

Excelsior Fire District Board  
EFD Governing Board Meeting  
Wednesday, September 28, 2022

24100 Smithtown Road  
Shorewood, Minnesota  
6:00 P.M.

## MINUTES

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dierking called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

### ROLL CALL

Present: Excelsior Fire District (EFD) Boardmembers: Dierking, Fletcher, and Connelly.

Also present: Excelsior Fire District (EFD) Chief Mackey; Deephaven/Greenwood Administrator/EFD Fiscal Agent Young; Shorewood Interim City Administrator Shukle; Tonka Bay City Administrator Laur; Excelsior Operations Committee Wisdorf.

Absent: Boardmembers Erickson and Johnson

### 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Connolly moved to approve the EFD Governing Board meeting agenda as presented.**

Boardmember Fletcher suggested that they add an agenda item under New Business, to discuss what would have been discussed at a work session related to staffing and EMS.

**Connolly amended his motion, Fletcher seconded, to approve the EFD Governing Board meeting as agenda, as amended. Motion passed 3/0.**

### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

#### A. July 2022 EFD Board Regular Meeting Minutes

**Connolly moved, Fletcher seconded, approving the EFD Board Regular Meeting Minutes of July 2022, as presented. Motion passed 3/0.**

### 4. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Monthly Fire District Administrative Reports – July – August 2022
  - i. Call Reports
  - ii. Firefighter Activity
  - iii. Inspection Reports

~~B. Treasurer's Report~~ (Removed for further discussion)

Boardmember Fletcher asked to remove the Treasurer's Report for further discussion.

**Fletcher moved, Connolly seconded, approving the Item A of the Consent Agenda. Motion passed 3/0.**

**B. Treasurer's Report**

Boardmember Fletcher noted that there was a new corrected report on everyone's desk and explained that it was discovered that some of the information was off because a wrong column of the spreadsheet was used in the calculations.

**Fletcher moved, Connolly seconded, approving the corrected version of the Treasurer's Report. Motion passed 3/0.**

**5. MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR**

There were no matters from the floor presented this evening.

**6. REPORT AGENDA**

**A. Fire Chief / Fire District Report (Open House October 6/Apple Day Dance Update)**

• **Communications**

Chief Mackey noted that the Board can plan on holding a meeting in November as either a Work Session or a regular meeting, to discuss long-term planning. The Open House will be held October 6, 2022 from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. and noted that Chair Dierking will be a 'victim' in their auto extraction demonstration. He noted that the Apple Day Dance event was put together very quickly and while they had a good showing, he thinks that they can learn some things and do better. He explained that the mailings went out late and many people received them after the fact. He stated that the weekend duty crew is moving into its fourth month and noted that there are plans to take a look at how it is going after it has been going for six months. He noted that they have had a few challenges with 2 retirements, 3 leaves of absence, and 2 on FMLA which means the Department is working off of about 30 people which can definitely put a strain on the program. He stated that there are quite a few other cities considering moving to a duty crew model and shared examples of surveys that he has completed for area departments looking into this issue.

Chair Dierking asked what the duty crew requirements were for the firefighters.

Chief Mackey explained that it is 32 hours/month minimum, which means: two overnights from 10 p.m. to 5:00 a.m.; three weekend shifts; and attendance of at least two drills per month. He noted that from what he has seen on the recent surveys, the EFD requirements are fairly low as compared to other departments. He noted that their biggest goal is to recruit as many qualified people as they possibly can.

Boardmember Connolly asked what Chief Mackey would consider 'fully staffed' where he did not need to recruit.

Chief Mackey stated that he would define full staffing as 45 or higher. He noted that they have two candidates right now that are going through the background check process that are already fully trained. He stated that they also picked up two other applications during Apple Day, however, they will need to be trained. He stated that there are also some long-term firefighters who are getting closer to retirement, so it can sometimes be like a 'house of cards' when you are looking at staffing.

Boardmember Connolly asked how long it takes to get a new firefighter trained and ready to go out on a call.

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Chief Mackey stated that in the past, under the old model, it took about 5 years until they were really confident in their skills, but was a bit dependent on where they lived. He stated that those firefighters who lived closer had the chance to be trained a bit more quickly just because of their proximity. He stated that with the duty crew model, it has kind of leveled the playing field and he felt they are able to get that same level of confidence in their skills within 2-3 years.

Boardmember Fletcher noted that the EFD may need to work on ways of being flexible and find creative ways where they can work with the Department, but in a way that also works for the firefighters.

Chief Mackey noted that with duty crews, where people live is no longer a factor, and explained that they are encouraging the firefighters to have conversations with their captains about what they cannot do, why they cannot do it, and also what they are willing to do instead. He shared the example of someone unable to work weekends because of their job being shift work, but who was able to take on daytime duties instead.

Boardmember Fletcher asked if the duty crew model meant that the Department could start accepting people that lived further away.

Chief Mackey explained that it will require a culture shift, because the organization was built on the idea of a neighborhood and that the people who lived here were also the ones who served here. He stated that a duty crew model shifts it into more a job mode rather than the neighborhood idea of just being people who live here and explained that he felt that culture shift would take time.

### **7. Unfinished Business**

#### **A. Recommend 2023 Budget Approval**

Chair Dierking stated that she believes that every member city had already reviewed and approved the proposed 2023 budget.

The Council discussed the rules within the JPA for voting and the possibility of approving the Capital Budget at the November meeting.

**Fletcher moved, Connolly seconded, to approve the 2023 Operating Budget, as presented. Motion passed 3/0.**

#### **B. Marine 1**

Chief Mackey stated that he and Boardmember Erickson had visited the site on September 26, 2022 and found that the boat is in rigging and painting, but has not gone too far through the process. He stated that it is highly unlikely that they will be able to take delivery of it before the water is frozen and explained that he had a slight concern that it would not be ready by the spring. He stated that he will be paying close attention to the situation, seek hard information from the manufacturers, and will keep the Board updated as he gets this information.

Boardmember Connolly asked if the existing boat was still in the lake and still useable.

Chief Mackey stated that the EFD got lucky and the boat only had to respond to about 7 calls. He stated that they have put booms in the boat to absorb the oil so it doesn't leak into the channel.

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Chair Dierking asked if there was an update on donations or funding for the new boat.

Chief Mackey stated that Boardmember Johnson was taking the lead on that effort so he did not have an update.

**C. Engine 11**

Chief Mackey stated that he did not have a report on Engine 11 and noted that the same engine is almost 32 months out. He noted that if the trend of vehicles being 3 years out continues, the Board will have to take that into consideration when they are making plans for new vehicles and start the process sooner.

Boardmember Fletcher stated that he has found that these things are cyclical and the build out time could decrease again.

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. 2024 Budget (Staffing and Future Planning)**

Chief Mackey stated that the only significant thing coming up in 2024, may be the loose equipment that they are buying because the pricing may continue to go up. He reminded the Board that they have the remaining balance of the boat included in the 2023 budget which will reduce the available reserves. He noted that meant that the Department would be pretty broke up until at least half way through the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter or possibly into the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter. He explained that he just wanted the Board to be warned and not be scared when they see the first Treasurer's Reports. He noted that he had distributed position outlines and organizational chart options for their review. He explained that, for example, currently the captains are not reporting to the battalion chiefs, which is not typical. He asked that the Board take a look at this information prior to the November Board meeting and be ready for discussion about the various options.

**9. NEXT MEETING**

**A. EFD Governing Board Meeting – November 16, 2022, 6:00 P.M., Station 1**

Chair Dierking stated that she will be out of town on November 16, 2022 and will not be able to attend the meeting. She stated that she will contact Boardmember Johnson to ensure he is able to attend this meeting.

Boardmember Fletcher noted that it would not be worthwhile to hold a work session meeting with only 3 of the Boardmembers present.

Chair Dierking noted that if Boardmember Johnson will be unable to attend, she will let the Board know so they can try to find an alternate date for the meeting.

Chief Mackey noted that one other item to discuss is their call volume, because that will effect everything that they talk about. He noted that he believes they will end up over 1,000 calls and they have also seen an increased in medical calls.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

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**Fletcher moved, Connolly seconded, Adjourning the EFD Governing Board Meeting of September 28, 2022, at 7:00 P.M. Motion passed 3/0.**