

**Northwestern Fire District
Organizational Meeting
April 8, 2020
Liberty Township Hall, Raymond, Ohio**

Because of the Coronavirus, several members were added by a Zoom Conference Call because of the Social Distancing encouraged by Governor DeWine.

Roll Call: Jerry McClary, Dave Thomas, Chad Heminger, Beth Marshall

Zoom call: Logan Rife, Chief Lloyd Segner, Chip Comstock and Tina Marshall.

The organizational meeting of the Northwestern Fire District was called to order at 7:10 PM by Jerry McClary. Dave Thomas, Assistant Fire Chief was the facilitator for this meeting.

The mission statement for Northwestern Fire District is: "The implementation of the Northwestern Fire District will continue seamless operations with community involvement."

Liberty Fire Department will continue using money from Taylor and York Contract money.

Northwestern Fire District will become active July 1, 2020 in an administrative and preventive role with full services for fire and EMS commencing on January 1, 2021. On July 1st, we can start getting the tasks completed.

Around the first week in May, we can open up our checking account at Richwood Banking Company to become active on July 1, 2020.

Chip Comstock:

- on July 1st, he needs to write up a contract for Liberty to continue fire and emergency services to the district.
- EIN number
- UAN system
- InsuranceF
- Bonding account w/insurance agency for fiscal officer
- Contracts
- Full Operational contract
- Lease agreements of the existing fire department building.

For operational purposes, all three townships should be involved if the board decides to put a levy on the ballot. Dave Thomas suggested a levy be put on May 2021 for the district to be collected in 2022. The money from townships will not be moved until the levy passes. Step by step.

Dave sent members an email of the implementational plans. We reviewed each sheet on the task list. Chad Heminger is here as an Administrative Assistant. Dave asked if we thought the task list was doable.

- Logan Rife said yes and he thinks it's a bold plan.
- Chip Comstock – he agrees with Logan in that it is a bold step but steps are good and workable. This has been very well set up and thought out. This is good. A typical timeframe is 90-180 days. Chip likes what has been done and where we are with the list.
- Jerry McClary and Beth Marshall are both ok with the task lists.

Fiscal Officer for Northwestern Fire District.

- A fiscal officer for a township is an elected position.
- A fiscal officer for a district is an appointed position and answers to the Fire District Board.
- Duties that the Board wants to give to the Fiscal Officer are:
 - Record and distribute minutes and financial reports at each meeting
 - Manage resources and funds of the district
 - Budgets
 - Purchase Orders
 - Work with County Auditor
 - Must have UAN accounting and government accounting
 - Can assign specific duties and prioritize workload
 - Fiscal officer can have duties from the Fire Chief or Assistant Fire Chief.
 - Fiscal Officer will report to the Fire Chief
 - An Administrative assistant can be hired by the fiscal officer to be a file clerk, make copies of minutes and financial reports, other jobs at the discretion of the fiscal officer. No fire experience is needed and would probably be a \$10/hour job.
- Dave Thomas asked:
 - How do we appoint a fiscal officer?
 - Do we post the job?
 - The Board has someone in mind to ask if interested in the opportunity
 - Would like Chip to send Dave a job description if we decide to advertise
 - Logan said we can pursue a person and check on their interest from them. Would ask Jeff Rea, Tina Marshall to support that person if need be. Logan feels that Jeff has plenty on his plate and we need to get someone to take that job and let Tina and Jeff assist as needed,
 - Beth will contact Alison Hamilton and get back to the board with her response.
 - Chip will get the budget information and job descriptions to Dave. Salary range \$12,000 - \$15,000.

Research Fire Department and State ID

- Chip says if the district doesn't do anything – you must get the state ID. However the state ID is not needed until January 1st.

Policy and Procedure Manuals

- We have a fire department policy & procedure book
- We have a district policy & procedure book. Is this correct?
- Chip says there are three groups:
 - Operational procedure (how to put out a fire)
 - Township & Fire Department should already have Policy & Procedure book re: ethics, dtravel, vacation, etc.
 - Operation of district itself – operational training

Dave asked Chip what really needs completed first.

- Per Chip, the things that take time such as sick time, vacation, comp time; benefits need to be in place by December 2020.
- Dave Thomas said he would take on this policy & procedure assignment as a personal deal and he has a great team of fire fighters that will assist.
- Chip said that we need to know what to do if we have a request for a union contract. (Per Dave there are two departments unionized now in Union County. Marysville & Jerome.

The Hiring Process

We need a Fire Chief

- We need 3 Lieutenants
- What comes first? The Fire Chief
- The job of Fire Chief will become a full time position on January 1, 2021
- The Chief needs to oversee the hiring process of the 3 Lieutenants
- The Chief needs to work with the board
- The Chief will be the liason with the Board and 3 Lieutenants and they will report to the Chief
- The lack of success will rest on the Chief. It will be hard to fill the footsteps of a great chief like Chief Lloyd Segner!
- When you interview a Chief, the Board & Firefighters need to block out 1 ½ - 2 hours with each candidate and have questions ready.

Logan said he would be happy to work on this and have fire fighters look at what we are looking for in a Chief and Chad will add from a fire fighter persepective.

Chad and Dave will put together a list and then Logan will review and present to the Board. Chief Segner's insight and input will b invaluable!

Banking Account

- The District doesn't become effective until July 1, 2020 Have account set up prior to July 1, 2020 at the Richwood Banking Company.

Insurance

- Per Chip, we can talk to an agent but on
 - Need a liability policy
 - Workers comp needed? If we only have one employee?
- Fiscal Officer Bonding needs done
 - ORC dictates the townships
 - Fire District amount is determined by the Board
 - Budget – First 6 months will be small \$50,000-\$100,000 This amount will increase in January as it is more about cash flow.
- Bond – its for fiscal officer if they do not do their work, in case we have to hire someone to recreate the meetings minutes. We need to bond the Fiscal Officers and typically the Board of Directors.
 - Need to get bids from local insurance companies. Liberty has insurance with Shearer Banks; Taylor insures with OTARMA. Will check with Nuckles-Scnert; Nationwide; State Farm, Sullivan
 - Beth will get bids from insurance agencies has samples and will send to Dave. Get a couple agents you can trust

Agreements

- Need contracts/agreements drawn up for now through 2021
- Asset transfer agreement / rolling assets
- This is the most important agreement of all things. Asset transfers.
- When do we move these things?
- Transfer after July 1, 2020 and put \$10,000 in the checking account.

December 31 – Liberty Fire Department needs to keep monies in their account. Example: Say Liberty fuels up all trucks in December but you don't get bills for 30 days. Liberty needs to put some money back for funds after the fact.

Logan said we need to do one item at a time – step by step

Chad suggested \$10,000 on 7/1/2020 to set up the bank account. We will need money for the chiefs salary and fiscal officer. Jan. 1, 2021 will roll \$1.2 million over to the district from Liberty. Don't move all the money at once. Need to have 90 days of operations at least. 2 years out – will need to transfer all money.

We need to keep the schedule/task list moving. Put a budget together and meet with the fiscal officer at township hall.

Tasks assigned at this meeting:

Logan expectations of Fire Chief

Beth talk to fiscal officer and check with insurance companies re: bonding

Jerry Asset transfer and budgeting

Dave & Staff will work on Policy & Procedures for operations for the district

Chip will provide:

- Fiscal officer survey
- Job description for Fiscal Officer
- Policy & Procedures direction to Dave
- Insurance quotes
- Transfer of assets

Hire a Fire Chief & Fiscal Officer. Dave Thomas will act as the Fire Chief for interim period.

The next meeting will be April 23, 2020 at 7:00 at Liberty Township Hall.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Marshall