

# Minutes of the Sparta Fire Board Meeting

October 19, 2017  
Sparta Fire Station

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

Also, present: Chief Bolen, Deputy Chief Olney

Absent: none

Dale Bergman called the meeting to order @ 7:03 pm

## **Approval of the Agenda:**

**Motion:** Made by **Van Patten** to approve the agenda with the addition of 2 items the department wants to purchase.

**Seconded: Bradford**

**Motion Passed:** 7 -0

**Public Comment:** Scott Boltman, resident, property owner and business owner. He stated that the fire department had saved his house from destruction by fire. He stated he was very disappointed in the article on MLive about the McGrath study. The thought the article was slanted and more of personal attack on the Chief and the department. He did ask what is the average cost per square foot for fire protection within township compared to other areas.

He stated that if the department were to hire a full-time fire chief that cost would higher than the current part time position of Chief and Administration Assistant together.

He asked is there a Fire Department Budget? Is the Fire Department within budget?

He also stated that he supports the Chief and Administration Assistant and entire department for the work and dedication they have for the Department.

Scott also commented on the HVAC system that the fire station has, as noted in the McGrath study the recommendation to install a Fresh Air Exchange System for thousands of \$\$\$ is not required. The HVAC system that was installed several years ago, monitors and samples the air and has the capabilities of exchanging the air within the station in seconds. No Fresh Air Exchange System is required. The Chief agreed with Scott's statement.

## **Approval of the Minutes:**

**Motion:** Made by **Van Patten** to approve September 21, 2017 minutes.

**Seconded: Taylor**

**Motion Passed:** 7-0

## **Approval of Bills:**

**Motion:** Made by **Van Patten** to approve bills through September 30, 2017

**Seconded: Momber**

**Motion Passed:** 5-2 (Taylor & Dougan dissenting)

**Chief's Report:**

There were 3 fire calls and 1 fire assist with Alpine Twp., 72 EMS/Med call for a total of 90 calls for the month, 1014 calls YTD. There 2 med calls with cardiac arrest and 1 auto accident with a fatality.

The Chief meet with the residents of IDA Red Retirement center and reviewed fire safety and fire preventions. He also presented fire safety, fire prevention, E911 services and the need for smoke detectors to over 1000 Sparta Area School students.

The Fire Fighters are putting on a Halloween Party for the area children. It's expected to be attended 1,000's of local children. The program is funded by donations and the "Fire Fighters".

The Chief stated that 5 new fire fighters are in "Fire Training" and two of them are also in medical training.

The Chief stated that the new platform vehicle is almost completed. The department has worked with B&B to make sure everything is being done to meet the department expectations. It's estimated that the vehicle will be delivered within the next 2 weeks. The Chief also stated that the new vehicle we be within budget.

**Requests to Purchase:**

Deputy Chief Olney presented a request to purchase 10-100' sections and 2-50' sections of 4" supply line hose. Some of the existing hose has exceed it life expectancy, has leaks in the hose and some is as old as 1987.

**Motion:** Made by **Dougan** to purchase 1100' of supply line hose from Douglass Safety for \$5,135.36

**Seconded: Taylor**

**Motion Passed:** 7-0

Deputy Chief Olney presented a request to purchase AED Automatic External Defibrillator and CPR Mannequins. The AED will replace the existing AED on Medic #10 and move the AED on Med #10 to the new platform. NFPA requires that all new fire apparatus are equipped with AED. This will allow for the new AED to be moved to Medic #10 and new platform will received the older AED which was on Medic #10. Currently the department rents CPR Mannequins for first aid training. The availability of mannequins are always a factor in doing a first aid training class. The purchase of the CPR Mannequins would eliminate the rental fees and allow for the department to schedule more first aid train classes.

**Motion:** Made by **Van Patten** to purchase AED and CPR Mannequins for \$2,510.50

**Seconded: Dougan**

**Motion Passed:** 7-0

Deputy Chief Olney presented a request to purchase additional items for the new platform truck which were not included in the original purchase. With the new platform storage system, the appliance will be stored horizontal and not vertical as on another vehicle's. These holders would be able to secure the appliances in proper position on the new platform. He's requested that a new "Stokes Basket" and Bridle be purchase for the new platform. The existing "Basket" is 20+ years old and doesn't conform to NFPA standards. He also is requesting the replacement of Ladder Belts. The existing belts are frayed and are over 20 years old. Current requirement that Hydrant adaptors have gate valves and a measurement system. This new Hydrant Adaptor will accommodate the requires by both the NFPA and the Village Water Department.

Deputy Chief Olney was asked if these were the final/last purchase requirements for the new platform. Both Deputy Olney and Chief Bolen confirmed that these were last requests for equipment for the new platform.

**Motion:** Made by **Dougan** to purchase Appliance holders, Stokes Basket & bridle, Ladder Belts and Hydrant Adaptor for \$3,282.34

**Seconded: Van Patten**

**Motion Passed:** 7-0

**Wage Scale Update:**

The Chief presented a new wage scale proposal which would bring the Sparta Fire Department wage closer in line with surrounding departments. In his proposal there are different wage scales for fire fighter depending on their certifications. The Chief stated that he doesn't like training and certifying fire fighters only to lose them to other departments who pay more money. The current department salaries are between 17% - 75% lower than neighboring township. The Chief stated the last salary increase for the department was in 2008. Even with his proposed salary increase the Department salaries will still be the lowest paid for on call departments in the county.

Taylor asked the Chief what is day time duty and who is on coverage. The chief stated, that day time coverage was from Monday through Friday 5:00 am to 5:00 pm. The Chief stated that he was part of day time coverage, the Administration Assistant and the Caption were also part of the Day time coverage. Not all are there every day or all hours but normally 1 person is at the station day time hours unless they are on call.

Taylor asked if there were Job/shift descriptions for each person on day time duty. Deputy Chief Olney stated that there were. They are part of "SOG" standard operating guidelines & "SOP" standard operating procedure which all in the "RED" book. The village and the township have copies of the book. Taylor asked for copies of the job descriptions. Dougan stated that she has a copy of the Red book. Taylor stated that he believes that the first responders are deserving of a raise.

It was the consensus of the board to table this item until month when job descriptions are available to the board.

**Budget review for 2018-2019:**

The Chief presented his proposed budget for 2018-2019 as required by the board. The finance committee reviewed the proposed budget and Goodfellow presented an overview of the budget request to the board. The Chief is asking for an additional \$26,000 in operational expenditures. The entire increase would be used for salary increases for the department. The revenues are project to be approximately the same. (Attached)

**Motion:** Made by **Goodfellow** accept the budget as presented by the Chief to the Fire Board. The Village and Township will be presented with this budget request for 2018-2019.

**Seconded:** **Momber**

**Motion Passed:** 5-2 (**Taylor & Dougan** dissenting)

**Capital Improvement Plan:**

The Chief presented his CIP with his proposed 2018-2019 budget to board. (Attached)

**McGrath Report:**

Bergman commented on the study: the report seemed unbiased, he agreed with the funding recommendations, the need for a platform, getting the politics out of the department, the need for hard decisions. The report stated the fire department does an excellent job is serving the community. There were several items in the report that were up setting, and he didn't agree with. He suggested that the board select an item/topic and review and discuss at the next board meeting. Med3's for the November meeting.

Bergman also suggested that the Village and Township create a sub-committee to review the joint agreement.

Dougan stated the study was more of a master plan for the department. She also agreed that a work group or subcommittee between the village and township would be good idea.

**Next Regular Meeting Date**

November 16, 2017 at 7:00 pm at the Sparta Fire Station

**Public Comment:**

Shawn Morton stated that the study showed that there is a breakdown of communication between the fire department, the fire board, village and township boards and the information passing between the boards shouldn't have to be submitted multiply times. He stated that having a fire department member on one of the subcommittees could add a valuable input. As for the McGrath study, he agreed with a lot of information, he thought that a lot of information in the report was subjective and or not correct. He did agree with statement that whatever we do it's for the good of the community.

Scott Boltman asked where he can get a copy of the McGrath study? Dougan responded that the Village can get him a copy. He also stated that it would cheaper to have multiply part time day time workers than having a full time chief with an assistant. He stated that if any board member doesn't get the information they requested from the Chief, keep following up until you get the information. Dougan stated that the village manager has no authority for or to the Fire Department.

Kyle Fitzpatrick stated as a Sparta Fire Fighter for over 10 years he hasn't had a raise in salary in 9 years. They work hard and are dedicated to the department. If it totally about money he'd work part time at McDonalds. He also stated that the board members and board meetings are no place for personal vendettas.

Bill Hayes stated to the fire fighters to keep the faith. Don't keep the fire fighter's poor, pay them now or they will leave.

**Motion:** Made by **Van Patten** to adjourn at 8:50 pm

**Seconded:** Jason

**Motion Passed:** 7-0

Minutes by **Goodfellow**, September 22, 2017