

St. Tammany Fire Protection District No. 1

Board of Commissioners

Regular Meeting Minutes June 17, 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 Risley were present.
Commissioners Brackett and Kingston were absent.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

- Marc Jaubert- Promotion to Operator
- Associates Degrees: T. Horton, M. Jaubert, R. Kelly, B. Macaluso, R. Pearce, J. Suber
- Swearing In: Communications Officer Michael Sanders
- Matthew Dupre was recognized for going out of his way to explain and demonstrate the fire truck to a young citizen.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner McDonald made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 20, 2014 meeting. Commissioner Risley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS (none)

NEW BUSINESS –

A) Chief's Report-

- 1.) **2013 Audit (presented by Jim Tonglet)** – Mr. Tonglet presented the 2013 “Clean Opinion” audit. Commissioner McDonald inquired into the variances in ‘Schedule 1’ (Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance) and Mr. Tonglet explained that the difference is what was budgeted vs. actually received and spent. While the result was a favorable variance, Mr. Tonglet explained that a deficit was budgeted, and we also spent less than what was budgeted.

Chairman Crowley stated that the audit shows that we are in a good position, which is the result of frugal spending and responsibility.

- 2.) **Bid Opening- Temporary Housing** – no bids were received
- 3.) **EAP Contract Renewal-** Resolution under “PMI”
- 4.) **Chief of Administration Timeline-** Chief Kaufmann stated that four applicants are scheduled to take the Chief of Administration test on July 14; however, Civil Service allows for a provisional appointment for two 90 day periods, as long as an established list does not exist. Chairman Crowley stated that at the last meeting, he was advised that this position could be for

up to a year. Mr. Waniewski stated that Civil Service has changed their opinion, based on an AG opinion.

Chief Kaufmann stated that he would like to move forward with the Chief of Administration position, and that he has offered "Plan B" where Chief Kuhn would move into a Deputy Chief day position, to continue his service in an Administrative position until the process is completed. This would allow for the utilization of both the Chief of Administration and Chief of Operations positions, thus allowing the Board to see the job performance of both positions, and if needed, readdress the 2015 budget at a later date.

Commissioner Risley stated that while she does not want to micro manage, she has a concern with someone from, not from Suppression, serving in one of the leadership roles; based on Suppression experience. Chief Kaufmann confirmed that there are no Suppression requirements for the Chief of Administration. He further stated that his reason for both plans was the span of control over the six divisions, and equally dividing the workload amongst the two positions. Chairman Crowley stated that the big concern was how the budget could sustain both positions.

Commissioner McDonald inquired as to whether Chief Kaufmann needed approval from the Board to implement his alternate plan. Chief Kaufmann advised that he doesn't feel that he needs the approval, as long as the budget allows. Chief Kaufmann stated that with the growth we have been experiencing, he strongly feels the need for both positions. Chairman Crowley suggested that Chief Kaufmann document the impact of having a Chief of Operations position, if Chief Kuhn is placed on 8 hour days, to show the return on investment. Chairman Crowley stated that he feels that having a Chief, Chief of Administration and Chief of Operations would make the department successful and more efficient; however, the issue is the funding.

- 5.) **July BOC Meeting-** Chief Kaufmann reminded the Board of the July 30 millage meeting, at Koop Dr. and a simple majority is needed for the vote to set the millage. Chief Kaufmann also reminded the Board of the millage hearing, on June 25.

Chief Kaufmann suggested having the Regular July meeting, on July 15, to handle the normal business; therefore, the July 30 meeting would be just for the millage vote.

- 6.) **Vehicle Maintenance Committee Report-** Chief Kuhn reported that Engine 12 is currently out of service due to a broken crank shaft (will be covered under warranty) and Ladder 11 is out of service due to problems with the brake adjusters.

- 7.) **General Comments-** Chief Kaufmann stated that he would be scheduling a meeting with Commissioner McDonald, the Board designee for PIAL, to update him on the groundwork that has been done to prepare for the upcoming rating. He further praised the work the Gary Jones, Jr. has done to prepare for this. Chief Kaufmann stated that there will be some changes (placement of equipment and personnel) to maximize the rating. Chief Kaufmann also stated that we are in a great position, with regards to the ladder requirements necessary for the growth of the district.

Chairman Crowley inquired into where we stand with having the meetings publicized, on Channel 10. Chief Duffaut stated that we need to send in the information in the proper format. Chief Kaufmann stated that there are other options that can also be looked in to.

Chief Kaufmann stated that we are two to three weeks from finishing Station 14 and we will schedule a Grand Opening after it is completed.

Chief Kaufmann stated that we will soon be signing the contract for the Multi-Purpose Bldg.

Chief Kaufmann reported that the Fire Chief's in St. Tammany Parish have formed a St. Tammany Parish Fire Chief's Association and he has been selected to serve as President.

Chairman Crowley encouraged the Board to try to attend some of the public campaign events that are being done. Additionally, Chief Kaufmann stated that we will be scheduling another Fire Ops class.

Commissioner Risley 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 Renewal- Update

2. Human Resource-

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

Commissioner McDonald made a motion to adopt Resolution 2014-017, Relating to Approval to Remove the Operational Spending Cap for Day to Day Operations for District No.1. Commissioner Risley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

b.) 2014-020: BOC Resolution (Commissioner FP Officers) - (Postponed)

c.) 2014-022: BOC Resolution (Official Publication)

Commissioner Risley made a motion to adopt Resolution 2014-022, Relating to the Selection of the Official Journal for District No.1 Commissioner McDonald seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously

d.) 2014-023: BOC Resolution (2013 Audit)

Commissioner McDonald made a motion to adopt Resolution 2014-023, Relating to the Approval of the 2013 Audit for District No.1. Commissioner Risley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

e.) 2014-024: BOC Resolution (EAP Agreement- Renewal)

Commissioner McDonald made a motion to adopt Resolution 2014-024, Relating to Renewal of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for District #1. Commissioner Risley seconded the motion.

Mr. Waniewski stated that there were no changes to the contract.

The motion carried unanimously.

3. Payroll

4. FRS (Firefighters Retirement System)

5. VFIS Special Risk Insurance & LWCC-

a.) VFIS Crime Coverage: Background Checks (Cash handling & signature authority)
– Update, Outstanding parties

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

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

There was a brief discussion on the funding, from the taxing bodies, for the annual equipment/furniture purchases for the Assessor's office.

Chief Kaufmann presented the board with information on the District's mandated funding of other retirement systems. He further explained that the District does not see an average of 8% of the millage funding.

Chief Kaufmann presented the Board with information on the tax roll millage projection vs. actual collected. He stated that the funding that the department receives is through ad valorem taxes, parcel fee, state revenue sharing and fire insurance taxes. Chief Kaufman reiterated the fact that we have funded a deficit in the past. Additionally, the funding of the deficit, as well as the bond certificate, equates to three mills. Additionally, he explained the importance of knowing the value of a mill vs. a mill rate when determining a millage.

Chairman Crowley stated that at a minimum, to break even, we would need 32.7 mills. He further stated that we used \$990,000 of savings, and if we continue to pull money from savings, may not be able to recover those funds, which are restricted for future projects.

Chairman Crowley stated that the 2015 budget that was submitted was in excess of the revenue that can be collected. He further stated that we did not "do business" at 29.7 mills, rather, nearly 33 mills. He further stated that in order to avoid depleting our savings, the breakeven is 33 mills (from last year).

Chief Kaufmann stated that we approved budgets, with deficits, 5 out of the last 6 years, due to having revenue after being forgiven from the FEMA loans. He further stated that in going forward, he recommended 35 mills. Additionally, he stated that next year is a reassessment year.

Commissioner McDonald stated that when asked the Assessor what the reassessment meant for our department, he was told that ours renewed this year, and we are setting the millage this period, that it does not go into effect until next assessment period; thus having to protect the millage in 2019.

Chief Kaufmann stated that he received an e-mail regarding an increase in property value for the Fremaux/Summit property land; therefore, we should receive more revenue than previously reported. Chairman Crowley stated that his concern is that a vote will be made and we have to understand the full impact of the vote.

Commissioner McDonald inquired as to whether the budget was expected to be approved before the millage vote. Chairman Crowley explained that a budget was presented, showing what millage was needed. He further stated that we should take only what we need to have. Chief Kaufmann stated that with the bond certificate and the building of Station 18, this is the best time to collect the voter approved 35 mills.

Commissioner McDonald stated that in order to be prepared for June 25, he will need his budget questions answered and the final draft of the proposed budget.

Commissioner Risley made a motion to accept the financial report. Commissioner McDonald seconded the motion.

Commissioner McDonald inquired about the amount, in the financial statement, for ad valorem revenue. Mr. DiGiovanni stated that the figure used is 8% less than the gross ad valorem figure received. Commissioner McDonald stated that the current ad valorem revenue received is at 97%, and inquired into whether we are receiving a bigger percentage of revenue than in the past and if the percentage of uncollected money can be reduced. Mr. DiGiovanni stated we use a conservative figure, and the 8% has been consistent.

Chairman Crowley encouraged the Commissioners to continue to ask questions and educate themselves on the budget, in order to make an informed decision on the millage vote.

The motion carried unanimously.

D) Attorney's Report-

- 1.) **FRS Mediation-** Attorney Ingram reported that he attended a mediations hearing; however, was unable to come to a resolution.
- 2.) **Millage-** Hearing on June 25, Meeting on July 30
- 3.) **Land/ Bldg. Update-** Attorney Ingram stated that with regards to one of property contracts, the owner passed away; however, we are permitted to continue with the introduction of the proposed rezoning to PF1.
 - **Multi- Purpose Bldg.-** (discussed above)

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

- E) Board of Commissioner Comments-** Chairman Crowley stated that he felt the meeting was very productive and the best decision can be made if there is opposing opinions. He suggested that if there are any discrepancies, the issue should be brought up and quantified, for discussion and clarification.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.