

BROOKLYN FIRE & EMS DISTRICT BOARD MEETING MINUTES 12/16/2020

Meeting was called to order at 6:38 pm by President Mark O'Brien. Members present were Kim Gruebling and Jim Lunde. Members Brit Springer and John Marx were present via online video conference. Also present were Mason Barber and Dan Dean. Sarah Andrisevic was present via online video conference.

Motion: Gruebling/Lunde to approve minutes of 11/13/2020 meeting with changes requested by Springer. Motion carried.

Gruebling asked how the strategic plan committee is coming along. Springer commented no one has been appointed from the town of Rutland yet, but they are going ahead with setting a meeting up to get it started.

Chief Barber reported the department had 14 calls during November. The department has had 12 fewer calls in 2020 compared to 2019. The new fire truck delivery is behind because of COVID, but they are expecting to pick up the truck at the end of the week. The department held annual elections at the last member meeting, the outcome was the same, there were no changes in positions. They also voted on a new member joining the department, but they have no prior fire or EMS training. The 17th is the final training of the year; the new member is coming into a slow time for training due to COVID.

EMS Director Dean reported the department had a total of 235 calls through the date of this meeting, which is substantially more than any previous year at the same time. It is 32 more calls than any other service year. The department is working with Dane county to get COVID vaccines for the first responders. The department held annual elections the night before and Justin Wicik will be the new EMS Director for 2021-2022. He has 20 years of experience on the department. Cheri Nedderson will be taking over Justin's previous title of maintenance officer. The board expressed their gratitude and thanked EMS Director Dean for his service. He will continue to volunteer at the department and help with the transition.

The District Secretary commented the CARES Act payment had been approved and the district should be receiving a check for the funds.

John Marx stated Congress has not passed any kind of assistance for 2021, or offering additional money through CARES funding. EMS Director Dean doesn't think they will have trouble filing shifts if hazard pay is not offered in 2021. But would like to continue it if they have the opportunity. Marx stated is unlikely they will pay hazard pay in 2021, but would like to hold off until the January meeting to see if Congress passes anything. EMS Director Dean commented the vaccine should be available to the members by the end of the month.

Brit Springer commented there is no hazard pay line item on the 2021 budget and doesn't think they can pay it without all municipalities agreeing and they should go through the proper channels. She would also like to re-evaluate the base pay for volunteers for the next budget. John Marx commented hazard pay is a salary line expense and can be paid from the general salary line. And past practice has established the commission can move money between budget lines as long as we don't exceed the bottom line on the budget. The district agreement also states the commission has exclusive power over compensation.

EMS Director Dean commented the volunteer pay rate of \$2 has been the same for the last 13 years he has been on the department.

Motion: Marx/Lunde to table hazard pay for 2021 vote until the January meeting Motion carried.

Chief Barber commented 2020 has not been a memorable year, its been a fight from beginning to end. Covid is scary, staffing and man-power has been beyond scary. He doesn't feel like he has done enough in his position and there is a lot of work to do. The biggest issue is truly the people. The time has come and something needs to be updated.

Marx thanked Chief Barber for continuing to service. He also commented the departments have been saying for over a year that they need a full time chief to have a supervisor in the station during the weekdays. And is concerned it is only going to get worse. The only reason they do not have a full time chief is the insistence of a strategic plan. He is all for having one but does not think it will change the recommendation of needing a full time chief.

Springer commented the board is supposed to be a team and collaborate together without constantly throwing anyone under the bus. She stated the village has nothing against this department. She would like in 2021 to move forward and agree to work together and the faster they can get to the issues at hand.

EMS Director Dean commented the departments are frustrated there is no sense of urgency to hire a full time chief.

Deana Zentner commented she knows Rutland has created a delay in getting a representative appointed to the strategic planning committee. Emails to the town chair have not been responded to. She will try to do what she can to get someone from Rutland appointed.

Motion: Springer/Gruebling to approve recommendation from Brooklyn Fire Dept. to appoint Mason Barber as Fire Chief for 2021-2022. Motion carried.

Motion: Gruebling/Lunde to approve recommendation from Brooklyn EMS to appoint Justin Wicik as the EMS Director for 2021-2022. Motion carried.

Motion: Gruebling/Lunde to appoint Sarah Andrisevic as the District Secretary/Treasurer for 2021. Motion carried.

The district secretary handed out November financials. She pointed out on the EMS financials the reserve use of \$35,000 added to the salary line on the budget.

Mark O'Brien asked how much extra equipment will need to be purchased for the new fire truck. There was a change order for approx. \$7,700 on the new truck. The truck will also be getting a CAD computer and docking station, CRADLE-point and radios. The total price for all that is uncertain at this time. There are enough funds in the budget available to cover those costs.

The Oath of Office was administered to Chief Barber.

The Oath of Office was administered to EMS Director Wicik.

Chief Barber commented there should be changes made so there would not be a possibility of a new Fire Chief, EMS Director and District Secretary all in the same year. They should have off-setting terms.

Next meeting will be January 20, 2021.

Motion: Gruebling/Springer to adjourn at 8:06 pm. Motion carried.