

St. Tammany Fire Protection District No. 1

Board of Commissioners

Regular Meeting Minutes October 16, 2012

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

The pledge of allegiance and prayer were given.

Roll Call: Chairman Kline and Commissioners Rich, Risley and Brackett were present.
Commissioner Kingston was absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES-

Commissioner Brackett made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 18, 2012 meeting. Commissioner Rich seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Commissioner Risley made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 1, 2012 Special Meeting. Commissioner Rich seconded the motion. The motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS- (none)

NEW BUSINESS -

A) Chief's Report-

a.) Years of Service Recognitions- (Postponed)

b.) Approval of the 2013 Proposed Budget- Chief Hess stated that he spoke to Commissioner Kingston, and that in the event that he could not attend this meeting, (he had another budget meeting) he stated that it was his desire to table the approval of the 2013 budget.

Chief Hess stated that during last month's meeting, several budget items were reviewed and one of the biggest items is on the effects of paycheck adjustments. He further stated that two of the biggest budget items are the request for the reinstatement of the 1.6% and the employer portion of health insurance that was passed on to the employees last year.

Chief Hess stated that in order to compensate for these items, while keeping it revenue neutral, that the department has received rebates for insurance performance, as well as a health insurance renewal with no increase.

Chairman Kline stated that he is ready to approve the budget. He further stated that while we recently lost a fire station, the administration has satisfied him in demonstrating that the funds are there and available. Additionally, he stated that the budget was developed well within the available millage and parcel fee funds.

Commissioner Risley inquired into when the 2012 budget was adopted. Chief Hess stated that it was adopted in November.

Commissioner Risley stated that at the Special Meeting held, two Commissioners were not present to get all of the information presented (regarding Station 14), and asked if they have been informed of what the initial costs will be, as well as that the funds will roll into the 2013 budget. Chief Hess stated that the costs are accounted for and the budget currently has over \$900,000 that has been identified for station improvements, PIAL relocations, etc. Chief Hess further stated that those funds can be utilized, as they are within the scope of what the fund account was created for. Commissioner Risley stated that she knew that two Commissioners were concerned with taking money that was set aside, or projected for station relocation.

Commissioner Risley stated that it was her understanding, that when the budget workshop was conducted, changes were made at that time and that there were no changes made since then. Chief Kaufmann confirmed that there were no additional changes made. Commissioner Risley also stated that since the budget workshop, the situation with Station 14 arose, as well as the notification that ad valorem revenue will likely go down. Commissioner Risley expressed her opposition in voting on the budget at this time.

Commissioner Risley stated that she sent Chief Hess a list of budget questions and has not heard anything back.

Commissioner Rich stated that he would be in favor of passing the budget; however, he was not present at the Special meeting where the building issues were discussed, and it is a concern to him. Commissioner Rich stated that if there is a place in the proposed budget, where something may be done, the Chief of Operations position could be postponed.

Mr. Waniewski stated that he addressed most of Commissioner Risley's concerns, while other answers should come from the district.

With regard to the Station 14 rebuild, Chief Kaufmann clarified that it would cost approximately \$650,000. He further stated that after insurance money proceeds, he would need to request up to \$350,000.

Chief Kaufmann clarified that the "Training relocation" line item in the budget was the removal of Station 17, and the relocation of it to the Training Academy.

Commissioner Risley made a motion to table the approval of the budget (Resolution 2012-032). Commissioner Rich seconded the motion.

Commissioner Rich requested another budget workshop.

The motion carried.

(Chief Hess will provide some dates to check Commissioner's availability).

- c.) **Discussion- SCBA-** Captain Matt Parish discussed his purchase order requests for an individual SCBA Compressor and fill station; both are already approved budgeted items, up to \$60,000. Additionally, Chief Kaufmann stated that he did

receive confirmation, from the auditor, that due to neither request exceeding \$30,000, the bid law is not applicable.

Commissioner Risley made a motion to approve the purchase of the SCBA systems, (two components) as long as one individual component does not exceed \$ 30,000. Commissioner Brackett seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Commissioner Brackett made a motion to accept the Chief's report. Commissioner Rich seconded the motion. The motion carried.

B) PMI Report-

1. Employee Benefits –

2. Human Resource

- a.) 2011-008: BOC Resolution (Referred to Civil Service (OSE))
- b.) 2011-009: BOC Resolution (Referred to Civil Service (OSE))
- c.) BOC Letter to Civil Service Board (BOC Resolutions 2011-008 & 009)- finishing the formal notification
- d.) 2012-027: BOC Resolution (Rescind 2012-015 Station 14 Addition)

Commissioner Rich made a motion to adopt Resolution 2012-027, Relating to the Rescinding of BOC Resolution 2012-015. Commissioner Brackett seconded the motion. The motion carried.

- e.) 2012-028: BOC Resolution (Demo Station 14 & Foundation)

Commissioner Risley made a motion to adopt Resolution 2012-028, Relating to the Demolition of Station #14 (Steele Rd.). Commissioner Rich seconded the motion. The motion carried.

- f.) 2012-029: BOC Resolution (Admin select Architect Firm)

Commissioner Rich made a motion to adopt Resolution 2012-029, Relating to the Selection of the Architect Firm for Station #14 (Steele Rd.). Commissioner Brackett seconded the motion. The motion carried.

- g.) 2012-030: BOC Resolution (Station 14 Design & Rebuild)

Commissioner Risley made a motion to adopt Resolution 2012-030, Relating to the Design & Construction of Station #14 (Steele Rd.). Commissioner Rich seconded the motion. The motion carried.

- h.) 2012-031: BOC Resolution (LWCC Worker's Compensation Renewal)

Commissioner Rich made a motion to adopt Resolution 2012-031, Relating to the Renewal of Workers' Compensation Insurance Coverage. Commissioner Brackett seconded the motion. The motion carried.

- i.) 2012-032: BOC Resolution (Posting of 2013 Budget)- tabled
- j.) 2012-033: BOC Resolution (Transfer Station 14 Insurance Proceeds balance to Rolling Stock/ Facilities Restricted Fund)

Commissioner Risley made a motion to adopt Resolution 2012-033, Relating to the Transfer of Insurance Proceeds for Station 14 to Restricted Funds. Commissioner Kline seconded the motion. The motion carried.

k.) 2012-034: BOC Resolution (Fire Chief Voluntary Salary Reduction)

Commissioner Rich made a motion to adopt Resolution 2012-034, Relating to the Voluntary Reduction of Base Salary Compensation for the Fire Chief of District No.1. Commissioner Brackett seconded the motion.

Mr. Fred McDonald stated that this Resolution was not made available; therefore, it should be voted on to discuss it.

The motion carried.

l.) SOG- Tie Breaker (Common Confirmation Class- Identical Seniority)

Mr. Waniewski stated that open seniority, where one or more employees are confirmed on the same date, has been brought to a date of discovery (October 2, 2012). This date of discovery was the result of a conference call, with the State Examiner, and the guidance received was that at the time of a promotion, the tie breaker for seniority should be done using alpha sequence in matters of vacation scheduling, upgrades, etc. He further stated that when it comes to a policy of promotional events, and/or substitute appointments which extend beyond 30 days, the State Examiner asked that tie breakers be decided at the time of the promotional event, not when the employee was confirmed. Mr. Waniewski asked that the seniority list be reorganized; listing common, identical class employees with an alpha listing.

Mr. Waniewski also stated that departmental seniority, when used for promotional purposes is determined at the time a promotion is to be made, and any ties in identical seniority are broken at that time.

Mr. Waniewski asked that all former policies, which were Standard Operating Guidelines for seniority tie breakers, be removed. It was stated, by Melinda Livingston, that we need an objective tie breaker system, with multiple components. Mr. Waniewski stated that the components that we have chosen are interview, standards and qualifications, education and experience. These components would replace the prior policies of higher test scores and the ranking, by prior chiefs, in the interview process.

Chief Hess stated that this was a problematic issue, and it was exasperated by being in existence for a very long time. Chief Hess further stated that we have two employees, of equal seniority, with one having a higher test score. However, Ms. Melinda Livingston stated that test scores are non –validated and a more objective means should be used to determine a successful candidate. Additionally, Chief Hess was told that the department could be put at a liability risk if it was not corrected. Chief Hess stated that this has been corrected, and that test scores will not be used; rather, both employees will go through an interview process, using the chosen components.

Fire Investigator Kreppein stated that when he was hired, over twenty years ago, he was told that he was hired based on criteria set up by an interview committee. He stated that there were six hired at the same time as him, 5 of which are still employed. He further stated that he was told that they were hired based on training (as Volunteers), certifications, and station time. Mr. Kreppein stated that

he was told, by Chief Poppler and others on the hiring committee, he was ranked #1, out of the 6 people, and the others knew where they were ranked.

Chief Hess stated that the Office of the State Examiner has no expectation that we go back and unravel the promotions that were predicated on that system. Mr. Waniewski stated that there was an AG opinion that supported what Chief Poppler did, at that time.

3. **Payroll**
 - a.) **2013 Revised Budget Forecast (Rolling 5 year forecast)**
4. **FRS (Firefighters Retirement System)**
 - a.) **FRS Back Pay Audit- Pay off balance (Outstanding)**
 - b.) **FRS 2006- Outstanding Audit Acknowledgement (Filed as not in agreement with FRS determination)**
5. **VFIS Special Risk Insurance & LWCC-**
 - a.) **Hurricane Isaac- Damages?**
 - b.) **Station 14 (Steele Rd.)**
 - c.) **LWCC- Renewal 11/01/2012**

Commissioner Risley made a motion to accept the PMI report. Commissioner Brackett seconded the motion. The motion carried.

C) DiGiovanni & Associates, CPA's, L.L.C-

Mr. DiGiovanni discussed the financial report.

Commissioner Rich made a motion to accept the financial report. Commissioner Risley seconded the motion. The motion carried.

D) Attorney's Report- (nothing to report)

Commissioner Rich made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Brackett seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.