

**Village Board Fire Public Safety Committee
~ Regular Meeting ~
MINUTES**

~ Thursday, January 28, 2021 ~

CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Guzzo called the blended meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

PRESENT

Mayor Gunter, Clerk Szynski, Trustee Barker, Trustee Brady, Trustee Guzzo, Trustee Liddle, Trustee Nero, Village Manager May, Fire Chief Riley and Finance Director Parker.

ALSO PRESENT

Deputy Fire Chief O'Hare, Deputy Fire Chief Connolly, Deputy Fire Chief Fitzgerald, Police Chief Gunther, Human Resources Director Brainard, Community Development Director Sylvester, Communications Director McIntyre, Communications Assistant Babyar, Admin. Asst. Mielcarski, Battalion Chief Kielczynski, Battalion Chief Blaskovich, Lt. Boyce, Lt. Newton and Lt. Zasada

ABSENT

Trustee Barry

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was received.

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 5, 2020 PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Trustee Liddle made a motion, seconded by Trustee Barker to approve the November 5, 2020 Public Safety Committee Minutes as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

CAPTAIN PROMOTIONS

Fire Chief Riley said Deputy Chief O'Hare handled the Captain promotional testing process resulting in five members successfully completing the promotional process. Three of the five members were being promoted to Captain Rank. Mayor Gunter administered the Oath of Office to Lt. Boyce, Lt. Newton and Lt. Zasada with their families pinning their new badges. All three members have been with the Westmont Fire Department for 19-20 years and have been very active in fire department operations.

FIRE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

Battalion Chief Kielczynski acting as the Awards Committee Chair presented Fire Chief Riley with the 2020 Fire Department Employee of the Year Award.

LIEUTENANT TESTING UPDATE

Deputy Fire Chief O'Hare advised after promoting three members to the captain rank there is now a need to fill lieutenant positions. A total of 13 members have submitted a letter of intent to challenge the lieutenant promotional process. He further stated this is the highest number challenging the process in the last several years. Candidates are currently reviewing study material in preparation for the process to begin in late February.

NEW HIRE UPDATE

Deputy Fire Chief O'Hare said the new hire process has been completed with a total of 15 members being hired. Background checks and physicals are underway with the six week Westmont Fire Department training program scheduled to begin on February 23rd. They should be ready to start working shifts by May 1st.

SURVEY CARD UPDATE

Deputy Fire Chief O'Hare said staff is continually evaluating practices relating to the accreditation process. In response to this a resident survey card was developed in an effort to better evaluate emergency response services. The program has been in place for two months with an approximate 12% response rate. Staff is evaluating data and will provide updates once available. The Village will continue to promote and encourage responses in an effort to evaluate and improve fire department operations.

SPRING VIRTUAL CITIZENS FIRE ACADEMY CLASS

Fire Chief Riley said the Fire Department will once again be hosting a Spring Virtual Citizens Fire Academy beginning on April 1st and commencing on April 29th. The virtual format was well received last year with approximately 13 residents attending the online program. Trustee Guzzo expressed her approval and support of the Citizens Fire Academy program stating she attended the very first class years ago.

NORCOMM / ACDC FIRE ALARM CONTRACT

Fire Chief Riley said the Norcomm / ACDC fire alarm contract would be tabled until a later meeting as information was still under review by Village Attorney Zemanek.

SOUTH FIRE DISTRICT CONTRACT

Fire Chief Riley said the South Fire District fire protection contract is due to expire on May 31, 2021. Village Attorney Zemanek is currently drafting a two year fire protection contract which will be presented at the February 11th Village Board meeting for approval.

GEMT FUNDS UPDATE

Fire Chief Riley said monthly GEMT funding reimbursement has started but is approximately four to five months behind in payments. Monies received in 2020 totaled \$173,774.10. Staff anticipated increasing funding in upcoming months.

2020 YEAR END REPORT

Fire Chief Riley said Deputy Fire Chiefs Connolly, Fitzgerald and O'Hare prepared the 2020 Year End Report highlighting Fire Department activities. He further advised Deputy Chief Fitzgerald will be deploying for approximately one year under the United States Coast Guard. Fire Chief Riley commended him for his 28.5 years Coast Guard career and thanked him for his service.

Deputy Fire Chief Fitzgerald presented a slide presentation highlighting the 2020 Year End Report. He said the Fire Department Mission Statement was updated to reflect updated visions and goals. The report is attached to the minutes for reference.

OTHER

Trustee Barker said discussion was previously held pertaining to fire department hiring and difficulty finding and maintaining adequate staff members. He questioned if there was still an issue especially during COVID. Chief Riley advised the fire department is managing and sustaining despite COVID. Staff members have been temporarily reassigned to various positions in an effort to keep all apparatus available. He further said a hiring process was recently completed and an additional 12 members will be joining the fire department. Chief Riley also advised Battalion Chief Carl Lite will be retiring on February 17th after nearly 40 years in the fire service. Further discussion followed pertaining to consolidation with other area departments. Manager May advised studies have been completed but it is a very complex process.

Fire Chief Riley advised that Tom Schultz has been promoted to the Fire Prevention Bureau Director along with hiring two additional inspectors to fill the two open positions created through retirements. Staff hopes the addition of two inspectors will increase annual life safety inspections in 2021.

Fire Chief Riley discussed the disposal of hazardous materials through the fire department. Residents on occasion will bring in fuel, medication, etc. for disposal. Rather than turning residents away and directing them to the Hazardous Waste Disposal site in Naperville the fire department on occasion will accept the materials. Staff feels a possible prescription, battery recycling, etc boxes may be beneficial for Westmont residents. Mayor Gunter suggested placing recycling containers near the Safe Exchange location at the Police Department. Staff to investigate further and report back.

There being no other business to discuss, Trustee Liddle motioned to adjourn, to which Trustee Barker seconded. The meeting subsequently adjourned at 5:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Hardy
Recording Secretary