

**LOWER ST. CROIX VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT  
MEETING MINUTES  
(via Zoom)  
February 10, 2021  
7:00 p.m.**

**DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Richard Bend, Randy Nelson [arrived late], Kris Peterson, Tom McCarthy, Don James, Pete DeCorsey, Beth Olfelt-Nelson, Brian Zeller

**ABSENT:** Gary Williams, Tim Schroeder

**DISTRICT STAFF:** Chief Jim Stanley, Deputy Chief Kevin Kirby, Deputy Chief Rob Corey, Treasurer Tom Niedzwiecki

**DEPARTMENT MEMBERS:** Ralph Piscitello, Kevin Wall, Steve Fogarty, Mike Campbell

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Bend called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL was taken.**

**3. AGENDA APPROVAL**

Chair Bend requested the following additional items be added to the Agenda: 3% annual raise for firefighters, report from the Relief Association, and State requirements for roll call for online meetings. **M/S/P (Don James / Beth Olfelt-Nelson) to approve the February 10, 2021 Agenda as amended. By roll call, Bend aye, DeCorsey aye, James aye, McCarthy aye, Olfelt-Nelson aye, Peterson aye, Zeller aye. Motion passed 7-0-3.**

**4. MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL**

**M/S/P (Richard Bend / Beth Olfelt-Nelson) to approve the January 13, 2021 Minutes as presented. By roll call, Bend aye, DeCorsey aye, James aye, McCarthy aye, Olfelt-Nelson aye, Peterson aye, Zeller aye. Motion passed 7-0-3.**

**5. TREASURER/ACCOUNTANT REPORT – Tom Niedzwiecki**

**Monthly Financials**

Tom Niedzwiecki presented Financial Reports for Full Year 2020 Final pending approval.

	<u>Balance 12.31.19</u>	<u>Balance 12.31.20</u>
100 General Fund Cash & Transfers	\$ 112,464.13	\$ 123,944.17
Total 100 General Fund	\$ 61,750.17	\$ 62,076.55
150 Ambulance Fund (\$15,000.00 transfer)	\$ 84,816.79	\$ 94,607.96
Total 900 Designated Funds	\$ 144,056.32	\$ 145,189.89

**Full Year Percentages**

Operating Income 99.7%

Operating Expense / Personnel 100.4%

Facilities & Administration 96.1%

Insurance 15% ambulance, 85% fire 91.6%

Vehicles & Equipment 101.9%

Training 64.2%

Other Expenses 70.3%

440.1 Employee Recruitment Fund Transfer to Designated Fund \$2,300 (Appreciation)

Transfer from Ambulance Fund to General Fund 150 Amb Fund Net Inc (Exp) YTD \$ 15,412

Total Operating Funds YTD 739

**M/S/P (Richard Bend / Don James) to authorize the transfer of \$15,000 from the Ambulance Fund to the General Fund effective 2.10.2021. By roll call, Bend aye, DeCorsey aye, James aye, McCarthy aye, Olfelt-Nelson aye, Peterson aye, Zeller aye. Motion passed 7-0-3.**

Accountant Niedzwiecki continued – Michael Pofahl is willing to do the audit this year and will be proposing a contract through 2021; reason for only one year extension is that Tom Niedzwiecki retiring as

of 5.31.2022.

**M/S/P (Richard Bend / Randy Nelson) to approve Total Claims to be Approved from January 15, 2021 through February 10, 2021 [checks 14384 to 14398] and EFT/Direct Deposits [202102: 001 to 029] in the amount of \$43,834.23 as presented. By roll call, Bend aye, DeCorsey aye, James aye, McCarthy aye, Nelson aye, Olfelt-Nelson aye, Peterson aye, Zeller aye. Motion passed 8-0-2.**

**M/S/P (Kris Peterson / Don James) to approve a 3% annual raise for firefighters, the district board, and department officers. By roll call, Bend aye, DeCorsey aye, James aye, McCarthy aye, Nelson aye, Olfelt-Nelson aye, Peterson aye, Zeller aye. Motion passed 8-0-2.**

Tom Niedzwiecki has also been working on billings from Comcast and Lakeland Water (PeopleService) bills to credit past sales tax billed to the Department.

Based on State Relief Association financial documents, the Relief Association is making a formal request that all 5-cities ratify a \$600/year increase; it is planned that this presentation, that was provided by Ralph Piscitello in Kevin Johnson's absence, be presented to all five cities; any comments and/or suggestions are welcome [Beth Olfelt-Nelson has suggestions].

Relief Association members include Kevin Wall President                      Ralph Piscitello Vice President  
Mike Cruz Secretary                      Kevin Johnson Treasurer  
Chip Hannigan, Simon Wirth, Jim Stanley ex officio, and  
District Members Beth Olfelt-Nelson and Don James.

#### **6. FINANCE COMMITTEE – Beth Olfelt-Nelson**

Held joint Finance/Operation Committee meetings and discussed potential fire rescue boat; plan to close out Year Ending December 31, 2020 and are beginning work on budget for 2022; Tom Niedzwiecki will set up a spreadsheet to facilitate projection for new budget.

Two acquisitions were discussed –

- Engine of which \$780,000 has been set aside; suggestion to order truck at the March District meeting; will replace 2015 truck they have spent \$3,000 last month for maintenance; financed over 10 years and still submitting payments.
- 24' boat at \$110,000; \$110,000 financed over five years works out for cashflow [Tom Niedzwiecki]. Discussion on need for boat and input from the DNR and Washington County Sheriff's Department on needed runs.

**M/S/P (Kris Peterson / Randy Nelson) to purchase a 24' boat for the District at the cost of \$110,000 (250 horsepower). By roll call, Bend aye, DeCorsey aye, James aye, McCarthy aye, Nelson aye, Olfelt-Nelson aye, Peterson aye, Zeller aye. Motion passed 8-0-2.**

Further conditions discussed acquiring based on laws and rules governing State purchasing and contracting. As Hudson is also contemplating purchase of a boat, the purchase consortium could provide benefit.

#### **7. OPERATION COMMITTEE – Don James**

Recommend another month for discussing the engine at operation committee meeting in March.

#### **8. AMBULANCE COMMITTEE – Kris Peterson**

Chief Stanley indicated they had discussion with Transmedic and were given many reasons and excuses. Accountant Niedzwiecki verified when accounts are written off; process reduces receivables and allowance for collectible accounts. At the December meeting, Randy Nelson had asked what is done with obsolete equipment when replacements are purchased; old fire equipment is usually thrown in the dumpster and electronics recycled.

#### **9. COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE – Pete DeCorsey (no report)**

#### **10. LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE – Richard Bend**

Meeting scheduled for Monday, February 22, at 6:00 p.m. for Long Range Planning, and at 7 p.m. Finance Committee.

#### **11. BYLAWS REVISION COMMITTEE – Richard Bend**

Completed red lines of Joint Powers Agreement and of Bylaws. Work will begin next on department rules and regulations then on procurement and purchasing policy. Discussion whether to discuss individually or bring to District Meeting all at one time to review. Consensus all at one time.

**12. FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT – Chief Jim Stanley**

Assistant Chief Kevin Kirby

Kevin Kirby - A 50/50 grant is available from the DNR; Department would like to purchase 12 pagers at a cost of \$4,250 of which \$2,125 would be an expense.

**M/S/P (Don James / Kris Peterson) to grant permission for the Fire Department to apply for the grant available from the DNR for the purchase of 12 pagers at a total cost of \$4,250 [State of MN grant \$2,125 / District expense \$2,125]. By roll call, Bend aye, DeCorsey aye, James aye, McCarthy aye, Nelson aye, Olfelt-Nelson aye, Peterson aye, Zeller aye. Motion passed 8-0-2.**

The Department currently has a 2003 diesel three-quarter-ton brush pick up truck with under 100,000 miles they will be selling for \$10-12,000; discussion if it should be offered to the five cities or sell outright. Randy Nelson suggested they offer the truck to the 5 communities first – right of first refusal and closed bid process w/minimum bid also suggested. Consensus to offer to cities initially in spring.

Plan to use the procurement policy for backend of grass rig advertising for bids in Gazette with specified closing date awarding March 10 where they will open bids and accept the lowest bid as required.

Assistant Chief Rob Corey

Continuing building inspections in Lake St. Croix Beach; city anticipating moving forward with rental inspections and will know in the next couple of months.

**13. OLD BUSINESS – Purchasing Policy Review**

Being discussed by Bylaws Committee

**14. NEW BUSINESS – Add Department Member Input to Agenda**

Randy Nelson suggested having an item within the monthly agenda for individual department member input to the District; would be a good addition to allow members to voice any concerns and/or suggestions.

**M/S/P (Don James / Randy Nelson) to amend the monthly agenda adding Department Member Input immediately after the Meeting Minutes Approval and ensuring all department members are invited to attend the monthly District Meeting. By roll call, Bend aye, DeCorsey aye, James aye, McCarthy aye, Nelson aye, Olfelt-Nelson aye, Peterson aye, Zeller aye. Motion passed 8-0-2.**

**15. ADJOURN**

**M/S/P (Richard Bend / Pete DeCorsey) to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 p.m. By roll call, Bend aye, DeCorsey aye, James aye, McCarthy aye, Nelson aye, Olfelt-Nelson aye, Peterson aye, Zeller aye. Motion passed 8-0-2.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Kate Piscitello