

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Northwest Homer FPD
Minutes of January 22, 2024

CALL TO ORDER – by Trustee Flemming at 8:00a.m.

PLEDGE – lead by Trustee Flemming.

ROLL CALL: Deputy Chief Fonfara, Attorney Flaherty, Trustee Flemming, Trustee Spontak, Trustee Kuzma by phone, Accountant Howard, Secretary Olisar, and Chief Vrba presiding over the district in his final role as Chief for Northwest Homer FPD! The board established a quorum. Others present, Lts. Windberg and Pucel.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – None

ACCEPT/APPROVE MINUTES– of December 18, 2023 – Trustee Spontak motioned as presented, Trustee Flemming 2nd, discussions; all in favored – MC.

ACCEPT/APPROVE - FINANCIAL REPORTS – for December 2023 – Accountant Howard briefed the board on said financials presented; Q&A session followed. Trustee Flemming motioned, Trustee Spontak 2nd, discussions; all in favored – MC.

CHIEFS REPORTS – Chief Vrba briefed the trustees with his operations for the month.

Personnel/Other –

- Total calls for 2023 – 2148: 1578 EMS / 570 Fire – 124 over last year.
- Chief Vrba dispersed & discussed his sheets of annual stats: structure losses, apparatus reports, Victorian responses, I-355 responses, Trouble & Fire response calls, history of calls, bureau/inspections.
- Lt. Pucel added input on the EMS runs and destinations with patient transports.
- Chief Vrba hired another part time ff/paramedic: his orientation is complete and filling open shifts.
- Deputy Chief Fonfara who will take over as Chief on February 1, 2024, will move forward and send out a letter to the 1st candidate on the full-time eligibility list. The board has no objections.
- The Lieutenant's list is complete and posted. Four candidates tested for the position; 1 passed the written test - Jonathon Roth.
- Lt. Bryan Windberg was promoted to Deputy Chief, and Jonathon Roth promoted to Lieutenant: both will be sworn in at the district meeting on 2/19/24 as well as the next full-time firefighter. On February 26th the two Lieutenants' ranks and salaries will be adjusted.
- Illinois American Water representatives came out to the station to deliver the \$1000 in grant revenue to the Chiefs.
- 1726 will be listed for sale on the web.
- Deputy Chief Fonfara added his history and time working with Chief Vrba.

Buildings –

- Lt. Windberg is acquiring quotes for a ladder for the hose tower and railing around the HVAC unit.
- All the projects are complete except for the coping on the edges of the roof at a cost of approximately 14,000.00.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT –

- The Illinois supreme court ruled on the existing pension case & article 3: both were upheld.
- The General Assembly met and filed bills with no passing of any yet. The next session will be again in February. Of interest to the fire district are three bills: 1 – to increase bidding from 20 to 30K: 2 –

clarify that fire districts can set aside funds for EMS specialty teams: 3 – the bill that would take us out of the paid leave act. More information to follow next month.

- The CPI was released – 3.4%.
- Attorney Flaherty will contact Victorian Village regarding the voluntary annual payment.

TRUSTEES REPORT –

- Trustee Flemming asked why we go by a June 1 budget year instead of annual? Chief Vrba stated we have always had May 31st as he believes due to revenues received during that period. Attorney Flaherty added input.
- Trustee Flemming thanked Chief Vrba for his dedicated time and service with Northwest Homer – 48 years – 15 years as Chief.

OLD BUSINESS –

Chiefs Severance Package and current contract - motion made by Trustee Flemming to approve the part time position as Bureau chief to Ken Vrba effective 2/1/24, Trustee Spontak 2nd, all in favored – MC. Motion made by Trustee Spontak to authorize Chief Vrba to have continued health insurance coverage for his spouse until November 30, 2024, using his accrued sick leave bank, Trustee Flemming 2nd, all in favored – MC.

NEW BUSINESS –

- Review/Approve November 14, 2023, closed session minutes, motion to approve & keep closed by Trustee Flemming, Trustee Spontak 2nd, discussions; all in favored – MC.
- Review/Approve December 18, 2023, closed session minutes as amended, motion to approve & keep closed by Trustee Flemming, Trustee Spontak 2nd, discussions; all in favored – MC.
- Review/Approve December 18, 2023, Special Meeting minutes, motion to approve & release by Trustee Flemming, Trustee Spontak 2nd, discussions; all in favored – MC.
- Review/Approve December 18, 2023, Special Meeting closed minutes, motion to approve & keep closed by Trustee Flemming, Trustee Spontak 2nd, discussions; all in favored – MC.
- Review/Approve Ottosen Law Firm New Engagement Letter for Legal Services, motioned by Trustee Flemming, Trustee Spontak 2nd, discussions; Attorney Flaherty briefed the board on the fee changes: \$10.00 per hour increase and scrapping the retainer fee: these changes will take effect in February 2024 and will remain in place until the end of 2025: Q&A followed; all in favored – MC.
- Review/Approve New Chiefs 3-year contract commencing February 1, 2024, for Todd Fonfara as amended, motioned by Trustee Flemming, Trustee Spontak 2nd, discussions; all in favored roll call: 3 Ayes – MC.
- Upcoming Promotions - Lt. Windberg and FF/Paramedic Jonathon Roth – Deputy Chief Fonfara briefed the board on the upcoming changes and timeline with the ranks in the department and when they will all take effect: Q&A followed.

CLOSED SESSION – Trustee Flemming moved to go to closed session at 8:49am to discuss personnel matters, Trustee Spontak 2nd, all in favored – MC. At 9:13am Trustee Flemming motioned to reconvene the regular board of trustee meeting for January 22, 2024, Trustee Spontak 2nd, all in favored – MC.

Next Trustee Meeting – February 19, 2024, at 8:00a.m.

ADJOURNMENT - Motioned by Trustee Flemming, Trustee Spontak 2nd, January 22, 2024, regular trustee meeting adjourned at 9:15a.m. – MC.


Respectfully submitted - Trustee Spontak – Trustee/Secretary

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