

## BROOKLYN FIRE & EMS DISTRICT BOARD MEETING MINUTES 09/15/2021

Meeting was called to order at 6:31 pm by President Mark O'Brien. Members present were John Marx, Kim Gruebling, Jim Lunde and Mike Brusberg. Sarah Andrisevic was present via online video conference. Mason Barber and Justin Wicik joined the meeting late.

Motion: Marx/Lunde to approve minutes of 8/11/2021 meeting as written. Motion carried.

No public comments.

Brusberg asked several questions on the fire 2022 budget: equipment new line item, hurst tool test & repair, immunizations, medical supplies, pagers & radios, SCBA testing, . The Fire Chief and EMS Director were on a call and unable to answer the questions. The district secretary commented the hurst test is done annually. O'Brien commented the district tries to replace a couple of pagers/radios each year. Brusberg asked for more information on the retirement accounts for the district. The district secretary commented there are 2 different retirement accounts set up. Fire has a CD in which the district puts money into every year and the interest earned is paid out to eligible members. Both departments participate in the service award program facilitated through the state with the help of the village's clerk. Brusberg asked several questions on the EMS 2022 budget: two office supplies line items, IT support, station supplies and sprinkler test. The district secretary commented EMS has a shared office expense account with fire and the other is just for EMS items. She also commented IT support is likely for help with any issues with any of the software the departments use. She commented the station supplies/maintenance account on the EMS financial statements each month were combined prior to her time and she just left it, but will break them out individually to reflect the budget line items more clearly. Brusberg asked how they came up with the numbers for the full time chief compensation. Marx commented the salary is \$55,000, which is about \$26 per hour. The rest of it is insurance and retirement, based on discussions with employee trust funds last year. Marx made the assumption that in order to attract someone with professional experience as a fire fighter and EMT is already part of the Wisconsin Retirement System. Retirement is 6.75% of the salary and the rest is health insurance.

Bob Postel asked about the town of Rutland's percentage of the EMS budget. Marx clarified the percentage includes both EMS and Fire's share. Postal also asked about the contingency funds and that any money left over at the end of the year just goes right into the contingency funds. Marx said that is correct, the amount has built up over decades and the district has consistently tried to spend it down over the years. Gruebling clarified there are two different funds, a contingency and unallocated. The contingency is 30% of the budget and the unallocated is unused. The district has discussed putting the unallocated funds towards a purchase of a new ambulance in a few years. Sue Williams asked if the 30% reserve is used annually. Marx commented they just started the 30% reserve a few years ago. Williams asked if they have considered reducing the reserve to 20% and draw down the unallocated to mitigate raising taxes. She also commented other departments Rutland contracts with gives the town refunds if there is money left over. She understands how it happened, but would like to prevent the buildup of unallocated funds from happening again in the future. Marx commented the 30% reserve was decided on because that's what most municipalities have for reserves and taxes haven't been raised to generate that reserve. He also commented they discussed paying the money back, but the town of Brooklyn said no, keep it for the ambulance. There was discussion on the difficulties of paying back the money since each year the municipalities pay a different percentage. Sue Williams recommended keeping track starting in 2021. Gruebling commented he is in favor of keeping taxes down by spending down the money, but the municipalities didn't

agree on how to use it last year. Deana Zentner commented she completely concurs with Sue Williams. She wants some assurance in either the contract or some language in writing that the unallocated funds are mutually agreed on by the municipalities for a major equipment purchase. O'Brien commented it is the intention of the board to use the money towards a new ambulance. Brusberg commented he would rather have the appropriate rainy day fund and have the right amount of cash on hand if something breaks and they don't have to wait make sure all five municipalities agree. Marx commented the district cannot borrow money; the municipalities have to on the behalf of the district.

Marx asked to add introductions to the joint meeting agenda since there are a lot of new people on the boards this year.

Motion: Marx/Brusberg to nominate Kim Gruebling as chair for the joint municipality meeting. Motion carried.

Marx nominated Mark O'Brien for District Board President. Hearing no other nominations, Marx/Gruebling motioned to close the nominations and cast a unanimous vote for Mark O'Brien. Motion carried. O'Brien accepted the position.

Gruebling nominated John Marx for District Board Vice President. Hearing no other nominations, Gruebling/Lunde motioned to close the nominations and cast a unanimous vote for John Marx. Motion carried. Marx accepted the position.

Motion: Marx/Gruebling to forward changes to the district agreement to implement the full time fire chief. Motion carried.

Motion: Marx/Gruebling to forward changes to the district agreement related to joint meeting. Motion carried.

Dan Dean spoke on the need to install an airline dryer in the compressed airline system.

John Marx spoke on charging a fee for fire calls. Dan Dean commented he does not think it's a good idea. Gruebling commented it's complicated with the law right now. Brusberg commented he is not in favor of charging.

Motion: Brusberg/Gruebling to not charge a fee for fire calls. Motion carried.

There was discussion on payment of December hazard pay. Marx suggested it be paid out of unallocated funds. Brusberg asked for some more clarification on the unallocated balances, specifically on the July financials with the sweep account having \$246,000 and then hearing there is only \$178,000 of unallocated funds. The district secretary commented the sweep account has all the money received from the municipalities in it and there is still half the year left for expenses. It is better to calculate the unallocated funds at the end of the year once we know what was spent. The \$178,000 is calculated from the end of 2020.

Motion: Marx/Brusberg to approve payment of hazard pay up to \$6,000 for December hours. Motion carried.

The district secretary handed out August financials. She reported the district had to reapply for a next tax exempt certificate, which has been received. She also commented she switched to a payroll processing system, so members can get all of their pay information online. She commented on keeping track of the unallocated funds left over each year and it has been accounted for and going forward it would be easy to track.

Chief Barber commented he received an estimate of \$1,845 for the dryer and \$275 for the line, plus installation from a local plumber.

Motion: Lunde/Marx to allocate \$3,000 for instillation of airline dryer in compressed airline system. Motion carried.

Chief Barber reported the department responded to 14 calls during August. They are 10 calls ahead of 2020 as of September 1<sup>st</sup>. There was 1 mutual aid call during the month. With the mask mandate back in Dane county, they have enough PPE for everyone. He commented to cost of PPE has really increased significantly. Hwy 14 & 92 roundabout construction has begun and with Biglow being closed, they will have to find different routes to take. The department has 2 members taking the pumper/operator class in Oregon. There are 3 new members taking the firefighter 1 class.

EMS Director Wicik reported the department had 25 runs so far this last month. This time last year, they were at 152 calls and this year they are at 189 calls. Total calls for 2020 were 242 and they are on track to be at 268 calls for 2021. They are averaging .74 calls a day. There was 1 mutual aid call in the city of Stoughton. Over half of the calls during the last reporting period were during cover by the LTE day time staff. There were 27 out of service hours during the month. 2 of the LTE members have accepted full time positions at other departments. But one of them is still picking up as many shifts as they can. They have received a couple applicants for day time staffing.

There was discussion on the questions Brusberg asked at the beginning of the meeting with the Fire Chief and EMS Director present to answer them. Chief Barber discussed the equipment new line item and the turn out gear line item. Last year, the department was looking at purchasing extrication tools for the new fire truck, which run about \$30,000. They did purchase some demo ones for cheaper. Also the hydraulic hurst tools they do have are getting old. He'd like to purchase 3 sets of turn out gear a year for \$2,600 a set (not including boots, helmet or gloves). The fire department used to purchase and keep track of their own medical supplies, but now when they need supplies they just get what they need from EMS. The medical supplies line item it just supposed to transfer over from EMS to fire but unclear if that has happened.

Bob Postel asked if there is any way the townships themselves who pay into the district can have a voice in the budget decisions or is that what their representatives are for? Marx commented on a month to month basis, yes the representative represents you on everything the district does. Marx goes to the town of Brooklyn's board meetings every month and tells them what the issues are and they tell him what they want him to do. There is a joint meeting every year to approve the budget.

Gruebling asked the district secretary/treasurer to put out the agenda for the joint meeting.

Next district meeting will be October 20, 2021.

Motion: Gruebling/Lunde to adjourn at 8:50 pm. Motion carried.