

St. Tammany Fire Protection District No. 1

Board of Commissioners

Regular Meeting Minutes February 15, 2022

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

Chairman Crowley introduced the new Commissioner, Tracey Powell.

The prayer and pledge of allegiance were done.

Chairman Crowley thanked Troy Brackett for his 10 years serving on the Board.

ROLL CALL: Chairman Crowley and Commissioners Rich, Gay, McDowell and Powell were present.

Awards/ Recognition: Firefighter of the Year: Chris Darby
Paramedic of the Year: Thomas "TJ" McMillan (absent)
Communications Officer of the Year: Shaun Dennis

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Rich made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2021 minutes. Commissioner Powell seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS – (none)

NEW BUSINESS

1. Chief's Report

a) Significant Monthly Events

- Ethics Training/ Financial Disclosure
- COVID-19 Update – 3 employees out with COVID side effects
- Annual Department Overview
 - Conducted Platoon Meetings
- Fatality Fire
 - Smoke Detector Campaign- currently installed 350 detectors in 374 homes
- 2 resignations- replacements likely to be selected from the Recruit class.
- 2023-2032 Millage Renewal
 - Campaign Coordinator- engaged consultant- Chief Kaufmann stated that a tri-fold was created and signs are ordered (to start displaying March 1).

Chairman Crowley stated that this is a millage renewal, at the current 35 mills. He further reiterated that we will only collect millage necessary to fund the budget.

Chief Kaufmann stated that the ballot costs will be shared.

Pursuant to R.S. 42:23, personal recording devices are welcome in every meeting for Fire District No. 1; however, 1 they must remain and be maintained in the possession of the individual that brings the device to remove any liability from Fire District No. 1 of any unintentional or accidental mishaps with the device during any such meeting

- St. 13/ HQ- UPDATE – Settlement complete
 - St. 11 – UPDATE – Chief Kaufmann stated that construction is progressing with an Aug. 15, 2022 projected completion timeframe.
 - St. 19- UPDATE – Chief Kaufmann stated that closing documents are being worked on and we will close when completed. He further stated that an architect has been engaged for the plans/specifications. Chief Kaufmann stated that he would like to have the project complete before the end of the year.
- b) Operations Reports** - Chief of Operations Bruno discussed the “Operations” report (December) 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.
- c) Maintenance Report-** Chief of Operations Bruno discussed the “Maintenance” report (December) which covered preventative maintenances and major repairs performed.
- d) Fire Prevention Report-** Chief of Fire Prevention Marquette discussed the monthly “Fire Prevention” report (January) which included Inspections, Public Fire Safety & Education Events, Investigations, and Economic Impact.
- e) Training Report** – Captain Abney discussed the monthly “Training” report (January) which included Classes, Certifications and Revenues.
- Chief Kaufmann stated that with the 16 props that we currently have, he has requested that we be recognized as a regional training academy, in partnership with LSU FETI.
- f) Communications Report** –Chief of Communications Parish discussed the monthly “Communications” report (January) which included call volume and statistics.
- g) General Comments-** Chief Kaufmann stated that we are currently compiling necessary data for the PIAL rating renewal. He also stated that we are providing annual year end documents to the Accreditation agency.

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

- 2) SFFA (Slidell Firefighters Association)** – Union President Berns, on behalf of the members, thanked Troy Brackett for his 10 years of serving on the Board. Additionally, he welcomed Tracey Powell to the Board.

President Berns stated that the Union adopted a Habitat family for Christmas.

3) PMI Report –

- a.) **Employee Benefits** - (none)
- b.) **Human Resources**

- 1) 2022-001: BOC Resolution (2021 General Fund Surplus Determination)

Commissioner Rich made a motion to adopt Resolution 2022-001, Relating to the Approval of the 2021 General Fund Surplus for District No. 1. Commissioner Gay seconded the motion.

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The floor was opened for public comment. There was no public comment.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 2) 2022-002: BOC Resolution (Approve Amended 2021 Budget)

Commissioner Rich made a motion to adopt Resolution 2022-002, Relating to the Approval to Amend the 2021 Budget to Comply with LLA Regulatory Statutes for District No. 1. Commissioner McDowell seconded the motion.

The floor was opened for public comment. There was no public comment.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 3) 2022-003: BOC Resolution (BOC Chairman Vote of Confidence)

Commissioner Rich made a motion to adopt Resolution 2022-003, Relating to the Vote of Confidence for Chairman of the Board of Commissioners for District No. 1. Commissioner McDowell seconded the motion.

The floor was opened for public comment.

Troy Brackett stated that Chairman Crowley has led the department, and Commissioners, through tumultuous times and requested ratification to have him serve as Chairman.

Union president Berns thanked Chairman Crowley for his commitment and service to the department and supports his re-appointment to serve as Chairman.

Captain Abney commented on Chairman Crowley's continued support for the department.

Retired Chief Collins commented on Chairman Crowley's passion for the department and the community. He further stated that he is a good steward of taxpayer dollars.

Rick Franzo, CCST, stated that his Board and advisors are in full support of Chairman Crowley.

Chief Kaufmann stated that he echoes the previous comments and that Dan is a friend to the membership, administration and the community. He further stated that Chairman Crowley has been the most active and involved Chairman. He recommended his re-appointment as Chairman.

Chief of Operations Bruno stated that he appreciates Chairman Crowley's commitment.

Commissioner Rich stated that it has been an honor to serve with Chairman Crowley.

Chairman Crowley stated that his role as Chairman, and a Commissioner, is to facilitate uninfluenced discussions, without any attempt to influence a vote. He further stated that there was discussion about a potential resignation; however, if the Board still has confidence in him serving as Chairman, he has no intention of resigning and will continue to serve honorably.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 4) 2022-004: BOC Resolution (BOC Vice Chairman)

Commissioner Rich made a motion to table Resolution 2022-004, Relating to the Election of the Vice Chairman of the Board of Commissioners for District No. 1. Commissioner Powell seconded the motion.

The floor was opened for public comment. There was no public comment.

Commissioner Gay stated that the By-Laws do not have a “Vice Chairman” position in them.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 5) 2022-005: BOC Resolution (Professional Services Vote of Confidence- Human Resource & Commercial Insurance)

Commissioner McDowell made a motion to adopt Resolution 2022-005, Relating to the Vote of Confidence for Providers of Professional Human Resource & Commercial Insurance Services for District No. 1. Commissioner Rich seconded the motion.

The floor was opened for public comment. There was no public comment.

Chief Kaufmann recommended a vote of confidence.

Chairman Crowley thanked Mr. Waniewski for the services PMI continues to provide, while maintaining a fixed rate fee for the services.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 6) 2022-006: BOC Resolution (Professional Services Vote of Confidence- General Accounting & Write –up)

Commissioner Rich made a motion to adopt Resolution 2022-006, Relating to the Vote of Confidence for Professional General Accounting Services for District No. 1). Commissioner Powell seconded the motion.

The floor was opened for public comment. There was no public comment.

Chief Kaufmann recommended a vote of confidence.

Chairman Crowley thanked Mrs. Gaudin (DHHM, LLP) for the level of service provided.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 7) 2022-007: BOC Resolution (Professional Services Vote of Confidence – Legal Services)

Commissioner Gay made a motion to adopt Resolution 2022-007, Relating to the Vote of Confidence for Professional Services (Legal Services) for District No. 1. Commissioner Rich seconded the motion.

The floor was opened for public comment. There was no public comment.

Attorney Ingram, despite Chairman Crowley’s request to speak at the podium, advised that he would be resigning. He requested an exit survey and to be part of the transition and that the resignation be effective May 1. He further thanked the Board for allowing him the opportunity to serve.

Commissioner Powell made a motion to accept the resignation. Commissioner Gay seconded the motion.

The floor was opened for public comment.

Commissioner Rich thanked Mr. Ingram for his services to the district.

Chairman Crowley stated that he genuinely appreciates that Mr. Ingram’s intent was to do the best he could, and thanked him for his commitment.

The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Gay made a motion to adopt Resolution 2022-007, Relating to the Vote of Confidence for Professional Services (Legal Services) for District No. 1. Commissioner Powell seconded the motion.

The floor was opened for public comment. There was no public comment.

Chief Kaufmann recommended a vote of no confidence.

Commissioner Rich stated that he and Commissioner Gay worked diligently on a set of evaluation standards and from his viewpoint, Attorney Ingram has met all, or most, of the standards. He further stated that he is confident that he can continue to serve as our Attorney, until May 1.

Commissioner Powell stated that she understands that the relationship has been strained. She commended Mr. Ingram, stating that she's always had good dealings with him. She further stated that in light of the situation, she felt it was right of him to resign, and is confident of his services through May 1.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 8) 2022-008: BOC Resolution (Approve Stat. 19 Advertisement for RFP)

Commissioner Rich made a motion to adopt Resolution 2022-008, Relating to the Request for Proposals to Bid Station 19 for District No. 1. Commissioner Powell seconded the motion.

The floor was opened for public comment. There was no public comment.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 9) Release for Review: Employee Handbook, SOP & SOG Revisions

- 10) Fire Chief Evaluation- due March 10

- c.) **Payroll** – (none)
- d.) **FRS (Firefighters Retirement System)** – (none)
- e.) **VFIS Special Risk Insurance & LWCC**- VFIS renewal is in May and we are working on the renewal questionnaire.

Commissioner McDowell made a motion to accept the PMI report. Commissioner Powell seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- 4) **Duplantier Hrapman Hogan & Maher, LLP**- Mrs. Gaudin discussed the December 2021 and January 2022 financial reports.

Commissioner Powell made a motion to accept the December 2021 and January 2022 financial reports. Commissioner McDowell seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Crowley stated that with regards to a “Vice Chairman” vote in March, we may need to update the By-Laws. Commissioners Rich and Gay will work on this.

- 5) **Attorney's Report-**

Executive Session: *Discuss potential litigation: Anonymous (represented by Eric Hessler, esq.), St. Tammany Parish Government and St. Tammany Fire Protection District No. 1 regarding qualifications of commissioners.*

Chairman Crowley stated that Resolution 2022-009 will be discussed after Executive Session.

Commissioner Rich made a motion to go in to Executive Session. Commissioner Powell seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Executive Session convened at 7:33 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 8:37 p.m.

- 1) 2022-009: BOC Resolution (Approve Ratification of Professional Services – Legal Counsel)

Commissioner McDowell made a motion to adopt Resolution 2022-009, Relating to Retaining and Hiring Chad A. Danenhower as legal Counsel. Commissioner Rich seconded the motion.

The floor was opened for public comment. There was no public comment.

The motion carried unanimously.

6) Board of Commissioner Comments

- Succession Planning (Commissioner Gay) – Commissioner Gay stated that with Chairman Crowley’s commitment to continue to serve, this will not be necessary at this time. He further stated that they may include succession planning in the By-Laws.
- BOC Action Item Review- (none)

Commissioner Powell stated they if anyone has any questions on the process, from beginning to end, from where she was approached to now, she’d be happy to meet.

Troy Brackett welcomed Commissioner Powell and offered his assistance, if needed.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:41 p.m.