

# NORTHWESTERN JOINT FIRE DISTRICT

February 8, 2023

Minutes

The Northwestern Joint Fire District Board met in Regular Session at 7:00 p.m.. The Board opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Logan Rife, representative of York Township, Ms. Beth Marshall, representative of Taylor Township, Mr. Jerry McClary, representative of Liberty Township, Mr. Bill Lowe, representative of Leesburg Township and Mrs. Allison Hamilton, Fiscal Officer were in attendance. Chief Merrick and Kevin Dotson were also in attendance. Mr. Tom Paplaczyk, Strategic Business Services was in attendance.

Mr. Paplaczyk of Strategic Business Services went over the Group Health Insurance rates. The renewal for the original plan was 13 %; however, because of the current census, he received a couple of plans with a significant decrease. He went over the traditional plans and a self-funded 'like' plan. The Trustees asked questions about the benefits and the plans were explained. The renewal is March 1<sup>st</sup>. The Board thanked Mr. Paplaczyk for his time.

The Board reviewed the January 11, 2023 minutes.

- I. Ms. Marshall made a motion to accept the minutes; Mr. Lowe seconded the motion. All were in favor with Mr. Rife abstaining.

Ms. Hamilton provided the Board with the 2023 January Bank Reconciliation, 2022 year end financial report and notes, these have been submitted to the State. Payroll, accounts payable were presented in the Board's packet.

Ms. Hamilton noted there is no unusual expenses for the daily operations; there has been an increase in payroll and account payables which is due to the expansion and staffing of the District. She is working with the Leesburg Fiscal Officer to coordinate bills for the Leesburg Station.

There was discussion of the STAR Ohio account; however the District has not yet received the monies from Liberty and Taylor Townships. These funds would be moved to a STAR Ohio account. Mr. Lowe reported that Leesburg will have approximately \$178,000 to contribute to the District when it is time.

Ms. Hamilton presented the Oath of Office to Mr. Lowe and Mr. Rife and the Board was presented with the updated signature card for the Richwood Bank.

- II. Mr. Rife made a motion to accept the Fiscal Officer's Financial Report; including the Purchase Orders/Blanket Certificates, payments and payroll. Ms. Marshall seconded the motion. All were in favor.

There was discussion about the Records Retention Policy. Mr. Badenhop reached out to Mr. Lowe to answer a couple of questions. Mr. Badenhop will work on the policy in the next couple of months.

Chief Merrick presented his report to the Board. The Department responded to 57 calls with 49 calls being in the District. There was 100% adequate staffing to handle the run volume. There were 4 Full Time staff hired in January. He and Lt. Morey are working on the HR platform to get it up and running. Chief Merrick continues to work on the interstation communications.

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There was discussion of the Leesburg Station modifications. The County wants the District to add a fire suppression system to the plans and the sleeping quarters need to be modified. The Board recognizes safety is a priority and the plans will need to be reworked and modified for a solution. The Board agreed to use the funding from Leesburg to put towards the Station modifications following the one year agreement. There was discussion of the possibility of an addition. Chief Merrick will continue to work on the plans.

Highlighted activities for January: Engine 291 is out for refabrication; Tanker 291 is out of service due to a failing fuel pump. The Chief has received quotes for the hose rack, gas monitors (to detect cyanide), radios for the Leesburg Station and gear bags for transport of gear between stations. The radio template is complete. An account has been set up with Smart Oil. Grants have been submitted for SCBA, Exhaust System and a Tanker.

In the Chief's packet was an account overview from Medicount.

The Chief discussed security measures for the Raymond and Leesburg Stations.

The Department will be holding a Medic refresher for \$300 per medic. The basics will obtain their CE's for no cost.

Chief Merrick reported that HB 509 passed and the state officials have the wording of accredited and certified flipped and should be working on correcting the error.

Chief Merrick discussed with the Board about working with Allen Township Fire Department for pack swap for interoperability and the District's policy for personal vehicle response. There was discussion of obtaining an additional passenger/station vehicle for the District.

The Chief requested the District to cover up to \$2000 in education reimbursement for eligible Part Time members.

- III. Mr. Lowe made a motion for the NWJFD work with AFD for the pack swap in order to allow for interoperability of equipment. Mr. Rife seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- IV. Mr. Rife made a motion for the District to reimburse education expenses; up to \$2000 for eligible Part Time members with the understanding the Part Time member serve the District for at least 2 years following reimbursement. Should the 2 year requirement not be met the member will be responsible for repayment to the District. Mr. Lowe seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- V. Mr. Lowe made a motion with Mr. Rife seconding; Chief Cook may use his personal vehicle to respond on calls until a District vehicle is made available to him. All were in favor.
- VI. Mr. McClary made a motion to accept the Chief's report. Ms. Marshall seconded the motion. All were in favor.

The Board reviewed the Health information provided by Mr. Paplaczky.

- VII. Mr. McClary made a motion to elect the coverage recommended by Mr. Paplaczky; E102, 0% deductible; \$1250 single/\$2500 family out of pocket maximum. The employees keep the

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TASC reimbursement card for the out of pocket. Mr. Lowe seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Ms. Hamilton will advise Mr. Paplczyk and his office of the election.

Mr. Lowe made a motion to go into executive session to discuss personnel. Mr. Rife seconded the motion. The Board went into executive session at 10:08 p.m.. All were in favor. At 10:17 p.m. Mr. Lowe made a motion to exit executive session and resume the regular Board meeting. Mr. Rife seconded the motion. All were in favor.

The Board commended Chief Merrick for his navigation of the District to date and his work on the merge of the additional Township.

VIII. Mr. Lowe made a motion with Mr. Rife seconding; at the next pay the District will give Chief Merrick a \$2000 completion bonus.

IX. Mr. Rife made a motion with Ms. Marshall seconding; at the next pay the District will increase the Fiscal Officer's salary 5% and be paid a \$1000 completion bonus.

The Chief and the Board discussed future salary and tabled the discussion for a later date. The Chief will provide the members with a compensation spreadsheet so they may review and make a decision.

As there was no further business; Mr. Lowe made a motion to adjourn the meeting, with Ms. Marshall seconding the motion. All were in favor. The Meeting was adjourned at 10:31 p.m..

Respectfully Submitted By:

Allison M. Hamilton, Fiscal Officer

Northwestern Joint Fire District

Reviewed:

\_\_\_\_\_ Logan Rife

\_\_\_\_\_ Beth Marshall

\_\_\_\_\_ Jerry McClary

\_\_\_\_\_ Bill Lowe