

St. Tammany Fire Protection District No. 1

Board of Commissioners

Regular Meeting Minutes May 20, 2014

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

The pledge of allegiance and prayer were given.

Roll Call: Chairman Crowley and Commissioners McDonald and Brackett were present.
Commissioners Risley and Kingston were absent.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

- **Fire Prevention Officer Billy Dekemel**- 20 years of service
- **Retirement Recognition**- District Chief George Elliot (29 years)
- **Slidell Police Officer Jason Seals**- Meritorious Award for life saving actions on April 20, 2014
- **Promotions**- Dominick Bruno (District Chief), AJ Wrublewski (Captain) and Glenn Morris (Operator)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner McDonald made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 15, 2014 meeting. Commissioner Brackett seconded the motion. The motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

1.) 2014-017: BOC Resolution (Rescind Internal Spending Cap in Excess of \$ 5,000)

Commissioner McDonald made a motion to approve Resolution 2014-017, Relating to Approval to Remove the Operational Cap for Day to Day Operations for District #1. Commissioner Brackett seconded the motion.

Chief Kaufmann clarified that this Resolution pertains to items already in the budget.

Commissioner Brackett made a motion to amend Resolution 2014-017, to reflect that any purchases over \$5,000, outside of approved budget line items, must be brought before the Board. Commissioner McDonald seconded the motion. The motion carried.

2.) 2014-018: BOC Resolution (Chief of Operations)

Commissioner Brackett made a motion to approve Resolution 2014-018, Relating to Approve the Position for Chief of Operations for District No. 1. Commissioner McDonald seconded the motion.

Chief Kaufmann stated that he's been asked if the need exists for a Chief of Operations, as well as a Chief of Administration. He stated that we have functioned without a Chief of Operations in the past; however, the direction we are heading in now, with the various divisions, this would allow for a greater span of control and improve efficiency in day to day operations. Chief Kaufmann stated that the test for Chief of Administration has been called for, as we have a certain time frame for filling the position.

Chairman Crowley stated that he is convinced that there is a huge benefit with having a Chief of Operations. Chief Kaufman stated that he served as Chief of Administration for the past seven years, with no Chief of Operations. He further stated that he was responsible for four out of five divisions in the department, and created positions that were never in the department. He stated that the non-emergency human resource application is critical to any organization when you talk about public scrutiny, integrity and values of what the department does. Chief Kaufmann stated the Chief of Operations position is based on seniority, not necessarily the person most qualified. He further stated that he opposes abolishing the Chief of Administration position.

Chairman Crowley inquired as to whether Chief Kaufmann, when in the Chief of Administration position, had many of the duties that he handled “fall into his lap” and just assumed by him in order to make sure the department had a direction to go in. Chief Kaufmann stated that he worked with little supervision and a broad authority to get the work done. Chief Kaufmann stated that the two positions would be equal and work together to share the administrative responsibilities.

Chairman Crowley stated that he is struggling with bringing another leader in, when administrative duties may be shared among the existing Chief’s. Chief Kaufmann stated that the Chief of Operations would work at the Training Academy and oversee the Training Division, which works directly with Suppression, as well as the Maintenance Division.

Chief Kaufmann stated that the Chief of Administration position will be through a selection process, to ensure that we get the person best qualified.

Chairman Crowley stated that Capitol projects have been a priority, and he envisions the Chief of Operations overseeing those projects. Additionally, he stated that the budget presented, after moving monies around, is at 33.5 mills, and we have many capital projects, the adding of firefighters with opening a new station, and another Chief.

Commissioner Brackett inquired as to whether Chief Kaufmann could be successful, going forward, with only one of the Chief positions. Chief Kaufmann advised that he could, and that he would want to select which position he wanted.

Chief Kaufmann stated that we are in the position we are in, regarding the budget, due to not rolling the millage forward in the past. He further stated that he will ask for the necessary millage to run the department today, as well as in the future, to serve the community at the highest level.

Commissioner McDonald inquired into who would be second in command if there was a Chief of Administration and Chief of Operation. Chief Kaufmann advised that they would be equal rank. Commissioner McDonald stated that one is compressional and one is promotional, with regards to the pay scale. Chief Kaufmann stated that in his absence, he would upgrade the Chief of Operations to his position.

The motion died with Commissioners Brackett and McDonald in opposition.

- 3.) **2014-019: BOC Resolution (Advertise to Consider Millage Rate) – Recordkeeping**

Commissioner McDonald made a motion to approve Resolution 2014-019, Relating to Advertise to Consider Millage Rate for District #1. Commissioner Brackett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- 4.) **2014-020: BOC Resolution (Commission FP Officers) – “move to postpone”**

Commissioner McDonald made a motion to postpone Resolution 2014-020, Relating to Approval to Commission Fire Prevention Officers for District #1. Commissioner Brackett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS –

A) Chief's Report-

- 1.) Update of Assessor Meeting (April 29)** – Chief Kaufmann stated that he attended an Assessor's meeting on April 29 and HB 1118 was brought up. He stated that HB 1118 would give the Parish Council the authority to vote on approval of our millage.

Chief Kaufmann stated that he spoke to the Revenue Committee at the Senate and represented our department, as well as the other Fire Chief's in the Parish. He advised that the end result was that the Bill changed, without the Parish Council vote included.

- 2.) Update on meeting with Tim Burns, HB 1118 (May 9)** – Chief Kaufmann stated that the Assessor said that he did not want any millage increases during his first year in office, which could affect his re-election. Chief Kaufmann expressed his concern that politics was getting in the way of emergency services. Commissioner Brackett thanked all that took the time out to go represent the department in these matters.

- 3.) Public Campaign- Rapid Diver Demonstration (May 22)**

- 4.) Vehicle Maintenance Committee Report-** Commissioner McDonald stated that we are still having engine problems with Engine 16. He further stated that in the 2015 maintenance budget, the maintenance will be split between equipment maintenance and small engine maintenance repairs. Additionally, there may be a need to purchase two fire trucks in 2015.

Chairman Crowley suggested having a meeting to discuss the five year strategic plan, as well as the funding that will be necessary to make it happen.

- 5.) General Comments-** Chief Kaufmann stated that once the Chief of Administration position is filled, he would like to keep Chief Kuhn on 8 hour days, as Deputy Chief, through 2014. He further stated that this would provide the perfect foundation to determine the need for a Chief of Operations. Chairman Crowley requested that Chief Kuhn remain in the Chief of Administration position, and not rush to fill it, until we determine the revenue for 2015 and the direction that we need to go in.

Chief Kaufmann stated that Captain Eric Abney is in New York at the 911 Flag Memorial.

Chief Kaufmann stated that we received a request from the Assessor to provide fire reports which would show structure damage and would affect the value of the home; therefore, those properties could be de-valued. It was determined that these reports can be requested, and would be subject to the fees associated with public record requests.

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

B.) PMI Report

- 1. Employee Benefits**

- a.) 2015 Insurance Review- Rate Impact
- 2. Human Resource-
 - a.) 2014-010: BOC Resolution (Surplus Property- Temporary Housing Station 14) – AMENDED to 07/01/14

Commissioner McDonald made a motion to adopt Resolution 2014-010, (as amended) Relating to the Surplus of Property for District #1. Commissioner Brackett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- b.) 2014-017: BOC Resolution (Rescind Internal Spending Cap in Excess of \$ 5,000)- (above)
- c.) 2014-018: BOC Resolution (Chief of Operations) – (above)
- d.) 2014-019: BOC Resolution (Advertise to Consider Millage) – Recordkeeping (above)
- e.) 2014-020: BOC Resolution (Commissioner FP Officers)- “move to postpone” (above)
- f.) 2014-021: BOC Resolution (Multipurpose Building)

Commissioner McDonald made a motion to adopt Resolution 2014-021, Relating to Approval of the Multipurpose Building for District #1. Commissioner Brackett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- 3. Payroll
- 4. FRS (Firefighters Retirement System)
 - a.) FRS ER Contribution Rate Increased: 29.25% Effective July 1, 2014
- 5. VFIS Special Risk Insurance & LWCC-
 - a.) VFIS Crime Coverage: Background Checks (Cash handling & signature authority) – update, outstanding parties
 - b.) VFIS- Effective 5/6/2014

Commissioner Brackett a motion to accept the PMI report. Commissioner McDonald seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- C) DiGiovanni & Associates, CPA’s, L.L.C- Mr. DiGiovanni discussed the financial report.

Commissioner McDonald made a motion to accept the financial report. Commissioner Brackett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- D) Attorney’s Report-
 - 1.) Land/Bldg. Update- Attorney Ingram reported that we are continuing efforts to purchase land.
 - 2.) Millage Intentions- Attorney Ingram stated that July 15 is when the vote will be done to set/ roll forward the millage.

Commissioner Brackett made a motion to accept the Attorney report. Commissioner McDonald seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- E) Board of Commissioner Comments- (none)

05/20/14

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.