

NORTHWESTERN JOINT FIRE DISTRICT

February 20, 2025

Minutes

The Northwestern Joint Fire District Board met in Regular Session at 6:00 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 Ms. Allison Hamilton, Fiscal Officer were in attendance. Ms. Amy Beeney, District Administrator, I. Chief Hawkins and Asst. Chief Cook along with FF Allison Collins were also in attendance. It is noted this meeting was advertised in the Marysville Journal Tribune and posted at all locations.

The Board reviewed the January 8, 2025 meeting minutes.

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

Mr. Lowe pointed out the VFDF committee would be comprised of: Two elected officials, two fire department members and a community member.

Ms. Hamilton provided the Board with the 2025 January Bank Reconciliation. Payroll, accounts payable were presented in the Board's packet. Ms. Hamilton will meet with the District Admin., I. Chief & Asst. Chief upon return from vacation to go over the 2025 final appropriations.

Ms. Hamilton presented the Board with the Group Health Insurance renewal. She along with the District Admin. and I. Chief met with the broker. If the District would elect to continue with the current plan without any changes, there would be an 18% increase. Ms. Hamilton reviewed the other quotes, which would increase the District's cost anywhere from 68% up to 164%, which were unacceptable. Ms. Hamilton provided the recommendation of continuing the MMO product from 90 degrees with a \$7000/\$14000 deductible; implementing a GAP alternative to cover the deductible. Both plans would save 8% . Ms. Hamilton advised that she would also recommend the plan with the 8% savings and then add the HRA benefit up to \$2500 to assist members in unforeseen circumstances.

Ms. Hamilton advised a Permanent Part Time member had enrolled in the Ohio Deferred Compensation program. Ms. Beeney advised she had contacted Mr. Tabler from Deferred Comp and he advised it was a Board's decision to allow members to enroll. After further discussion, it was believed this would be a beneficial offering to Permanent Part Time members as they will have a consistent work schedule and pay. This can be monitored to ensure the members are able to meet withholding requirements.

It was determined the Permanent Part Time had not had comp accrual credited. There was discussion about providing the Permanent Part Time members 24 hours of Personal Leave on a one time basis. The Board previously moved to eliminate the accumulation of comp time from the policy (calculations were not clear and the process was cumbersome to ensure correct accruals)

The District received the invoice from WDC for architectural design phase services in the amount of \$98,987.09. After discussion, the Board wanted more time to review the details before approving. The invoice was tabled.

- 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.

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- III. Mr. Rife made a motion that the District elect the 90 Degrees/MMO plan with the \$7000/\$14000 deductible; including the enrollment into the GAP program and providing member with an HRA of \$2500. Mr. McClary seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- IV. Mr. Rife made a motion that the District offer membership to the Ohio Deferred Compensation Program to Permanent Part Time members. Mr. McClary seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- V. Mr. Lowe made a motion to provide one time 24 hours of Personal Leave Time to the Permanent Part Time members. Ms. Marshall seconded the motion. All were in favor.

USDA Application Discussion

As advertised, the Board made available to the public the opportunity to discuss and review the NWJFD's application for a USDA construction loan.

Ms. Beeney provided an update on the USDA loan process. She was advised the paperwork is at the State level for review and to her knowledge all information that has been requested has been submitted including additional information on PAR from WDC. She will forward a copy of the minutes from the February 20, 2025 meeting.

An updated Builders Risk was received from Rhinehart (Ohio Plan) along with a notice of rate increases from GeoTech.

Moving on to other District business, Ms. Beeney advised she attended the Tri-Township meeting, training on OSHA recordkeeping, met with Phoenix Fire. She also attended a training from Medicount as it relates to patient signature compliance. Ms. Beeney updated the labor law posters at all sites and will be working with Strategic Business Services on a benefit platform called EASE. She completed on-boarding for 5 new Part Time members and posted job openings at both stations along with advertising in the Marysville Journal. She wrote a letter for R&L Consultants as it relates to the services rendered to the District. Ms. Beeney provided the Board with her scheduled time off.

Ms. Beeney provided the Board with a resignation provided by Lt. Rob Morey. The Board accepted the resignation.

- VI. Mr. Rife made a motion to accept the District Administrator's report. Mr. McClary seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- VII. Mr. McClary made a motion to approve the updated lease agreement with Leesburg Township. Mr. Rife seconded the motion. All were in favor; with Mr. Lowe abstaining.
- VIII. Mr. Rife made a motion that in the next 90 days, as per the training provided by Medicount regarding patient signature compliance, the District performs a self-review and audit to ensure compliance. He appointed Assistant Chief Cook to perform the compliance audit. Mr. McClary seconded the motion. All were in favor.

I.Chief Hawkins present the Board with his report. He pointed out the runs, although are a few numbers down, are consistent. Imagetrend is work and the reports are fixed. He has SAM & FEMA access and assigned additional personnel to the platforms. The Ambulance Impact Grant has been submitted. The grant writer for the Magnagrip exhaust recommended bidding out the project for the FEMA grant award.

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I.Chief Hawkins presented the Board with policy and rule changes and updates along with changes in the Lieutenant job description. He has reviewed with the Full Time members driving safety and vehicle operations. He and Asst. Chief Cook are going over further training options. Mr. Rife suggested the following be added into the description of a leader: "A leader that empowers, equips, and organizes a unit to reflect the directives provided by the fire chief".

He was invited to speak with North Union High School about careers in Fire & EMS. A grant application was applied for grain bin rescue equipment and training; the grant is sponsored by Nationwide.

Discussion on the web and Facebook pages. He met with the Sheriff to discuss communications, incident response, active shooter training, public info. officer; the meeting was productive.

There was discussion of a couple of station vehicles and their purpose.

I.Chief Hawkins, Asst. Chief Cook, District Admin., Fiscal Officer met with Phoenix Fire to review a program entailing rental of turn out gear. There are no long term obligations.

The generator on Engine 292 has been repaired, the mobile radio is installed on Medic 292. There was discussion of radios being installed into the Chief's vehicles and quotes were provided.

The training mannequin is being used. The air bag controller is scheduled to be shipped April 11th.

Asst. Chief Cook presented a quote for phone service provider which included internet. A tools list was provided to Harbor Freight and to NAPA. Harbor Freight quoted \$2068.58 and NAPA quoted \$2018.46. Asst. Chief Cook provided the Board with the promotional process outline utilizing a third party to conduct interview & testing of the candidates. The total cost would be \$7850.00

FF Michael Behrendt will be moving from Full Time to Part Time; this will leave 4 Full Time openings in the District.

Members of the Department went to the following training: Officer symposium, PIO training and Fire Safety Inspector.

The Zoll maintenance contract has been renewed.

Asst. Chief Cook will be covering EMS Coordinator duties.

- IX. Mr. McClary made a motion to approve the I.Chief's report. Ms. Marshall seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- X. Mr. Lowe made a motion to table the quotes for vehicle mounted cameras. Mr. Rife seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- XI. Mr. Lowe made a motion to sell the Black Ford and continue utilizing the Chevy Pickup truck. Mr. McClary seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- XII. Mr. Lowe made a motion to approve a 3 month trial of Turn Out Gear rental from Phoenix Fire. Mr. Rife seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- XIII. Mr. Rife made a motion to approve the policy and rule changes; also adding PALS and "see wage scale". Mr. McClary seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- XIV. Mr. Lowe made a motion to approve the updated Lieutenant job description. Ms. Marshall seconded the motion. All were in favor.

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- XV. Mr. Rife made a motion to approve the NAPA quote for the tools in the amount of \$2018.46. Mr. McClary seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- XVI. Mr. Lowe made a motion to approve changing phone/internet vendors to Teligent. Mr. Rife seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- XVII. Ms. Marshall made a motion to approve the NWJFD promotional process with third party coordination. Mr. Rife seconded the motion. All were in favor.

At 9:24 p.m. Mr. Rife made a motion to enter into executive session to discuss personnel. Mr. McClary seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. Rife made a motion to exit executive session and reconvene the regular session of the NWJFD Board meeting. Mr. Lowe seconded the motion. All were in favor. The Board went back to regular session at 10:46 p.m..

As there was no further business; Ms. Marshall made a motion to adjourn the meeting, with Mr. Lowe seconding the motion. All were in favor. The Meeting was adjourned at 10:49 p.m..

Respectfully Submitted By:

Allison M. Hamilton, Fiscal Officer

Northwestern Joint Fire District

Reviewed:

_____ Logan Rife

_____ Beth Marshall

_____ Jerry McClary

_____ Bill Lowe