

Holmen Area Fire District

Meeting Minutes – July 16th, 2024

Bob Stupi called the Holmen Area Fire District meeting to order at 6:30 pm on July 16th, 2024 at the Town of Holland Town Hall.

Present: Doug Jorstad (Holmen), Travis Elam (Holmen), Rick Hauser (Holland), Bob Stupi (Holland),

Also Present: Ryan Ostreng (Fire Chief)

Excused: Jeff Herlitzke

Guests: Fire department staff

Pledge of Allegiance Recited

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Motion by Jorstad, second by Hauser. Motion carried unanimously.

Resident or Employee Concerns/Comments:

None.

Financial Review:

Jorstad (Treasurer) presented a general fund summary.

Jorstad highlighted that the department was only halfway through the fiscal year but the staff overtime was at 102% of budget and requested comment from Chief Ostreng.

Ostreng explained that the increase would continue but the department would save money in other areas like employee benefits and salary because the department wasn't fully staffed for the first half of the year. Ostreng stated the overtime was due to large increases in staff training. Ostreng stated that he was watching the budget and intended to use 2% dues, if necessary, at the end of the year to cover any extra costs.

Jorstad highlighted that building supplies were at 103% of the budget and requested comment from Chief Ostreng. Ostreng explained the department was cleaning more frequently and the cost increase of cleaning products was the cause.

Jorstad stated that the department was at 47.5% of the total budget for the year.

Jorstad highlighted the department's commitment to repaying itself the \$80,000 it borrowed from the capital account to pay firefighter wages while waiting on the results of the referendum. Jorstad stated this year's budget had a line item for \$40,000.

Check detail was reviewed by the board.

Board reviewed new detailed quote by MCS networks IT contract. Jorstad motioned for the approval of the contract for a total of \$10,589.70, second by Elam. Motion carried unanimously.

Fire Administration Report:

Ostreng stated that June had 97 calls and highlighted that it was the most amount of calls the department has had for June since 2017. Ostreng stated the department had a total of 536 calls year to date, which was similar to numbers from 2019. Ostreng gave a brief summary of the calls for the month which included a gas line being hit, structure fire in Onalaska, and a sprinkler system issue at a business.

Ostreng stated that a new firefighter, McKay Wolsey, started July 2nd. Ostreng stated that with the addition of McKay, the department now has 4 firefighters on every shift.

Ostreng stated rescue 1 would be getting new tires and gave the board an update on upcoming staff training, including additional boat/water training.

Ostreng stated that the department and Onalaska would be forming a committee to create the framework for shared resources for fire investigations.

Fire Commission Report:

Nothing new to report. Jorstad asked a question about when Holmen should have a new replacement lined up for the opening position on the fire commission.

Future Fire Station Study:

Ostreng stated that he had finished the draft RFP and had sent it to Stupi and Administrator Heinig for review. Jorstad asked if the Chief had an idea of how many parties would be interested in the RFP. Ostreng stated that it would be similar to how many Onalaska had received, which would be about 5 to 6. Stupi asked if the RFP should have language that states the awarded party communicate with both municipalities. Ostreng stated the RFP was left intentionally broad on purpose and that it was his intentions for the party to meet with staff from both municipalities. Motion by Stupi to accept the proposed RFP, second by Jorstad. Motion carried unanimously.

Assistant Fire Chief Position Request:

Ostreng stated that he reached out to some of his personal connections for help on the specific job description and is actively working on it. Ostreng stated that the focus of the position will primarily be on firefighter training. Ostreng stated that the department needs to focus on the mandatory training that is required for the firefighters. More specifically dangers unique to the community like confined spaces, hazardous materials, water rescue, etc. Ostreng stated that this work requires a more dedicated position due to the amount of coordination and record keeping. Ostreng stated that this position would also rotate availability with the Chief as necessary. Ostreng stated that his goal is to present a job description at the next fire commission meeting.

Command Vehicle Replacement:

Ostreng stated that he has not heard anything back from the vehicle dealer, but his plan is to get a black suburban and apply a vehicle wrap to it to match the other vehicles in the department. Ostreng stated he got a quote for \$13,000 for radios for the command vehicle. Ostreng stated only one supplier got back to him for the vehicle wrap and that was around \$3,000. Ostreng stated that he had not yet received a response from suppliers he had reached out to about painting the vehicle. Ostreng stated that he reached out to a local organization for the installation of the light package, cabinets, radio mounting, and other interior work and had not yet received a response. Ostreng stated that he is still not sure on what the total vehicle would cost the department. Stupi questioned if the Chief was still set on a Chevy Suburban. Ostreng stated that he was still set on a suburban due to the storage capacity of the vehicle compared to others and intended to install a pull-out tray in the back for equipment. Ostreng stated that he wanted the vehicle dedicated to a command position. Jorstad stated that he had spoken with Administrator Heinig and that the Village of Holmen was still not sure how the vehicle would be funded and that the Village of Holmen would be setting its budget soon. Jorstad suggested Ostreng speak to Administrator Heinig about the vehicle soon. Ostreng stated he still intended to use 2% dues to purchase the vehicle.

Announcements and Future Agenda Items:

Elam asked Ostreng if he had any information about an MOU for medical response from the County. Ostreng stated that he had looked into it and most of the people he had spoken to weren't aware of the MOU. Ostreng also stated that he spoke with one person who said the district did and another who said it didn't. Ostreng stated that because the department doesn't do medical transport and Tri-State is always dispatched for medical transport that he was under the assumption that he might have the ability to suspend medical response from the department in the event of an all-hands-on deck fire scenario. Elam stated that he would look into this further at the county level.

Next Regular Meeting Date:

Next regular meeting August 20th, 2024 at 6:30pm at Town of Holland Town Hall.

Adjourn:

Motion to adjourn by Hauser, second by Jorstad. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes by Travis E. Elam, Secretary