



Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors
Of the Wentzville Fire Protection District of March 21, 2023

The Regular Meeting of the Wentzville Fire Protection District was held on March 16, 2023, at Wentzville Fire District Headquarters, 502 Luetkenhaus Blvd, Wentzville, MO 63385

Chief Schneider called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. He asked for a moment of silence in honor of E. Robert Dick's passing. Upon the end of silence, Chief Schneider led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Open Forum: No one from the public spoke.

Roll Call: Chief Schneider called roll. Two Board Members were present Director Bob Hawkins-present, Director Jennifer Houston-absent, and Director Frank Grassmuck-present.

Also in attendance were Assistant Chief John LeDoux, Deputy Chief Michael Scott, Fire Marshal Chris Cuddihee, Battalion Chief Joe Hutson, and several members of the department sign-in sheet attached.

The agenda was approved with the addition of approval of the bills. On a motion by Director Hawkins and a second from Director Grassmuck. Director Hawkins-aye, Director Houston-absent, Director Grassmuck-aye.

On a motion of Director Hawkins and second of Director Grassmuck, the regular meeting minutes of March 16, 2023, were approved. Director Hawkins-aye, Director Houston-absent, Director Grassmuck-aye.

Director Hawkins motioned to approve the bills as presented. Director Grassmuck seconded it. Director Hawkins-aye, Director Houston-absent, Director Grassmuck-aye.

Old Business:

No Old Business

New Business:

Chief Schneider talked through what was discussed in planning last week about the direction of the district in the future and the need to explore options for renewing the bond. He stated that the optimal time to do this would be August 2024. It would be ten years from our last bond, an August primary, and if a general tax would be considered, funds would be received in January 2025. Nothing has been set in stone. The board has engaged Stifel for municipal services to look at structuring a no-tax-increase bond based on assessments and strategic planning by committees for items deemed necessary for the future. It is important to have board involvement in these processes. Chief Schneider informed the group that if you are not on a committee, please feel free to bring structured information to the committees; he wants a positive environment. He is proud to say we did what we promised to do in the last ten years.

This was because of the positive management by the group of the past bond and tax. Timelines are important; the district will take a systematic approach. He stated that truck vendors say 30-36 months out, so the committees need to prepare and not get frustrated. Chief Schneider said we want to get as much done before committing to funds. Communication will be key; we have set up email groups. Committees are two members per shift. Browder wants to move on from Equipment and will work with Hohenshell to take over. There was a discussion regarding the GIS and Data committee. We are working with Arc GIS software and have contracted with a Metro West Firefighter who has worked with this program for the past ten years; Hutson will have a split dual role with LeDoux on this committee. Hohenshell and P. Szarwinski were the only two to volunteer for the Pension Committee, so that committee stands. As for Operational Deployment, Huston is chairing. The goal is to look at various apparatus in the district and what we need, not just for 2024 but for the next ten years, tanker, brush trucks, etc. Committees must all interact with each other. Communication is key, and the core value of caring for people, our residents, and our personnel is vital. We must put personal wants and desires aside. In closing, we want good communication between the committees, and we embrace labor management. Work through the process. Shop Steward Mueller agreed with Chief Schneider. He stated that we have been good with our budget and timelines in ten years. We look forward to putting together another 5–10-year plan. Shop Steward Mueller stated that moving forward, the shop may need to ask the board about some things; we have people looking to retire, and in keeping with taking care of personnel and members, there will be some proposals made to request actuarial studies for retirement pension (currently 100% funded), we will need to look at options for the benefit and how it looks if hiring were to take place. There is a need for studies on station placement as the district continues to grow as well.

Director Hawkins stated it is hard to believe it has been ten years. Director Hawkins, in the beginning, wondered how the plan would be pulled off and still take care of the day-to-day. He has been impressed. He stated that the board's job is made easy because when suggestions are brought to them, they know they have been researched. Rank and file are doing the right thing. He knows studies must be completed to know where we need to grow. Director Hawkins is looking forward to moving forward. Joint effort working together accomplished the pension, and we can conquer many things. Director Hawkins is proud to be affiliated with Wentzville Fire. The district set out to do what we said we would do. The residents of Wentzville should see what has been accomplished.

Director Grassmuck concurred with Director Hawkins. He said our members make it easy because they do their research. Director Grassmuck is amazed at the District's PR program and interactions with the public.

Firefighter Paramedic Stenslokken stated that it makes the staff's job easier to know that a board supports its members and families; it is a definite motivator. Director Hawkins stated that he knows he has heard the horror of the other districts but is thankful things like that don't go on out here because of the positive efforts and management.

Mosher: Brought up the property tax bills. Schneider stated there are people following it; we are in a political environment, and wiping it out totally is not a good avenue for anyone; people are looking into a long depreciation process over 15 years possibly; people in our county drive this initiative, so it is being watched. He discussed the preliminary numbers and the growth of our district. We are blessed at where we sit.

There was a discussion on the tax rate. The preliminary assessment shows that the general tax rate will be \$0.57. and the debt service to be \$0.09. We projected in 2014 to collect \$0.18 for debt service but only went to \$0.12; Debt service pays the note. If we stay on track with growth, it is possible not to have to go above \$0.09. The committee will be looking at the need for a general initiative. Chief Schneider stated that reserves are positive. Director Hawkins said that

12-18 months in reserves is the norm in his environment because we saw what can happen; when Director Hawkins got involved, we only had 22 days in reserve, so we have come a long way.

Director Grassmuck asked about the future growth and development of the district. Fire Marshal Cuddihee stated that he does see growth continuing.

Officers Report:

Chief Schneider had nothing to report.

Assistant Chief LeDoux updated the board on the solar panel issue at 209 W. Pearce. It appears to be a dead issue, and he does not foresee future discussions.

Deputy Chief Scott stated that the training room was ready for the outside class with Dennis LeGear.


Fire Marshal Cuddihee had nothing to report.


Battalion Chief Hutson had nothing to report.

Shop Steward Mueller had nothing to report.

Legal Counsel McLaughlin was absent.

On a motion of Director Hawkins and a second of Director Grassmuck, the meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m. Director Hawkins-aye, Director Houston-present, Director Grassmuck-aye.


Frank Grassmuck, Secretary


Stacy Krieger, Recording Secretary

