

Fire District #3 Minutes

1/15/2025

Meeting called to order 7:00 pm by Chairman Commissioner Avin.

The meeting began with the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Holzer addressed the audience that today's meeting will be recorded using Artificial Intelligence (AI) for assistance with the minutes then erased. By participating in today's meeting, you consent to being recorded. If anyone has concerns about being recorded or wishes to remain anonymous, please let the board know and the board will accommodate the request accordingly. No objections.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Avin - Present

Commissioner Larson - Present

Commissioner Holtz – Present

Commissioner Holzer – Present

Commissioner Milton – Present

Commissioner Avin confirmed the meeting's compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act and wished everyone a Happy New Year and expressed gratitude to volunteers and commissioners for their hard work in 2024.

Commissioner Milton advised that the December meeting minutes was sent to the Commissioners. Commissioner Holtz made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Holzer, and Commissioners Avin, Holtz, Holzer and Milton voted yes to approve the minutes. Commissioner Larson abstained saying he wasn't present at the December meeting.

Commissioner Holtz discussed the transition to a new QuickBooks file for 2025, the handling of checks, and the resolution of an duplicate payment issue with FirefighterOne . He advised that the new bookkeeper, Suzanne Heller, will generate the reports. He thanked Commissioner Milton for providing information to invoice Districts 1,2 and 4 for the combined election ad that was sent to the newspapers. He discussed the compensation of the commissioners. He advised that there is \$584,750.94 in Capital funds and there is a total of approximately \$1.7 million in all accounts.

Commissioner Avin discussed her conversation with our auditor about LOSAP and that can be funded from our operating account. She also likes the new bookkeeping system and explained that the QuickBooks accounting system will be on-line. A motion to pay the bills was made by Commissioner Holzer , seconded by Commissioner Larson, and all present voted yes to pay the bills.

CHIEF REPORTS

Bradley Gardens: Chief Jeff Taylor gave the report and advised there were 49 calls total for the month of December and 532 calls for 2024 with 327 in District 3. All is running smoothly.

Green Knoll: Chief Jim Driscoll Reported 33 calls for the month and 497 for 2024, and is awaiting a quote for tires for the ladder truck.

North Branch: Chief Zois Pournaras reported 44 calls in December with 16 calls in District 3, and 16 calls in Branchburg, and 512 calls for 2024. 49-108 has a speedometer issue and he mentioned LOSAP applications issues specifically not getting a response for new member Emily Kolodziej.

Country Hills: Chief Pat Doherty Reported 39 calls last month 11 in District 3 and 414 calls for 2024. Squad 24 and man-power have been good.

OLD BUSINESS:

Commissioner Larson advised that he received LOSAP reports for 2024 from Country Hills and North Branch Fire Departments and that he is waiting for Green Knoll's LOSAP report.

Commissioner Milton advised that Commissioner Larson informed us that LOSAP can be increased to \$1,300. per year per qualifying individuals and that a resolution was prepared to show the increase. Commissioner Larson advised that it takes 4-6 weeks to get LOSAP money and explained to all that it is important to be current with beneficiaries listed.

Commissioner Avin advised that all the audit and budget information has been uploaded to the DCA FAST system and we are awaiting approval.

NEW BUSINESS: Commissioner Milton explained that anyone who wants to run for Fire Commissioner and be on the ballot must have their application completed and notarized and submitted by January 17th. Commissioner Holtz explained that Richard Braslow has to approve the ballot. Commissioner Holtz estimated that 300 in-person ballots will be needed and Braslow will create the ballot and then sent to the printer. Commissioner Holtz advised he will coordinate this process.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Candidates for the fire commissioner position introduced themselves and shared their priorities. Stephen Hernandez emphasized data-driven decisions and community safety, while Mark Hudek and Jason Steinberg highlighted the importance of safety and equipment for volunteers, and Rand Milton who spoke about working together and is running to be re-elected.

NEW BUSINESS (Continued): Commissioner Milton discussed the resolutions needed to be passed for 2025. The resolutions were read, and a motion was made to approve them collectively. Commissioner Holtz made a motion to pass all the 2025 resolutions and this was seconded by Commissioner Holzer, and all present voted yes to approve the resolutions.

Commissioner Avin discussed the Operating Policies for the fire district companies that were approved by Braslow. These were discussed with all the fire Chiefs in a conference call which included attorney Richard Braslow, and Commissioners Avin and Holzer. Commissioner Avin mentioned that the By-Laws and Operating Policies should be looked at each year. The board discussed the approval of Operating Policies, which include procedures for fire district operations. The Operating Policies were reviewed by the attorney and are to be implemented within 30 days. Commissioner Milton made a motion to approve the Operating Policies and be implemented within 30 days, and was seconded by Commissioner Holtz and all voted yes to approve the motion.

A discussion about calling in crew sizes when responding was brought up by Commissioner Milton as not all companies are doing this, but all the Chiefs agreed to do this as mentioned in the minutes from last May's meeting. The discussion focused on the use of I Am Responding and Alpine software for reporting and communication within the fire departments. The importance of reporting crew sizes was emphasized.

Jayson Steinberg asked the Commissioners if we have reviewed case laws in how we operate and he was advised that Richard Braslow has reviewed the Operating Procedures.

Kevin Driscoll mentioned that before the Lincoln Financial LOSAP program, it was handled by Heartyville Insurance. He asked if the Heartyville accounts can be combined with the Lincoln Financial accounts for those members who have the prior LOSAP money.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Made by Commissioner Holtz, seconded by Commissioner Larson, and passed by those in attendance. Meeting adjourned at 8:06 PM