

CLOQUET AREA FIRE DISTRICT BOARD (CAFD) MEETING MINUTES

April 9, 2009

CAFD Station #2 Perch Lake Fire Hall, 6:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair DeCaigny called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Members present: DeCaigny, DeMenge, Harms, Nemmers

Member absent: Ahlgren

Staff: Langenbrunner, Klatt, Kolodge, Olson, Peterson, Schroeder

Others: Fritsinger, Eames (recorder)

2. Approval of April 9, 2009, Meeting Agenda

**MOTION (Harms/Nemmers): To approve the agenda with the following additions.
Motion carried.**

A. Station 2 resignation - added as NB item N

B. Mutual Aid Agreement Technical Rescue – added as NB item O

C. First Responder Agreement – Sawyer Township – added as NB item P

3. Approval of March 11, 2009, Meeting Minutes

MOTION (Nemmers/Harms): To approve the minutes as recorded. Motion carried.

4. Presentation/Visitors

None

5. Old Business

A. Update on Fire Mutual Aid Agreement Notices and Meetings

Langenbrunner provided the following updates:

(1) Carlton County Ambulance Mutual Aid – This agreement is making the rounds of three ambulance services for signatures.

(2) DNR (Department of Natural Resources) Forestry – CAFD is waiting for the return of this agreement.

(3) FDL (Fond Du Lac) Wildland Forestry – This agreement was recently approved by the RBC (Reservation Business Committee), but needs their signature.

B. Process of Creating Goals & Objectives to Further the Mission of the Fire District

DeCaigny said he had nothing new to report. In fact, this item can be removed from the agenda until further notice.

C. Update on Communications Plan Development including Website

Langenbrunner had nothing new to report since the March 11th meeting when Board members and staff had provided input. Schroeder was not at the March 11th meeting and asked for the input. These include the:

- (1) Perch Lake history update.
- (2) Posting photographs of fire personnel.

D. Update on Insurance Needs

Fritsinger reported that he and the Reliable Insurance Agency are in various stages of communication with the life, dental, and health carriers regarding their transfer of insurance from the city of Cloquet to the Fire District.

E. Fire/EMS Legislation Update on House File 1426

Langenbrunner reported that he and Fritsinger attended the House of Representatives meeting a couple of weeks ago regarding House File 1426. Today, he and Fritsinger met briefly with Senator Lourey and Representative Hilty in Cloquet City Hall, and heard that the Senate Tax Committee wants the taxing portion to be more specific with dollar limits.

Langenbrunner distributed the following draft tax language for consideration.

DRAFT

Replacement Language for Subdivision 3 of House File 1426

The district may impose a property tax on real and personal property in the district and to those cities and townships receiving service from the district. The actual cost of the provision of emergency medical services is currently \$1,150,000 to be levied against all within the PSA (primary service area) and the actual cost of fire and other emergency services \$1,200,000 against those within the fire district. This initial tax structure is to increase by a maximum of 1.5% above the (CPI) Consumer Price Index on an annual basis.

As additional communities and/or townships become members of the district the full additional cost of providing additional fire and emergency services to the new member communities will be determined and added to the initial base fire and emergency services tax to a maximum of 4.9 million at which time the 1.5% above the CPI on annual basis may be levied.

This tax shall be in an amount sufficient to discharge its operating expenses and debt payable each year. The applicable county auditor shall collect the tax and pay it to the fire and ambulance special taxing district. Further, the district may impose other fees or charges as allowed under statute for the provision of fire and ambulance services provided.

Langenbrunner explained how he determined the dollar limit. He found that Floodwood is the only ambulance taxing district in the state of Minnesota. Their primary service area is 1,500 to 2,000 persons, and their maximum taxing limit is \$450,000. The CAFD's primary service area is ten times that of Floodwood; therefore, the maximum tax limit should be ten to eleven times \$450,000. In this case, Langenbrunner set it at \$4,900,000.

In addition, Langenbrunner explained how he determined the 1.5%. Medicare sets their percentage at 1.0% above the CPI and does not include fuel and food.

Board members asked if the Senator Lourey had set a specific limit. Fritsinger answered in the negative, stating that the Senate Tax Committee members are not so concerned about the actual amount, as they are about having a limit and not handing the District a "blank check."

Fritsinger advised that he and Langenbrunner will return for another meeting on Tuesday. Strategically, they will have to be able to explain how the tax "works" within the primary service area. The county auditor must be able to separate the ambulance side from the fire side and determine how to apply the tax for CAFD (while knowing that it cannot be applied the same for all areas). The intent is that those areas which currently have their own fire protection should not be taxed for fire services.

Langenbrunner: Both Senator Lourey and Representative Hilty carried the message that government has to reform. Board members and staff agreed that the CAFD is setting the stage for reform by being a model of change.

MOTION (DeMenge/Nemmers): The Board conceptually supports the new draft language with a final version being presented to legislators in the Twin Cities. Motion carried.

F. Adoption of Personnel Policy

Langenbrunner asked if everyone had received a copy of the Personnel Policy Document sent by email on March 26, 2009. Harms and DeCaigny reported that they had not received the document.

The official Personnel Policy will be included in the Employee Handbook, along with the union contract and other documents. The Employee Handbook will not be ready for some time.

Langenbrunner listed three features of the Personnel Policy Document:

- (1) It is generic and covers everyone in the district.
- (2) It includes a supplement listing union provisions which will be updated as required and supersede specific provisions in the Document.
- (3) It has specific provisions for paid-on-call staff.

Harms asked if Langenbrunner was satisfied with the Personnel Policy Document in its present form and Langenbrunner said he was.

DeMenge noted that the procedures should include reporting deadlines for Workers Compensation. Langenbrunner advised that the following policies have always existed:

- (1) Paperwork begins immediately with reported injury.
- (2) Significant injuries and or fatalities must be reported immediately.
- (3) Formal notification must occur within 48 hours.

Schroeder promised to address this topic once he gets information from the carrier. He also described the document as a living document, subject to changes in the months to come.

Langenbrunner said he would prefer to have the Board vote on the Personnel Policy Document this meeting, since waiting would delay the posting of the Fire Equipment Operator. The new Personnel Policy Document must be posted for ten days prior to the posting of the Fire Equipment Operator under the new rules. Posting the Fire Equipment Operator position before approval of the new CAFD Personnel Policies would require posting post under the old city of Cloquet civil service rules.

MOTION (Nemmers/Harms): To approve the Personnel Policy Document as presented. Motion carried.

6. New Business

A. Review Vehicle Maintenance on all District Vehicles

Langenbrunner reported that Emergency Apparatus Maintenance, Inc., has performed its annual inspection of the District's vehicles and equipment. They will be back to perform actual maintenance on valves, gauges, and similar tasks. Captain Kolodge and Acting Captain Hills will take charge of the maintenance being done by the District, whether that is through city fleet personnel or Station 1 staff.

Langenbrunner described the significant problems with Station 2's 1986 Tanker 3. He suggested looking at an alternative to investing \$8,000 to \$10,000 into this unit for repairs. District staff will research the possibility of purchasing a used pumper tanker in Andover for \$5,000 - \$10,000. A new one could be at least \$100,000.

Diversified Inspections does the annual inspection for the structural integrity of the aerial tower (Station 1 Tower 108).

B. Fire Tender, Tanker Truck Update

Langenbrunner said that Station 2's Tanker 3 has been removed from service.

C. Standard Operating Procedures

Langenbrunner is currently working on standard operating procedures (SOPs) for both stations. SOPs include everything and are ultimately approved by the Chief.

D. 2010 Budget Development

Fritsinger advised that it is time to begin working on the 2010 Budget. Since the process is tied in with specific paid-on-call issues (i.e., fire relief pension) and union negotiations discussion, he suggested that the Board set up a subcommittee now to deal with these items. Langenbrunner noted that the union contract runs through December 31, 2009.

DeCaigny asked both Fritsinger and Langenbrunner to be on the subcommittee. Board members will be added later in the meeting.

According to the joint powers agreement, the Board must have a preliminary budget for review by June 10, 2009. Fritsinger will submit a preliminary budget in May.

E. Fire Equipment Operator Position Posting

Langenbrunner stated that the Personnel Policy Document will be posted at both stations for ten working days. After that, the Fire Equipment Operator position will remain posted for one month or so. Langenbrunner anticipated that the testing would take place in June. There is one opening now. Another retirement may create two.

F. Future Position Vacancies

This depends on available funding from the state.

G. Training Update – Ken Klatt

Klatt presented a complete report, a copy of which can be obtained from the Cloquet Area Fire District. In addition, he recommended the following:

- (1) Establishment of a training budget; that fees taken in should be returned to the training budget, and not be placed in the general fund.
- (2) Funds should be set aside for sending staff to school.

Board members agreed to consider Klatt's recommendations and the entire training budget when they review the District's budget.

Staff and Board members considered Dr. Ripp's increased involvement with the District and his current compensation of \$6,500 per year. They agreed to review this and other items when they examine the District's budget.

Klatt was congratulated for his performance and ambitious schedule.

H. Fire Relief/Pension Discussion

As a result of the previous discussion on the 2010 Budget, Board members determined that Board members should set up a subcommittee for specific paid-on-call issues (i.e., fire relief pension) and union negotiations.

DeMenge and Nemmers volunteered to be on the committee.

I. POC (Paid On Call) Recruitment

Langenbrunner said he is reviewing the status of inactive persons. His goal is to determine how many volunteers he needs and budget accordingly. He anticipated a potential group of 15 – 18 volunteers.

Fritsinger asked about Cloquet residents serving as volunteers at Station 1, rather than driving out to Station 2. Staff advised that Station 1 has no room to house volunteers. Olson noted that Perch Lake has had volunteers who are Cloquet residents and previously used a six-mile radius for recruitment, which includes most of Cloquet.

Langenbrunner commented that successful recruitment will depend on a good training program, fire relief and paid-on-call point systems. Board members and staff agreed recruitment would be an important budget item. DeCaigny advised that the District could begin now to develop a culture for recruitment.

J. Union Contract Negotiations

This was previously addressed in discussion about the subcommittee.

K. Thomson EMS Service Agreement

The Board briefly reviewed the status of the service agreement. Staff noted that the township was expected to take up the agreement in the near future.

L. Recruitment of District Membership

Fritsinger opened a discussion about the timing and strategies in reaching out to neighboring communities. DeCaigny suggested that staff come up with an agenda for this topic to include:

- (1) Budget
- (2) CAFD selling points that would be a draw.

Fritsinger further suggested that the Board start with a communications plan - perhaps develop an approach over the next few months to send specific information to town boards, city councils, and fire departments.

DeCaigny suggested that the District will want to draw departments most aligned with its goals and method of operation

This topic will also be discussed next month.

M. Approval of Payment of Bills

MOTION (Nemmers/Harms): To approve bills, dated April 9, 2009, as submitted. Motion carried.

Board members asked staff to submit itemized lists in the future for approval.

N. Resignation from Station 2

MOTION (DeMenge/Harms): To accept the resignation from Dan Clemons, Station 2. Motion carried.

Langenbrunner will send a letter thanking Clemons for twenty years of service.

O. Inter-Governmental Mutual Aid Agreement for Provision of Technical Rescue Services

Schroeder addressed the Board regarding this technical rescue contract which got lost in the shuffle of past meetings and the merger. What is needed is a service specific agreement for technical rescue services with Thomson and Carlton. He defined technical rescue services as high angle rescue, confined space, etc,

This contract is similar to the Fire Mutual Aid Agreement used for surrounding communities. Schroeder will forward electronic copies for review at the next meeting. This requires specialized training for industrial settings.

Industries are required to identify rescue services for their companies.

P. Sawyer Mutual Aid

Langenbrunner recalled that in the past, Carlton was interested in having Perch Lake First Responders cover unorganized Sawyer Township. At this point, the Board and staff began a discussion about the various options for providing this service. More to come later.

7. Other/Next Agenda

A. Future agenda items

DeCaigny asked for a meeting with Fritsinger and Langenbrunner April 15, 2009, at 10:00 a.m., at SAPPI, to review objectives. In addition, he would like to design an Excel format for tracking District objective review. Other Board members are welcome also.

B. DeCaigny also asked for an organization chart with names. This chart does not need to be posted on the website.

C. Confirm Next Meeting Date

Date	Time	Place
May 13 (Wednesday)	3:00 p.m.	Station 1 Cloquet Fire Hall
June 11 (Thursday)	6:00 p.m.	Station 2 Perch Lake Town Hall
July 8 (Wednesday)	3:00 p.m.	Station 1 Cloquet Fire Hall

August 13 (Thursday)	6:00 p.m.	Station 2 Perch Lake Town Hall
September 9 (Wednesday)	3:00 p.m.	Station 1 Cloquet Fire Hall
October 8 (Thursday)	6:00 p.m.	Station 2 Perch Lake Town Hall

D. Action Items List Review

See updated chart reviewed at meeting.

8. Adjourn

MOTION (Nemmers/DeMenge): To adjourn at approximately 7:00 p.m.