

**Cloquet Area Fire District Board
City Hall
October 29, 2008 Meeting Minutes**

Regular Meeting.
Roll Call.

Members Present: Ahlgren, Nemmers, Harms, DeMenge, and DeCaigny.
Members Absent: None.
Staff Present: Langenbrunner, Olson, Meagher, Tobeleski and Schroeder
Others Present: Fritsinger and Tom Marshall

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The Board began the meeting by discussing the need to elect officers. Consensus was reached as follows:

- Bob DeCaigny – Chairperson
- Stan DeMenge – Vice Chair
- Neil Nemmers – Chair Elect

The Board clarified that the Vice Chair serves in the capacity of the Chairperson over the next year when the Chair is absent and that the Chair Elect will take over the Chair seat in the future.

AGENDA

The Board asked that the format for the agenda be changed for future meetings. Action on the approval of the agenda should be added as well as the agenda being segregated under “new business” and “old business”. For today’s agenda the Board asked that a brief review of the JPA be added.

MINUTES

The minutes of the regular meeting of October 15, 2008 were presented. The minutes were approved with a correction to the spelling of Board member DeMenge’s name.

JPA EQUIPMENT

Mr. Fritsinger reviewed the last item to be completed in terms of the JPA is the Equipment Lease. Both communities have prepared a very detailed breakdown on the inventory of all items. Attorney Yetka has suggested that only the large pieces of equipment be included in the lease.

The Board clarified that it would like to see any equipment with a current value of \$7,500 or more to be included in the lease. Staff was directed to bring back the final draft of the lease to the next meeting.

MUTUAL AID NOTICES

Staff noted that the mutual aid notices were sent out from Cloquet as requested and that Perch Lake was still in the process of doing so. Cloquet was asked to e-mail the mailing list of the communities notified about the mutual aid change to Steve Olson.

LEGISLATION

Mr. Fritsinger reviewed the history of this issue and discussions that took place during the broader Carlton County meetings with area legislators. If the Board is looking to obtain the ability to levy property taxes as part of the District concept for both Fire and EMS, then legislation is needed to do so.

The Board was in support of moving forward with discussions on a proposed Bill and asked that staff also review the PSA language to potentially limit our responsibilities outside our communities.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Mr. Schroeder reviewed the draft organizational structure that has been developed for the District. This structure is being set up with the theory that it will withstand the test of additional members communities being added in the future. Staff clarified the point that only one new position is being added under this structure and that the Perch Lake/POC portion still needs additional refinement.

The issues of wage rates or union/non-union membership has not yet been addressed for the Battalion Chief positions. All positions within the organization, including the Training Chief, are still expected to be firefighter/paramedics.

The Board suggested that the structure be adjusted slightly to incorporate the Operating Committee and Community members.

Steve Olson clarified that current Perch Lake firefighters are paid under a points system for participation in departmental activities. They get compensated based upon overall percentage.

Mr. Schroeder was asked to continue to flush out the organizational structure and costs of the proposed structure. Some investigation with other similar type organizations from around the State would be appropriate.

RULES & REGULATIONS

Chief Langenbrunner briefly touched on the Rules presented and clarified that those presented today are more like personnel policies rather than rules.

Mr. Meagher was asked to contact other similar departments in the State to see what type of rules and policies that they have to consider at future meetings.

Tom Marshall, IAFF, noted the union is supportive of the JPA and changes being considered but will be looking for clarification on the potential loss of benefits and wages. The Board asked that staff provide all Board members with a copy of the current IAFF labor agreement at the next meeting.

Staff was directed to put a draft date and revision dates on all documents that go the Board so that the changes can be tracked.

AMBULANCE AGREEMENTS

Mr. Langenbrunner noted he is still working on the various letters and notices related to the EMS side of the operation. He does not see any significant changes in Mutual Aid with EMS like we

might see on the fire side. Perch Lake also has some First Responder agreements that will need to be addressed.

HOUSEKEEPING

Mr. Fritsinger reviewed the status of legal, fiscal and insurance areas. All are under some form of review at this time and should be ready to be discussed at the next meeting of the Board.

JPA

Chairman DeCaigny would like a more formal review of the JPA at a future meeting so that he can better understand some of the legal aspects of the agreement. It was suggested that Attorney Yetka attend a meeting to help clarify these questions. It was also suggested that the Board begin the consideration of By-laws and that staff find some examples of Fire/EMS By-laws for consideration.

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

Mr. Schroeder reviewed some of the information he received from his attendance at the Minnesota Fire Chief's Conference session on Cooperative Services.

Chairperson DeCaigny suggested that the District consider the development of a Mission Statement as a start for the new organization. This statement will help guide the organization as it deals with future issues. The Board debated both approaches including having staff prepare a draft statement for board consideration or holding a meeting with all staff to work together to develop a statement.

The Board was reminded that it needs four members for a quorum at all meetings.

It would be appropriate for the Board to work towards the discussion of goals & objectives at its January meeting.

The Board discussed communications, both internal & external, and the need to clarify this at a future meeting.

Chairman DeCaigny suggested that at the end of each meeting an Action Item list be developed so that all parties understand what tasks are to be completed and by whom for the next meeting. This should be added to the agenda.

The Board agreed for future meetings to be held at the Cloquet Fire Station to allow for the use of the training room and its computer capabilities to track the discussion and minutes in real time. Perch Lake will consider having its Clerk in attendance to assist with the minute taking.

LOGO

Staff reviewed the changes to the proposed District Logo. The Board was comfortable with this and directed staff to finalize it.

OTHER

Mr. Tobeleski addressed the Board and commented that the IAFF is looking forward to working with the Board and making a smooth transition to the new organization. Mr. Tobeleski and Mr. Marshall also discussed some of the specific concerns of union staff including PERA.

Staff was asked to send a copy of the Board meeting agenda packets to the union for each meeting.

PARKING LOT LIST

- Communications Plan
- By-laws
- Goals & Objectives

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 19, 2008 at the Cloquet Fire Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.