



Village of Westmont ADMINISTRATION

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Village Board Fire Public Safety Committee ~ Regular Meeting ~ MINUTES

~ Thursday, December 14, 2023 ~

CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Nero called the meeting to order at 1631 hours.

PRESENT

Mayor Gunter, Deputy Clerk Richards, Village Manager May, Assistant Village Manager Parker, Trustee Barker, Trustee Brady, Trustee Guzzo, Trustee Liddle, Trustee Nero, and Trustee Simonovich.

ALSO PRESENT

Fire Chief Riley, D/C Fitzgerald, B/C Blaskovich, FPB Director Berkowitz, Police Chief Gunther, Community Development Director Hennerfeind, Public Works Director Reis, Supervisor of Administrative Services Mielcarski, Human Resources Director Brainerd, Interim Finance Director Narducci, Administrative Assistant Hoxha, Administrative Assistant Olsson, Administrative Assistant Saldivar and Communications Specialist McIntyre.

ABSENT - Clerk Szymski

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was received.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 1, 2023 PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Trustee Liddle made a motion, seconded by Trustee Barker, to approve June 1, 2023, Public Safety Committee Minutes as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

New Fire Department Administrative Assistant II - Denisa Hoxha

Fire Chief Riley introduced Administrative Assistant Denisa Hoxha as the new administrative assistant for the Fire Prevention Bureau. He also stated that Administrative Assistant Hoxha has started cross-training in payroll and billing services with Administrative Assistant Saldivar.

NEW BUSINESS

Fire Prevention Updates

FPB Director Berkowitz gave updates on two properties in Westmont. He advised that at 41 N. Cass, the sprinkler system has been installed and the underground work is complete. All that is needed now is a hydro test. He also advised that at 6410 S. Cass, the sprinkler plans have

been approved and the sprinkler pipe is being manufactured. They are also working with community development to obtain an underground permit.

Fines vs. Violations

FPB Director Berkowitz said the Fire Department is restructuring how they issue fines to be more in line with Community Development. The Department will issue a \$100.00 fee to occupants and/or properties for every re-inspection for non-compliance of the Annual Fire and Life Safety Inspection after two inspections. He also said that they will be fined for false/trouble alarms if there are more than two over a six-month period. If they have a fire alarm system or life safety system that they don't get repaired within 72 hours, they will be issued a citation to appear at adjudication rather than immediately issuing fees. Currently, there have been many false/trouble alarms at Eagle Creek Apartments due to a non-compliant system.

EMS Billing Update - Explore Switching Companies

Fire Chief Riley has advised that Andres Medical Billing has been sold to EMS|MC and that they are lowering the fees that the Fire Department receives. Therefore, the Department is exploring other options before deciding to continue with EMS|MC or to switch companies.

Deputy Chief Opening

Fire Chief Riley said that Police Chief Gunther and Human Resources Director Brainerd have been working to bring D/C Fitzgerald as a full-time Deputy Chief after retiring from the Chicago Fire Department. After January 1st, Police Chief Gunther and Fire Chief Riley will start working on an internal process to choose a second Deputy Chief. This process will be run by the Human Resources Department and will eventually be brought to Village Manager May and the Village Board for approval.

Annual Compliance Report (ACR)

D/C Fitzgerald stated that for Accreditation, the Fire Department must submit an Annual Compliance Report. A Fire Chief in Wisconsin evaluated the compliance report submitted. Per his recommendation, this was the first time the Department split the types of calls and the statistics look differently. He went on to give an update on the number of calls for the year. Overall, the total number of calls is up 5% and EMS calls are up 3.06%, making it the highest call volume the Fire Department has had.

Staffing Update

Fire Chief Riley shared that there are currently 67 members and 30 paramedics in the Fire Department, which is the lowest number of paramedics in the last 27 years. Five candidates just graduated from the fire academy and two of those will be attending EMT school. There are also three members on leave of absence. D/C Fitzgerald is taking over the hiring process and the Department is taking paramedics first. D/C Fitzgerald said there will be more paramedics soon because there are several members close to graduating paramedic school or are waiting for their license in the mail. He hopes to keep any new paramedics on board for at least a year and a half to two years, but they can be gone within nine months to work at full-time departments due to the demand from other villages.

ISO Class 1

Fire Chief Riley advised that the Fire Department has remained ISO Class 1 and is waiting for the certificate at this time.

New Engine Committee

Fire Chief Riley said that the timeframe for a new engine is currently 45 - 49 months. The Department was due to replace an engine in 2025 but now it's more likely to be replaced in 2027. The last engine was purchased for \$657,000 and the new engine is priced at \$1.172 million. Currently, the entire fleet is from Pierce. However, the Department will be looking at other vendors in order to attempt to bring the price and/or the timeframe down.

HQ Fire Station Update

Public Works Director Reis had a meeting with representatives from Leopardo Construction at the Fire Department Headquarters along with D/C Fitzgerald, Police Chief Gunther and Virgil Viscuso of Public Works to discuss the next steps of either updating, remodeling, adding an addition to the current building or constructing a new building. Public Works Director Reis stated that they will do a space analysis first which takes about 6 months to complete. She also stated that once a decision has been made, the design documents take about 6 months or more and that construction can take anywhere from 9 - 12 months or longer if they could only work on parts of the building at a time. She advised that the next step is an RFQ for a space needs study. Trustee Barker recommends hiring a forensic investigator to see if it's worthwhile adding to the old building.

Emergency Management Agency (EMA)

Fire Chief Riley has replaced David Weiss as the new EMA Director. There are currently 21 members in EMA, 2 of which have zero hours of volunteer time, therefore, they will be released. This will bring the total members down to 19 from the highest number of 35 and the number keeps decreasing. The volunteers contributed 837 volunteer hours which is the most hours in the last 10 years, saving the Village about \$25,000 had they been paid. Fire Chief Riley advised that EMA is continuing to look for more volunteers and he would like to create more incentives in order to attract more volunteers.

There being no other business to discuss, Trustee Nero motioned to adjourn, to which Trustee Liddle seconded. The meeting subsequently adjourned at 1720 hours.

Respectfully submitted,
Jacqueline Saldivar
Recording Secretary