

Holmen Area Fire Department Board

Meeting Minutes – April 22nd, 2025

Jeff Herlitzke called the Holmen Area Fire District meeting to order at 7:03 pm on April 22nd, 2025 at the Town of Holland Town Hall.

Members Present: Patrick Barlow (Holmen), Travis Elam (Holmen), Jeff Herlitzke (Holland), Rick Hauser (Holland)

Alternates Present: Doug Jorstad (Holmen)

Members Excused:

Also Present: Ryan Ostreng (Fire Chief)

Guests: Fire Department Staff

Pledge of Allegiance Recited

Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Barlow to approve the agenda. Second by Elam. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of March Meeting Minutes:

Herlitzke noted there were some minor typos under the Fire Administration Report. Motion by Hauser to approve the minutes with minor changes. Second by Barlow. Motion carried unanimously.

Resident or Employee Concerns/Comments Election of Officers:

Herlitzke gave the board a summary of the officer election process.

Elam motioned to nominate Patrick Barlow as Board President. Second by Herlitzke. No other nominations were brought forward. Motion carried unanimously.

Hauser motioned to nominate Jeff Herlitzke as Board Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.

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Hauser motioned to nominate Travis Elam as Board Secretary. Second by Herlitzke. Motion carried unanimously.

The management of the meeting was transferred to newly elected board president Barlow.

Financial Review:

Treasurer Herlitzke gave the board a brief overview of the balance sheet for the department. The board reviewed the individual budget sheets separately due to the transition of Officer positions. Hauser questioned the LGIP-Medical Equip Upgrades Line item. Chief Ostreng stated the increase in funds came from the EMS FAP money and donations. Ostreng stated the funds would be used to purchase the new cardiac monitors.

Herlitzke noted the Fire-Capital Expenditures line item and stated its total budget used was 108.5%. Herlitzke questioned the budget and where the funds were being spent. Chief Ostreng stated the budget increase was due to one-time cost upgrades due to the CAD system. Chief Ostreng also stated that he thought there was an accounting error that he needed to investigate, and that more money was taken out of that line item than what should have been.

Herlitzke noted the Total Expense for the year was 28.5% of the budget.

The board reviewed check detail thoroughly. Hauser questioned a check to DeBauche trucking. Chief Ostreng stated that check was to fix a shifting issue on one of the trucks. Barlow questioned a large check in the amount of \$181,322. Chief Ostreng stated the check was a standard transfer from the departments checking to the LGIP accounts where the money would earn better interest. Elam questioned a check to Ragz Upholstery. Ostreng stated the check was issued to repair the tarp that was on top of Engine 1. Hauser questioned a check to Motorola Solutions. Chief Ostreng explained it was for one of the new radios that would be in the new command vehicle.

National Fleet Graphics Command Car Wrap

Chief Ostreng gave the board a summary of the design and requested its approval. Barlow requested a larger summary of the progress of the command vehicle as well as its status. Hauser requested a running total for the total cost of the new vehicle so the board could track the expenses to make sure they remained below the \$100,000 originally approved for the purchase. Motion by Herlitzke to approve the National Fleet Graphics Command Car Wrap design not to exceed \$5,750. Second by Elam. Elam asked if the Chief had received any quotes for paint instead of the wrap. Chief Ostreng stated that he requested quotes for

paint from several companies and nobody responded to him. Motion carried unanimously.

Fire Investigation PPE and Tools

Chief Ostreng requested approval for the purchase of Fire Investigation PPE and Tools. Chief Ostreng stated that the City of Onalaska already had their equipment purchase approved and that it was his intention to mirror what the City of Onalaska had purchased. Chief Ostreng stated he did not anticipate the purchase to exceed \$6000. Hauser questioned if the department needed extra PPE if they already have some. Chief Ostreng explained the risk of cross contamination in investigations, the cleaning process, and explained why the extra PPE was necessary. Motion by Herlitzke to approve the purchase of Fire Investigation PPE and Tools up to \$6000. Second by Hauser. Motion carried unanimously.

Donations

Chief Ostreng stated that Andrew and Nichole Meyer donated money to the department, and he would be applying the donation to the new cardiac monitor fund. Chief Ostreng stated the Wisconsin Terrazzo C Tile Inc donated \$1500 toward the new cardiac monitor also.

Fire Administration Report:

Chief Ostreng provided the board with a summary of the calls and activity for March 2025. The board reviewed the reports in detail. Chief Ostreng summarized the notable calls for March and provided the board with details of specific calls.

Chief Ostreng stated he was in the process of joining the Heart Safety Community program. Chief Ostreng stated that La Crosse was a member of this program, and the City of Onalaska was working towards joining this program.

Chief Ostreng explained to the board what the Red Cross Sound the Alarm program was and how it operated. Chief Ostreng stated that La Crosse and City of Onalaska were members of this program, and it was his intention to also become a member of this program.

Chief Ostreng gave the board a fleet update. Chief Ostreng stated Rescue 1 needed its tires rotated after the previous alignment problem and that Engine 2 continues to have IO errors. Fire Department staff explained to the board in detail this problem. Staff stated this issue has existed since they received Engine 2 from the manufacturer. Chief Ostreng stated that he would be replacing the out-of-date decal on Engine 2 so it matches the rest

of the fleet and is labeled properly.

Chief Ostreng gave a facility update and stated the leaks in the building have reoccurred.

Chief Ostreng stated it was his intention to purchase a new engine and rotate Engine 1 into the tender position. Chief Ostreng explained he requested a general quote for a new Engine with a 1500-gallon pump and 1000 gallons of water capacity. Chief Ostreng stated the quote was around \$1,000,000 and had a 46-month production time. Barlow stated that he knew the City of Onalaska was also purchasing a new Engine for roughly 1.2 million that also had a 4 year wait time. Barlow questioned if the need was for an engine or for a tender and what the cost and wait time for a tender would be. Chief Ostreng stated the issue with the current engine is that the hoses are located too high on the engine and that somebody was going to get hurt eventually pulling hose. Chief Ostreng stated it was his intention to purchase a more ergonomic engine that would be better suited for everyday fire response. Barlow questioned the statement citing that Engine 1 was a standard model used in La Crosse and was suggested by La Crosse when purchased. Fire department staff familiar with La Crosse's engines commented on the engine. Town of Holland board members voiced their disapproval for using Engine 1 as a tender and stated its limited water capacity compared to the current 2000-gallon tender. Chief Ostreng stated that Galesville just ordered a new tender, and the wait time was 2.5 - 3 years. Elam questioned how fast, and engine goes through 1000 gallons of water. Department staff commented. Barlow asked if we had a vehicle replacement plan available so the board could plan for these purchases especially with the long wait times. Chief Ostreng stated he was working on the list.

Chief Ostreng stated it was his intention to add a Training Captain to the department.

Chief Ostreng stated the Town of Holland was approved for their Innovation Planning Grant for an amount of \$35,500.

Fire Commision Report:

Chief Ostreng gave a brief update regarding the previous fire commission meeting. Chief Ostreng highlighted the commissioner rotation and how that worked, and a badge pinning ceremony.

Fire Station Study:

Chief Ostreng gave the board a summary of what has been completed so far. These things included the existing fire station conditions report, the GIS report, and the fire station concepts report which includes locations for a new station. Chief Ostreng stated that the

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next meeting is scheduled for May 6th and the department would be doing station tours on May 14th. Chief Ostreng stated the final report would be done in June. Barlow voiced concerns over the board's limited input in the final report and questioned if any further work based on board feedback would require additional fees based. Chief Ostreng stated it was his intention to have a special meeting to present the report to the boards of both communities. Chief Ostreng stated the board contracted for one meeting and that the board would be receiving a concept and not a finalized blueprint for a new station

Selection of HAFD collective bargaining team:

Barlow gave a brief history of the previous collective bargaining team members and what it entailed. Barlow volunteered to be a part of the team. Herlitzke volunteered to be a part of the team. Hauser also volunteered but had some concerns about scheduling conflicts. Barlow addressed the conflicts and stated they board could work around them. Chief Ostreng suggested the inclusion of Chief Whittaker on the bargaining team. Herlitzke motioned to appoint Barlow and Hauser to the collective bargaining team. Second by Elam. Herlitzke amended his motion to include Chief Robert Whittaker. Second by Elam. Motion carried unanimously.

Closed Session:

Motion to go into closed session by Herlitzke. Second by Elam. Motion carried unanimously. Alternate member Doug Jorstad (Holmen) remained for closed session.

Reconvene in Open Session:

Motion to reconvene into Open Session by Herlitzke. Second by Hauser. Motion carried unanimously.

Action on Close Session item(s):

No action was taken on close session items.

Announcement and Future Agenda Items:

No announcements occurred. The board suggested reviewing the meeting location due to parking conflicts at Town of Holland. Hauser suggested revisiting the Chiefs annual performance review criteria.

Next Regular Meeting: May 20th, 2025

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Adjourn:

Motion to adjourn at 9:08pm by Herlitzke. Second by Elam. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes by Travis E. Elam, Secretary