, **replace "if ALS needs assistance in lifting or moving a patient" to read "after ALS sets the priority level" Per Dan Olney and the current ALS & E911 dispatch process.**

Under Public Comment for Bob Whalen the following statement will be added: **There are new expectations from the Village President for submitting the budget so deal with it and move on. The change was requested by Kristi Dougan and confirmed by Bob Whalen.**

Motion: Made by **Van Patten** to approve December 21, 2017 minutes with the above changes.

Seconded: Bradford

Motion Passed: 5-0

Approval of Bills:

Motion: Made by **Van Patten** to approve bills through January 15, 2018.

Seconded: Bradford

Discussion: Van Patten questioned the Cash summary report provided by the Village and why was there a negative amount shown in the Cash Checking account. Goodfellow stated the thought it was after the fire truck payment was made. Goodfellow & Van Patten to review with Sharon. There was no Revenue and Expenditure Report provided for SFD available for the meeting. Goodfellow will check with Sharon to see why the report wasn't sent.

Motion Passed: 5-0

Chief's Report: The Chief reported that for the last days of December there 31 calls and a total of 1251 calls for 2017. So far in December there were 56 calls. Several power wires down and a elevator at Ida Red was stuck with 96 year old lady in the elevator between floors. There were (6) accidents with several injuries and (1) fatality.

The Chief sent a letter was sent to Emergency Communications Center manager rescinding the October 16th, 2014 letter that SFD will respond to all MED 3's. The letter also outlined the new SFD MED 3 calls

which the SFD will respond to. The Chief also stated that effective January 16th, 2018 the new MED 3 dispatch requirements were implemented. (both letters are attached).

Bergman asked if there was anyway to bill or invoice for multiple visits to the same address. Shawn Morton stated: He works for Rockford Ambulance and they only invoice for a person being transports. He stated that there are legal issues for not responding. Not responding to any site or a multiple visit location would be a problem.

The only way the SFD could invoice or not respond to multiple visit location would be if there was an ordinance within the village and township. The ordinance would have to be created along with the criteria, approved by the village and township and the ordinance be sent to SFD to implement. (Bergman to have Dougan add on to the joint Village/Township meeting agenda.

Clarification on Training pay rate: Dan Olney stated that in discussion with the accounting service there was a need of clarification on a new training pay rate. The board approved the new pay rates for the SFD but it was unclear what the new training pay rate would be. Dan stated that the current Training pay rate is \$10.00 per hour for the entire department. Fire Fighters through officers, including the Chief. Last year there was approximately 1115 total hours of training for all the department employees. Discussion a new proposed rate which went for using the current wage scale for training to \$15.00 per hour or lower.

Motion: Made by **Member** to increase the departmental training rate from \$10.00 per hour to \$12.50 per hour for all SDF members.

Seconded: Van Patten

Motion Passed: 5-0

Updated Job Descriptions:

The board reviewed all the updated Job Descriptions. The changes and corrections were made as presented at the next board meeting.

Motion: Made by **Bradford** to accept the all the updated SFD Job Descriptions.

Seconded: Van Patten

Motion Passed: 5-0

Winter Snow services: The Chief presented the (3) quotes he received for an annual fee and a per time snow removal. Alternative Lawn Care, Water Works & Majestic all submitted a quote. It was the consensus of the board to continue to have Water Works remove the snow, salt and clear sidewalks on a per time bases. Being its already the end of January the board thought this would be the best approach in lieu of a yearly contract. The Board will be looking for quotes for 2018-2019 winter season later in the year.

Turnout Gear Clearing and Repair: The Chief stated that the biggest issues are finding a company to clean the "Turnout Gear" as the company doing the work must follow NFPA 1851-2013 standards. The Chief also presented a quote from Turnout Management from Livonia MI and GearWash from Milwaukee WI. for the services. The quote is approximately \$45.00 - \$60.00 per set of turnout gear plus shipping between Livonia/Milwaukee and Sparta. The cleaning of turnout gear would make the gear out of service for at least (1) week or more. The SFD currently uses Douglas Safety Systems for repairs on any turnout gear that need to be done.

Deputy Olney stated that the East Grand Rapids Fire Department ended up purchasing their own commercial washer and dryer and the East Grand Rapids Fire Fighters do their own cleaning as they are full time employees and at the station.

The Chief and Deputy Chief estimated that last year between 260 – 300 sets of uniforms were cleaned in house at the fire station. It's estimated that the cost to ship out the turnout gear for cleaning, including shipping would cost SFD \$16,000 - \$21,000 per year just for cleaning. Repair etc. are all additional SFD costs.

It was the consensus of the board to look for alternative solutions for cleaning and repair of SFD turnout gear as the quotes are too expensive for the Fire Board and SFD.

Currently all the cleaning and repair of SFD turnout gear is done in house using "Day Time Coverage" SFD folks. Because of the age of the existing washing machine, the size of the machine & drying system, it takes between 2-3 hours per set to clean and dry each set of turnout gear.

Station and Fire House Cleaning: The Chief presented the quote from Service Master of Kent County for cleaning the fire house and fire station. Kleen Office Environment was asked for a quote but hadn't provided one as of the meeting. It's estimated that the cost for cleaning the Station and Fire House would cost SFD between \$ 9,000 - \$12,000 per year for twice a week cleaning.

Consensus of the board was to table until next month pending firm quotes from Kleen Office Environment and others. Currently all the cleaning for the station and fire house is done in house using "Day Time Coverage" SFD folks. It takes between 4-8 hours per week for cleaning, trash removal etc. for station and Fire House depending on departmental activity.

Administrative Assistance – Potential Problems with Nepotism: As requested by Dougan last month, the board should get a legal opinion first before moving forward with any decisions.

Bergman read the "legal opinion" received from Attorney James Scales.

Mr. Scales wrote: "In Conclusion", the employment of the Fire Chief and his spouse is not in violation of State Law. Bergman suggested that the board limit the amount of Administration hours and possibly change the reporting structure for the Administration Assistant.

It was the consensus of the board that "nepotism" is not an issue, current employment of spouse has no legal bounds and the legality it's not an issue. (attorney letter available upon request)

Administration Assistant Hours: Currently the Administration Assistant is paid @\$12.00 per hour. The Chief stated that the department requires approximately 15-20 hours per week based on the Job Description for the Administration Assistant. Deputy Chief Olney stated, the current Administration Assistant hours are recorded in one accounting category, "Office hours. Office hours also include the "Day Time Coverage" hours, cleaning and janitorial service, turnout gear cleaning, fire station and vehicle checklist etc.

Motion: Made by **Momber** to have Administration Assistant work 15 -20 hours per week doing administration duties, 5-10 hours per week cleaning and janitorial service and 10 hours per week doing turnout gear cleaning not to exceed 40 hours in total.

Seconded: Bradford

Discussion: The board discussed what other items that the "Administration Assistant" would or could be doing. What other items would be included in the "Day Time Coverage" which SFD folks would do.

Deputy Chief Olney stated that if there was another accounting category created "Day Time Coverage" then "Office Hours" would more in line with just Administration Hours.

Momber withdrew his motion.

Day Time Coverage: The current process being followed was adopted by the Fire Board 6-8 years ago. The Board requested the Chief to try and provide "Day Time Coverage" between the hours of 5:00 AM and 6:00PM during the weekdays. The Department tries to provide that coverage between 2-3 different people working out of the fire house and station. The "Day Time Coverage" folks who's primary

responsibility is SFD coverage. In addition to the coverage responsibilities the “Day Time Coverage” folks also do the cleaning and janitorial service, turnout gear cleaning, fire station and vehicle checklist etc. with all hours recorded as “Office Hours”.

It was the consensus of the board that a new accounting category “Day Time Coverage” be created. They also requested that the Chief, Deputy Chief, Administration Assistant and Caption create a new job description “Day Time Coverage” and provide the board with a list of responsibilities and duties which the Day Time Coverage folks would handle. It was also the consensus of the board that the board didn’t want to outsource the janitorial service and turnout gear cleaning because the department couldn’t afford the additional expense.

Fire Department Office/House: Bergman also requested a legal opinion that the Fire House was not ADA compliant and should be closed as stated in the McGraph study. The “legal opinion” received from Attorney James Scales. Mr. Scales wrote: The ADA does not otherwise specifically require that existing governmental buildings meet current accessibility standards. (attorney letter available upon request) It was the consensus of the fire board that there is no need to make any changes to fire house at this time.

Next Regular Meeting Date

January 18th, 2018 at 7:00 pm at the Sparta Fire Station

Public Comment:

Nancy Bolen, thanked the board for continuing to work with the department in trying to keep the fire department providing excellent service.

Chief Bolen, thanked the board for their concerns and focus on continued Day Time Coverage.

Shawn Morton, thanked the board for understanding the current processes and how effective they are vs. a recommendation which wasn’t properly understood.

Motion: Made by **Van Patten** to adjourn at 9:32 pm

Seconded: Bradford

Motion Passed: 5-0

Minutes by **Goodfellow** 1-21-2018

Finance meeting dates: January 30th and February 13th at 4:00 PM township offices.

Joint Village and Township meeting January 29th at 7:00 PM Sparta Civic Center.

You’ll need a secretary for next month’s meeting as Goodfellow will not be at the meeting.