

**Excelsior Fire District Board
EFD Governing Board Meeting
Wednesday, September 26, 2018**

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

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Jennings called the meeting to order at 6:10 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Present: Excelsior Fire District (EFD) Boardmembers: Vice Chair Jennings; Boardmembers Fletcher, and Miller.

Also present: Excelsior Fire District (EFD) Chief Gerber; Deephaven Administrator/EFD Fiscal Agent Young; Excelsior City Manager Luger; Tonka Bay City Administrator Tingley; EFD Assistant Chief McCarthy; and, EFD Battalion Chief III Alex Stern.

Absent: Chair Erickson and Boardmember Sundberg.

2. AGENDA APPROVAL

Fletcher moved, Miller seconded, approving the EFD Governing Board meeting agenda as presented. Motion passed 3/0.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. July 25, 2018, EFD Board Regular Meeting Minutes

Miller moved, Fletcher seconded, approving the EFD Board Regular Meeting Minutes of July 25, 2018, as presented. Motion passed 3/0.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Monthly Fire District Administrative Reports – August 2018

- i. Call Reports**
- ii. Firefighter Activity**
- iii. Firefighter Percentages**
- iv. Inspection Reports**

B. Report of the Operating Committee – July, 2018, and August, 2018

C. Treasurer's Report

Fletcher moved, Miller seconded, approving the motions contained on the consent agenda. Motion passed 3/0.

5. MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR

There were no matters from the floor presented this evening.

EFD GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

September 26, 2018

Page 2 of 8

6. REPORT AGENDA

A. Fire Chief / Fire District Report

- **Training**

Chief Gerber stated he officially received notice the Department will receive a MBFTE grant of about \$200 per firefighter this coming calendar year to offset training costs through 2019.

Chief Gerber announced he will be attending the State Chief's Conference in St. Paul on October 11, 12, and 13, 2018.

Chief Gerber displayed pictures of the drill and training staff using extrication tools (Jaws of Life). He thanked William's Towing and Matt's Towing for providing vehicles to use during this training event. Chief Gerber described how the firefighters were divided into three groups during this training so each has an opportunity for hands on experience.

- **Fire Prevention**

Chief Gerber stated with regard to prevention activity, there are approximately 85 preplans so they remain active. It was noted that at the last meeting, Reserve Captain Dave Cole had reported on preplans and how they interact with the 911 system. The EFD continues build on and enhance that system.

Chief Gerber stated with regard to public education, Fire Prevention Week starts this week and will go into November. During this time, they will be spending time in each of the schools to talk about prevention and fire safety.

Chief Gerber stated although there have not been big developments, there are still remodels and new construction where plan review comes into play.

Chief Gerber displayed pictures of the Water's Building in Excelsior and stated the final inspections for the fire alarm and sprinkler systems were conducted today.

- **Fire Suppression / Response**

Chief Geber noted there have been 645 calls for service today compared to 598 as of last year. Last year, significant severe weather resulted in a lot of calls, which has not been the case so far in 2018. He described the severe weather with multiple tornadoes experienced last week in the southern part of the State and stated those communities are still dealing with the ramifications of those storms today.

Chief Gerber displayed slides of an incident on County Road 19 in Tonka Bay when a company doing underground boring struck and broke a gas line. Because there was potential for the gas to travel underground, it caused a bigger impact. Chief Gerber stated this was a duty officer call but because of the nature of this call, an engine was called for and some hose lines were stretched to assure safety. He stated they were able to keep one lane of traffic open during that event but had the event progressed and the road was shut down, they would have needed to include Public Works and Tonka Bay administrative staff to notify residents.

EFD GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

September 26, 2018

Page 3 of 8

Boardmember Miller asked if the company was boring for fiber optic. Chief Gerber answered in the affirmative.

Vice Chair Jenkins stated that incident was near his neighborhood and he noticed the response ran very smoothly.

Boardmember Fletcher asked if there is a way to prevent this from occurring and if the lines are marked. Chief Gerber stated the company called for locates but sometimes the lines are not exactly where they are supposed to be, or there is a contractor error. The EFD bills for this type of call as part of the Cost Recovery Plan.

Chief Gerber reported that a pump at Lucky's Gas Station got knocked over and started on fire, which does not occur often. He stated it was fortunate that trucks arrived quickly and the active fire did not spread much beyond the gas pump. He stated all trucks were called.

Chief Gerber noted Jim Douglas is the photographer and pictures taken during these kinds of calls are also used during training events to evaluate what may have been done differently or better.

Chief Gerber reported that a short time ago, a gentleman in Shorewood had a medical emergency while on the roof of his house. He stated the response crew did a good job of assessing and stabilizing the individual and the reach of the ladder truck was used to get him safely off the roof.

- **Special Events**

Chief Gerber announced Night to Unite, Safety Camp, VIP, and Apple Day events. Additional future events include the October 4, 2018 Open House here at this Fire Station, the October 6, 2018, Fall Festival at St. Therese, and the Protect Mn Event.

- **Emergency Management**

Chief Gerber stated EFD continues to work with Hennepin County Emergency Management (HCEM) and HCEM was heavily engaged when severe weather came through to provide up-to-speed information.

- **Administrative**

Chief Gerber noted staffing levels are the same with 3 full-time staff, 2 part-time inspectors, and 37 paid on call firefighters.

He stated there are 9 candidates going through the process to be paid on call firefighters. First round interviews are this week and second round interviews will be conducted next week. Agility testing will be the first Saturday in October and final interviews will be held by the end of October. At that point, conditional offers will be made to candidates, then background and medical evaluations, with final offers in November or December.

Vice Chair Jennings asked about the number of applicants. Chief Gerber stated 9 candidates is one of the highest levels he is aware of and partly because some applicants stayed in the queue.

EFD GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

September 26, 2018

Page 4 of 8

Chief Gerber mentioned the impact of road construction projects and delays caused by weather and noted that with construction projects, Fire Marshal Kellie Murphy-Ringate is involved with building inspections.

Chief Gerber reminded the Board that some dry hydrants exist, primarily in Deephaven. The Fire Department evaluates them to assure they still function and have been up front with homeowners whether or not the dry hydrants will be used. He explained the dry hydrants are tested annually and that information is submitted to Deephaven and homeowners' associations. Chief Gerber explained the private hydrants in Shorewood and Deephaven are connected to private wells so they are inspected to assure water flow. A private well could be used to dump water into a tank but would not be used to connect fire trucks because they would not support the level of water needed to pump.

Chief Gerber invited the Board to attend the Minnesota Fallen Firefighter memorial event this coming Sunday, 1-2:30 p.m. He stated this year the Department's ladder truck will be in front of the Capitol along with the Hopkins truck to display one of the two large flags at that event.

- **Other**

Chief Gerber introduced Battalion Chief Alex Stern.

Battalion Chief Stern introduced himself and stated his father is also a Battalion Chief. He also introduced pictures of his wife and son and stated he is a Detention Corporal at the Dakota County Jail and last year had received the Corrections Officer of the Year award.

Battalion Chief Stern stated his presentation will include an overview of the duty crew model, station project update, and firefighter health and safety measures.

Battalion Chief Stern reported that duty crews are gaining popularity among membership. Since shifting hours to the evening, they are only canceling 28% of the shifts, meaning another 25% of the shifts are getting filled.

Battalion Chief Stern stated they tried two 48-hour weekend duty crews the weekends of June 29-July 1 and August 10-12. He noted the second weekend gained popularity so more people were spread out to cover the area equally.

Battalion Chief Stern described the duty crew experiences, noting the main reason is to offer new experiences for firefighter who may not otherwise get into a fire truck because they may live at a distance. Also, it offers officer development as they are able to respond and ride in the truck. He described the types of additional training that can be accomplished with the duty crew that is more difficult to offer in a larger group setting.

Battalion Chief Stern stated the duty crew also offers more community connection by patronizing local restaurants including Kowalski's, Tommy's Trolley, and Tino's as well as Maynard's. Battalion Chief Stern played a short video showing the ladder truck being used as a pop-up splash pad that was enjoyed by resident youth. He stated the duty crew also does a 'Tweet Along' that shows the public what is going on.

On building project updates, Battalion Chief Stern stated Station 2 has a new HVAC system and he is drafting a contract for preventative maintenance to assure both the furnace and air conditioning systems are regularly serviced. In addition, flooring at both stations will be fixed to repair the cracked epoxy

EFD GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

September 26, 2018

Page 5 of 8

coating, and the washer and dryer have been replaced along with fitness equipment so firefighters can work out at no cost. He stated there will be yearly preventative maintenance for garage doors and they rented a floor scrubber to clean both Fire Stations.

Battalion Chief Stern addressed the issue of firefighter health and safety, noting firefighters are more susceptible to cancer because of the environment they are in. They conduct gross decontamination after a fire event by using a DECON/pack to spray gear and wash it down. There are also kits in the fire trucks so gear can be taken off at the scene and bagged so it does not contaminate the trucks. He noted these efforts are trying to eliminate exposure to firefighters.

Boardmember Fletcher asked if there are guidelines and protocols that deal with decontamination. Battalion Chief Stern stated there are and a lot of companies deal with cancer prevention.

Boardmember Miller stated the Department is using best management practices. Chief Gerber stated that is correct and explained that Minnesota Fire looks at firefighter's health, safety, and cancer risks and offers best management practices. Also, Hennepin County has 8 LSU trailers, which were grant funded, that play a big part in the decontamination effort. He explained there are standards across the nation and the Department will try to meet them moving forward.

Boardmember Fletcher commented on the need to look at the most effective practices, which may be a moving target over time. Chief Gerber agreed.

Boardmember Miller asked if duty crew is a good program that will be effective at improving service levels. Battalion Chief Stern answered in the affirmative and stated next year, night time staffing will be a nice benefit for firefighters.

Boardmember Miller stated duty crew seems to have gained more acceptance, noting firefighters are providing feedback from the ground up. Battalion Chief Stern agreed duty crew is being more accepted. He explained a post duty crew survey was conducted and some changes were made based on the responses received. He agreed it is a moving target but when firefighters provide input, it can be incorporated.

Vice Chair Jenkins asked why there was such an increase in numbers between the two duty crew events. Battalion Chief Stern stated there may have been talk about it after the first duty crew. It was noted the first crew weekend was the 4th of July holiday weekend.

Boardmember Fletcher asked if there is a lot of interest in the overnight duty crew. Battalion Chief Stern stated he has heard from both, those who are interested and some who are not interested in sleeping at the Station. He noted that having a nice sleeping facility will also encourage participation.

Boardmember Fletcher pointed out that all don't need to participate, just enough to cover the shifts. Battalion Chief Stern agreed and stated some people work night shifts so the overnight duty crew doesn't work for them.

Chief Gerber stated it is a different mindset because it is shift work and clearly not everyone is on board.

Vice Chair Jenkins stated as the duty crew model continues to gain traction and more firefighters sign up, he would ask if it is harder for all firefighters to hit their point targets since there are not as many

EFD GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

September 26, 2018

Page 6 of 8

call ins for all firefighters. Chief Gerber stated adjustments to points will need to be made to address that issue.

Firefighter Dana George asked whether overnights will eventually be mandated. He stated he would prefer to sleep at his house rather than the Station. Chief Gerber stated he is not in a position to answer that question but would prefer active participation from everybody. He stated whether mandated or voluntary will be determined as the details of the program are worked out.

Boardmember Fletcher thanked Battalion Chief Stern for his efforts and the work they do that is probably not often recognized. He stated he really appreciates their effort.

Vice Chair Jenkins stated he frequently drives by the Fire Station and gets to see the training exercises, which he has found are extremely coordinated.

7. Unfinished Business

A. 2019 Budget Updates

Chief Gerber stated since the last meeting, the recommended 2019 operational and capital budgets have been approved by all five member cities. The next step will be final approval of the 2019 budget.

Vice Chair Jenkins stated this is a procedural consideration as this budget is not any different than the budget presented to the cities.

Fletcher moved, Miller seconded, approving the 2019 operational and capital budgets. Motion passed 3/0.

Chief Gerber thanked the Board for their continued support. He stated Chair Erickson and Shorewood City Administrator Lerud talked about the process and both were supportive of budget approval even though they are not in attendance tonight.

B. Station Remodeling Update

Chief Gerber stated staff continues to work with the architect on the Station remodeling projects. He displayed a floor plan of Station 2 and described the room locations as well as a proposal to split the current bunk room into two separate rooms with a full-sized bed, desk, and linen area. Another proposal creates three dorm rooms instead of two dorm rooms. Chief Gerber explained why the current support is to create three rooms for long-term viability. He reviewed the proposed changes and described how the rooms would be rearranged to create the needed dorm room space.

Chief Gerber displayed the Station 1 layout and described the room locations. They are currently looking at two proposals. One would create four dorm rooms as Station 1 is larger. ADA requirements are still being addressed to determine whether they need to be met in this case. He stated as the design progresses, they may plan four dorm rooms but initially only be able to fill two dorm rooms.

Chief Gerber stated he will meet with architects in October, review cost estimates, and anticipate it will be bid this fall for construction this winter and substantial completion by May of 2019. The EFB currently has \$130,000 of grant funds from the State of Minnesota and the grant process will be finished by June of 2019.

EFD GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

September 26, 2018

Page 7 of 8

Boardmember Fletcher asked if there will be two dorm rooms in Station 2. Chief Gerber explained that rather than trying to reconfigure the spaces in the future, the architect recommended doing four dorm rooms now, even if only two are needed at this time.

Boardmember Miller asked whether it would be more economical to create the four rooms at this time. Chief Gerber stated that will be looked at once the bids are received. He noted only internal walls are being moved at both stations.

Chief Gerber stated he received initial bids from Sleep Number and will also be meeting with the Station Alerting staff to discuss the “in station alerting” systems.

Chief Gerber explained that Wold will handle the bid process and it is hoped the winter season will be the most competitive time for this project.

Boardmember Fletcher noted if the bids are not out soon, contractor’s schedules will already be filling for this coming winter construction season. In addition, this is not a large construction project.

Vice Chair Jenkins stated not including grant funds it is estimated to cost about \$200,000 for both stations. Chief Gerber stated that is correct and includes the furnishings. He noted with the bid, a minimum of 25% needs to be spent.

Boardmember Fletcher stated he is more worried about underspending because smaller sized projects costs more.

Boardmember Miller stated if the project is too small, the cost per room will be higher than it would be with a larger project.

C. Station 1 Concrete Replacement Update

Chief Gerber stated he talked with vendors who are interested in this project and informed them about the anticipated bidding and construction schedule.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. EMS Response in the South Lake Area

Chief Gerber stated this was discussed in a meeting with Mayors during which all of the agencies were represented. He displayed the agenda that was covered when the overall EMS meeting was held with the community providers and stated they discussed if they should change the response for medical and fire and decrease auto responses. They also talked about the 911 system. Chief Gerber explained when someone calls 911, it is dispatched by Hennepin County, located in Plymouth and sent out with the call type assigned to that call. That information then goes to the fire dispatcher who puts it out to the fire agencies. Because this is a modified two-stage dispatch system, it is not always the same person who answers the phone and does the dispatching. In addition, different police dispatchers send the information to the police. The information is sent out to the EMS provider by telephone to give the address and type of call. Some calls are sent to EMS for pre-arrival instructions.

Vice Chair Jenkins asked if these calls are occurring in parallel. Chief Gerber stated they are roughly occurring at the same time.

EFD GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

September 26, 2018

Page 8 of 8

Boardmember Fletcher described how the old dispatch system operated, noting this is a new system. Chief Gerber concurred.

Chief Gerber reviewed their discussion about what is best for the person making the call and for the community, the response system, staffing, training levels, equipment as it relates to police, fire and EMS, and next steps. He stated Administrative Specialist Ana took notes of the meeting and will summarize what was discussed.

Chief Gerber stated the two medical providers, fire, police, and dispatch will review the information and provide him with input on CAD event codes from their perspective. He noted Dr. Sipprell, who has prior pre-hospital fire/EMS experience, was also present at the meeting.

Chief Gerber stated he hopes to develop three to four core points about medical response to share with the Board, Operating Committee, the City Councils, to assure all are on the same page. The goal is to provide that report at the November meeting.

Boardmember Miller stated some reports will be boiled down to how it affects service level, response time, and costs to the fire district, which will help the Board.

The Board requested a copy of the PowerPoint presentation.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

10. NEXT MEETING

- A. Regular Board Meeting – November 14, 2018, 6:00 P.M., Station 1**
 - i. (Adjusted for Thanksgiving)**

Vice Chair Jenkins noted the next EFD Regular Board Meeting is scheduled for 6:00 P.M. on November 14, 2018, at Station I.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Miller moved, Fletcher seconded, Adjourning the EFD Governing Board Meeting of September 26, 2018, at 7:12 P.M. Motion passed 3/0.