

Town of Menasha Board of Supervisors Special Meeting
Fire Station #40 - 1326 Cold Spring Rd. - August 29, 2007

Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Town Chair Arden Tews called the Meeting to order at 8:40 p.m. Present were Supervisors McQuillan (also Ad-Hoc Committee member), Hanson, McNamee, and Youngquist. Fire Ad-Hoc Committee members present were: Dave McFadden, Kris Koeppel, William Otto, Pam Jentz, Mike Dillon, Fire Chief Kiesow, Dep. Fire Chief Phillips, Division Chief Sweeney, Ed Wiese (arrived 9:10 p.m.). Committee members absent were: Amos Mikkelsen, Pat Thiel, Linda Wiese, Mike Allcox.

Others present: Administrator Sturgell, Dir. of Finance Piergrossi, P. C. Reporter Mike King, Jay Schroeder, Diane Gallagher, Kelly Sweeney, Grand Chute Fire Chief Tim Bantes, Darron Breckenridge, Mark Hesselman, Ken Mattison, Mike Negro. Arriving at 9:10 p.m. were firefighters: Ryan Hintz, Jon Ziepkel, Earl Hesselman, and Mike Gallagher.

2. FIRE DEPARTMENT AD-HOC COMMITTEE PRESENTATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Deputy Chief Phillips began the presentation drafted by the Fire Ad-Hoc Committee. All committee members in attendance presented and provided background information about themselves.

After introductions, Deputy Chief Phillips, Chief Kiesow, Mike Dillon, Bill Otto, Kris Koeppel, and Dave McFadden continued with the presentation. Discussion between the Board and Committee members continued throughout the presentation. The Committee explained that they reviewed several focus areas of the fire department to try and find ways to improve fire service, and concluded that improving response times would provide benefit to the Town. Chairman Tews inquired whether the Committee had reviewed mutual aid agreements and consolidation with other communities. The response was that the Committee did not fully review consolidation as that was not within their means to control or address. When discussing mutual aid agreements the Committee suggested that without the Town having a full-time staff to respond to fire calls, other communities would not be eager to negotiate improved agreements. Supervisor McNamee stated he would like to see the Town develop a series of strategic goals that would allow him to evaluate this study in an overall Town context.

The Committee made a recommendation to the Board to hire three (3) new full-time firefighters to work a day shift. The three firefighters, along with the current firefighter, would allow the department to staff a four man crew during the day to respond to daytime fires. The Committee further requested thoughts from the Board regarding the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant—a grant that would help offset the costs of hiring the firefighters (see attached presentation.)

After discussion, the Board provided a consensus to Chief Kiesow to submit the SAFER application (which was due on August 31, 2007), with the understanding that even if the Town gets the grant, it is not a guarantee that the Town would be able to fund the firefighters. An increase to the budget of this magnitude would likely have to be decided by a levy limit referendum should levy limits be placed back on municipalities. The Board also requested information from Chief Kiesow to include number of fire calls and number of responder calls from 2006 and previous years.

3. OPEN DISCUSSION

Resident Jay Schroeder raised a concern about the cost of the full-time firefighters, and whether the needs of the other departments of the Town had been taken into consideration when the recommendation was made. Discussion ensued.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The Board thanked the members of the Committee for their time and effort in putting together the information and presentation.

At 10:45 p.m. MOTION: Hanson/McQuillan to adjourn. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey Sturgell, Administrator