

St. Tammany Fire Protection District No. 1

Board of Commissioners

Regular Meeting Minutes June 20, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m.

The prayer and pledge of allegiance were done.

ROLL CALL: Chairman Crowley and Commissioners Brackett, Rich, Gay and Hoying were present.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION-

Swear In: Fire Prevention Officer Lou Melancon
20 Years of Service: P.J. Rudesill
15 Years of Service: M. Thiel
10 Years of Service: J. Cetrone, J. Frich, G. Morris
5 Years of Service: C. Knecht (absent), D. Marullo (absent)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Brackett made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 16, 2017 meeting. Commissioner Gay seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS – (none)

NEW BUSINESS

1. Chief's Report

a) Significant Monthly Events

- **Extinguisher Demo-** Conducted May 20
- **Fire Prevention Bureau Resolution(s)-** (to be covered under “PMI and Attorney”)
- **Restructure of Special Operations Division-** Chief Kaufmann stated that the Special Operations Division was reorganized. We have approx. 37 members that applied. This group will be called upon for deployments and other agency assistance.
- **2018 Budget Draft-** Chief Kaufmann stated that a draft of the budget has been put together and we will have a meeting, with Commissioner Gay attending, to discuss any increases/decreases that have an impact on the budget.
- **Accreditation- Update-** Accreditation Manager Thiel stated that the 2015 Accreditation is good for a five year period; however a required compliance report is done annually. This report ensures that the department is continuing to remain compliant and making improvements, based on the report provided by

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the peer assessment team. He further stated that our annual compliance report was due and submitted in March, and we received notification of approval.

Chief Kaufmann stated that response times were critical, and we have improved on our “get out of the station” time. He further stated that we have worked toward the exhaust system compliance.

Chief Kaufmann stated that the PIAL rating and Accreditation complement each other and he feels the Accreditation process helped us prepare for PIAL.

Chief Kaufmann stated that Accreditation, on the public side, is validation of best practices and that we are working to best serve our citizens. He thanked the Board for their support in going forward with Accreditation. He additionally thanked the members for their hard work and dedication.

Chairman Crowley stated that the Accreditation has been a good return on the investment. Additionally, the potential of becoming a Class 2 department will be a cost savings to our citizens.

- b) **St. 13/ HQ**
 - Groundbreaking June 28, 2017, at 10:00 a.m.
 - Discussion- Possible Change Order- Chief Kaufmann stated that there is a possible issue with the dirt and the need for additional excavation.
- c) **2016 Audit-** Mr. DiGiovanni stated that the “Annual” and the “Agreed Upon Procedure” audits reflect no findings.
- d) **Public Campaign/ Outreach-** Sidewalk CPR- June 24, 2017 (Central Station)
- e) **Operations Reports -** Chief of Operations Kuhn discussed the “Operations” report (May) which covers YTD call totals, Hydrants Inspected, NFIRS Incidents, Dollar Loss/ Dollar Save (by Station location), Average Response Time (by Station) and EMS Call Type and Number of Incidents.
- f) **Maintenance Report-** Chief of Operations Kuhn discussed the “Maintenance” report (May) which covered preventative maintenances and major repairs performed.
- g) **Fire Prevention Report-** Chief of Fire Prevention Marquette discussed the monthly “Fire Prevention” report (May) which included Inspections, Public Fire Safety & Education Events, Investigations, and Economic Impact.
- h) **Training Report –** Chief of Training Bauer discussed the monthly “Training” report (May) which included Classes, Certifications and Revenues.

Chief of Training Bauer stated that we have purchased a car fire prop which will provide another level of training.
- i) **General Comments-** Chief Kaufmann recognized the Suppression and Fire Prevention divisions for the public outreach events and ongoing PIAL training.

Chief Kaufmann stated that he may be going out of town for a few days, but is undecided due to the tropical depression. In the event that he does go, Chief Kuhn will handle Operations and Chief Duffaut will handle Administration.

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

2. SFFA (Slidell Firefighters Association) – (none)

3. PMI Report

- a.) **Employee Benefits**
- b.) **Human Resource**

- 1) 2017-023: BOC Resolution (Fire Prevention Bureau- Ratification)
ACTION ITEM: APPROVAL

Commissioner Brackett made a motion to adopt Resolution 2017-023, Relating to the Creation and Existence of the Fire Prevention Bureau for District No.1. Commissioner Hoying seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- 2) 2017-024: BOC Resolution (State Fire Marshall- Inspection Liability Release)
ACTION ITEM: APPROVAL

Commissioner Brackett made a motion to adopt Resolution 2017-024, Relating to the Release of the State Fire Marshall from Responsibility or Liability for Those Inspections Performed by St. Tammany Fire District #1's Fire Prevention Bureau, or the Consequences Thereof. Commissioner Gay seconded the motion.

Chief Kaufmann stated that the PIAL rating recognizes the Fire Prevention Bureau, and we have been doing this type of work for over forty years. Additionally, we have been recognized by the State Fire Marshall in the passing of a Resolution to adopt a Parish-wide code. The inspection liability release was requested by the State Fire Marshall.

Attorney Ingram stated that the State Fire Marshall's office thought that Parish Government was the only entity that could provide the State Fire Marshall's office with a Resolution creating an indemnification agreement. After much correspondence, we were able to convince them that our Board is the governing authority. He further stated that they then requested a Resolution, with respect to the duties and responsibilities that our district takes in performance of the duties of the State Fire Marshall, that if there is a claim, damage, or lawsuit, that our department will agree to hold harmless the State Fire Marshall's office.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 3) 2017-025: BOC Resolution (Approve 2016 Audit)
ACTION ITEM: APPROVAL

Commissioner Brackett made a motion to adopt Resolution 2017-025, Relating to the Approval of the 2016 Audit for District No.1. Commissioner Gay seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- 4) 2017-026: BOC Resolution (Adopt the Millage Rate(s))
ACTION ITEM: APPROVAL

(Chairman Crowley read the Resolution into the record)

RESOLUTION 2017-026

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BE IT RESOLVED, that the following millage(s) are hereby levied on the 2017 tax roll on all property subject to taxation by the St. Tammany Fire Protection District No. 1:

MILLAGE

Acquisition and Maintenance 35.0 mills

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the proper administrative officials of the Parish of St. Tammany, State of Louisiana, be and they are hereby empowered, authorized, and directed to spread said taxes, as hereinabove set forth, upon the assessment roll of said Parish for the year 2017, and to make the collection of the taxes imposed for and on behalf of the taxing authority, according to law, and that the taxes herein levied shall become a permanent lien and privilege on all property subject to taxation as herein set forth, and collection thereof shall be enforceable in the manner provided by law.

The foregoing resolution was read in full, the roll was called on the adoption thereof, and the resolution was adopted by the following votes:

*YEAS:
NAYS:
ABSTAINED:
ABSENT:*

CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and exact copy of the resolution adopted at the meeting held on June 20, 2017, at which meeting a quorum was present and voting.

Slidell, Louisiana, this 20th day of June, 2017.

*Daniel Crowley, Chairman Board
of Commissioners
St. Tammany Fire Protection District No. 1*

Commissioner Brackett made a motion to adopt Resolution 2016-026, Relating to the Adoption of the Millage Rate (s). Commissioner Hoying seconded the motion.

Mr. Fred McDonald stated that with all of his experience with Fire Dist. #1, Chairman Crowley, since he has been on the Board, has never rolled back a millage and always increases it. He further stated that he finds it hard to believe that every year we've had a surplus....

Chairman Crowley addressed Mr. McDonald, stating that he, individually, does nothing. He stated that he is the Chairman of the Board and oversees the process that the Commissioners vote, and approve, everything. He further stated that he is a tie-breaker, and one of five people who vote for the millage and that he (Mr. McDonald) was once one of those in the vote. Chairman Crowley reiterated that as Chairman, he has no power to roll back, to set back, or roll forward any millages.

Mr. McDonald stated that except for one vote, Chairman Crowley is required to vote. Chairman Crowley stated that he is one of five people.

Mr. McDonald stated that he was told that when he comes up for comment, he is the address the Chairman, not the Board or Administration. He then re-phrased his comment, saying that since Chairman Crowley has been on the Board, the Board has always raised the millage and have had huge surpluses in the last couple years, due to increased revenues. He further stated that we purchased a fire truck and we are also building a new Headquarters which was not budgeted.

Commissioner Brackett stated that the new Headquarters was budgeted and that he (Mr. McDonald) is making inaccurate statements.

Mr. McDonald requested that the Board consider rolling back the millage due to a projected surplus this year, as well as the past surpluses.

Chairman Crowley responded by saying he feels that there is a timeframe to consider that. He further stated that as soon as the process of funding and fixing the ten years of irresponsibility in budgeting, due to the previous Board's members political pressures, and when the fleet and stations are back in order and all of the maintenance, that has cost 1 ½ to 2 times the cost, is up to date and in working condition for the constituents can it be done. He further stated that in the next few years, we may not have the funding for Capital improvements. He stated that as soon as we fix what was not done right, we will roll back.

Chairman Crowley called for the vote:

*Commissioner Gay: yea
Commissioner Hoying: yea
Chairman Crowley: yea
Commissioner Brackett: yea
Commissioner Rich: yea*

The motion carried unanimously.

5) 2017-027 BOC Resolution: (Levy Parcel Fee on Tax Roll)

ACTION ITEM: APPROVAL

Commissioner Brackett made a motion to adopt Resolution 2017-027, Relating to the Approval to Levy the Parcel Fee on all Taxable Property Shown on the Official Assessment Roll for the Year 2017. Commissioner Hoying seconded the motion.

Chairman Crowley called for the vote:

*Commissioner Gay: yea
Commissioner Hoying: yea
Chairman Crowley: yea
Commissioner Brackett: yea
Commissioner Rich: yea*

The motion carried unanimously.

- c.) **Payroll** – (none)
- d.) **FRS (Firefighters Retirement System)** – (none)
- e.) **VFIS Special Risk Insurance & LWCC-**

Chairman Crowley stated that our budgetary process has many parts to it and to pick and select a particular item, amount, or section and disregard its entirety and the domino effect of the decisions made from the past, and the impact that it will have for future years is irresponsible. He further stated that he appreciates that the current Board is challenging and no one gets a pass on spending taxpayer money. He stated that he and Chief Kaufmann have been in public, on more than one occasion, and confirmed that when the time comes, Chief Kaufmann, as well as the Board, intend to roll back the millage and not collect monies that are not absolutely necessary for going forward.

Chairman Crowley reiterated that no one person on the Board can make any decision, or vote by themselves, to raise taxes.

Commissioner Hoying stated that he can't reiterate enough the importance of the Capital and Strategic Planning process and correcting misperceptions about things like surpluses and millages. The process is very disciplined and it has mapped out the equipment replacement and facility maintenance timelines, which has not been looked at from a budgetary standpoint. He further stated that it should help resolve future misperceptions about our financial situation. Chairman Crowley stated that it is a transparent, disciplined process.

Chief Kaufmann stated that with regards to the previous Accreditation discussion, he doesn't know how much more transparent we can be. We are validated through the Accreditation process that we are good stewards of taxpayer money and we deliver an above average service. He further stated that in an eight year period, we rolled back over \$13.5M.

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

4. **Duplantier Hrapman Hogan & Maher, LLP-** Mr. DiGiovanni stated that in the years 2019 and 2020, the deficit is projected to be over \$1.1M/yr. Chairman Crowley stated that we are getting to the point where cuts are going to have to be made. He stated that if cuts are done, the impact needs to be shown. Commissioner Rich stated that while he agrees, there isn't much that can be cut. Chief Kaufmann stated that 4% of the budget is discretionary.

Mr. DiGiovanni discussed the May financial report.

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

5. Attorney's Report-

Attorney Ingram gave a synopsis of work performed in April:

- A few public record requests for incident reports involving building inspections and a few involving car fires and car accidents
- Millage and Parcel Fee Resolutions
- State Fire Marshall Resolutions

Commissioner Brackett made a motion to approve the Attorney report. Commissioner Rich seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously

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6. **Board of Commissioner Comments** – Commissioner Hoying stated that he hopes that Chief Kaufmann takes his time off and that the Chiefs are prepared to handle anything that comes up. He further stated that it's needed for his wellbeing and mental health.

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

UNOFFICIAL