

# St. Tammany Fire Protection District No. 1

## Board of Commissioners

### Regular Meeting Minutes January 19, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m.

The pledge of allegiance and prayer were given.

Roll Call: Chairman Kline and Commissioners Rich, Davis, and Risley were present.  
Commissioner Kingston arrived at 5:45 p.m.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES-

*Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 17, 2009 and December 22, 2009 meetings. Commissioner Risley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**OLD BUSINESS** – (none)

#### NEW BUSINESS

##### A) Chief's Report-

###### a) Accept 2009 Audit Proposal

*Commissioner Rich made a motion to accept the 2009 audit proposal from Ericksen, Krentel & LaPorte. Commissioner Risley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

- a) **Employee Recognition-** Chief Hess presented Ray Pearce with the Firefighter of the Year award for his heroic actions at the incident that occurred on January 26, 2009, at Eagle Lake. Firefighter Pearce was also awarded a Valor Award. Fire Operator/ Paramedic Kristoffer Remerow also received a Valor Award, for his same actions on this scene.

Firefighter Tim Dudenhefer received a Service Award (2008 recognition) for the additional jobs he's performed on his days off.

Fire Captain Matthew Parish, Operator Remerow and Firefighter Pearce were also given a Unit Citation for their response to the incident on January 26, 2009. District Chief David Jenkins commented on their actions and response on the scene.

Chief Hess requested a Special Meeting to be held on January 28 for a detailed financial overview and alignment of strategic planning. As no business will be conducted, a quorum isn't necessary.

Commissioner Davis stated that he had a copy of an e-mail that Chief Hess sent to other Fire Chiefs, discussing the possibility of a parish wide board of governance. He quoted, in the letter, "if this fire authority is an elected body, we can end the influence of those who appoint current members to the board of commissioners." Mr. Davis stated that some members are told, by those who appoint them, to vote on issues in a certain manner, or risk not being re-appointed. Mr. Davis was offended by this, as he has never been given orders. He further requested Chief Hess' explanation of

the e-mail. Chief Hess stated that on several occasions certain board members have indicated to him that because of the way they may have voted on certain issues, particularly the millage, they felt that they were in jeopardy of being re-appointed. Commissioner Risley stated that she has received calls implying that she would not be reappointed if she didn't vote a certain way. Chief Hess further stated that this goes to the issue of the fire study that is being conducted. There is concern about how we're governed. Chief Hess apologized for offending anyone; clearly that was not his intention.

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

## **B) PMI Report**

### **1. Employee Benefits**

#### **a) 2010 Section 125 Cafeteria Plan Enrollment (POP & FSA)**

### **2. Human Resources**

#### **a) 2009 BOC Resolution Summary**

#### **b) 2010- 001: BOC Resolution 2009-037 (Non job related disabled retirees)**

***Commissioner Kingston made a motion to accept Resolution 2010-001. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.***

### **3. Payroll**

#### **a) 2010 Pay scales**

#### **b) 2009 W-2's**

### **4. FRS (Firefighters' Retirement System)**

#### **a) 2010 Projected ER contribution rate- effective 7/1/2010- 21.5%**

### **5. VFIS Special Risk Insurance & LWCC**

#### **a) VFIS Renewal questionnaire**

***Commissioner Risley made a motion to accept the PMI report. Commissioner Kingston seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.***

## **C) DiGiovanni & Associates, CPA's, L.L.C**

Mr. DiGiovanni discussed the financial statement.

Commissioner Risley discussed the "Public Relations" line item. There was discussion on the contract we have with Hartman and Associates. Chief Hess stated that we have money set aside to engage Hartman and Associates; we do not have a signed contract. Commissioner Kingston inquired about our employees trained in public relations. Chief Hess stated that we need Hartman and Associates for campaign/ inter-governmental issues. The main focus we have right now is the millage vote in March 2011.

Commissioner Davis requested that the board be able to send specific budget questions directly to Mark Wanievski and/or Mr. DiGiovanni. Attorney Troy Ingram recommended that the questions and responses be read in to the minutes of the board meetings. Commissioner Risley requested line items that break

down the divisions (i.e. suppression, fire prevention, Information Technology) and a comparison of State and/or National standards. There was additional discussion.

***Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the financial report. Commissioner Risley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.***

**D) Attorney's Report-** Attorney Troy Ingram requested to suspend the rules to discuss compensation for serving on the board. He feels the time that is served, is justified and permitted as compensable. He recommended that they discuss this for a vote at the next meeting.

***Commissioner Kingston made a motion to accept the Attorney's report. Commissioner Risley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.***

Commissioner Davis proposed that the board, as a committee, investigate Unifire and the feasibility of combining dispatching services. He further stated that it must be proven that we will not lose any of our employees, nor would their pay be cut. Also, would they remain Civil Service and what would the cost be for our District? Chief Hess, Chief Kaufmann and Attorney Troy Ingram are welcome to participate. Chief Hess agrees that due diligence should be done in regards to this consideration. There was additional discussion.

***Commissioner Davis made a motion for the board to become a committee to study the feasibility of joining Unifire. Commissioner Risley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.***

Superintendent John O'Neil requested that he be able to explain the letter he wrote to the Commissioners. He stated that Mr. Oiler and Parish President Davis indicated that Chief Hess had the idea of joining Unifire. When the issue was brought up, and Chief Hess did not take part, he wanted the Commissioners to take part in the feasibility study. This issue really started when Fire Dist #7 asked Fire Dist #1 to dispatch for them; Unifire does not want to lose them.

***Commissioner Davis made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Risley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:58 pm.***