

# Holmen Area Fire Department Board

Meeting Minutes – July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025

President Barlow called the Holmen Area Fire District meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at the Town of Holland Town Hall.

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

**Alternates Present:** Doug Jorstad (Holmen)

**Members Excused:** Jeff Herlitzke (Holland)

**Also Present:** Chief Ryan Ostreng

**Guests:** Fire Department Staff

**Virtual:** Chief Robert Whitaker (Consultant)

## **Pledge of Allegiance Recited**

## **Approval of Agenda:**

There was no discussion on rearranging the agenda order. Motion to approve the agenda by Elam. Second by Hauser. Motion carried unanimously.

## **Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

Chief Ostreng suggested corrections to the discussion on the captain position. He clarified his stance and referenced edits sent to Elam via email. Hauser motioned to approve the June meeting minutes with the suggested edits by Chief Ostreng. Second by Elam. Motion carried unanimously.

## **Resident or Employee Concerns/Comments:**

Jeremy Cook commented on the captain position for training. Cook voiced his support for the captain position and noted how vital training is for the department. Cook also voiced disagreement with the board's previous debate on two captains on the same scene and rank issues. Cook explained that multiple personnel of the same rank routinely respond to calls together.

### **Financial Review:**

The board reviewed the Balance Sheet (Item 7a) in detail. No questions or concerns were raised. The board reviewed Profit C Loss Budget vs. Actual (Item 7b) in detail. Chief Ostreng commented on the **2% Fire Protection Equipment Ex** line item and noted it was at 133.4%. Chief Ostreng explained that extra funds from the 2024 2% dues were showing up in this line item and he would be working with the accountant to resolve this. Barlow noted the budget year-to-date percentage was 52%.

The board reviewed check detail. Hauser noted another payment to Interstate Roofing for repairs related to the ongoing leaks the department was experiencing. Barlow noted the check to MacQueen for the firefighter's new turnout gear. Chief Ostreng stated the department had received all of the equipment and it was in service.

The board reviewed the 2026 WI DNR Forest Fire Protection Grant (Item 7d). Chief Ostreng stated he had applied for the grant and it was his intention to apply for new Class A firefighting foam (non-PFAS based), additional pager, backpacks, and collapsible pumps. Chief Ostreng stated he was requesting approval to spend \$2,388.70 for the department's required fund match if awarded the grant. Hauser questioned if the funds used to match grant requirements were budgeted ahead of time. Chief Ostreng stated that he did plan and budget for grants but noted that the current state of grant funding was unknown due to changes in the federal government. Hauser requested a line item be added to the 2026 budget for matching grants. Elam voiced approval for Hauser's suggestion. Elam motioned to approve matching funds for the 2026 WI DNR Forest Fire Protection Grant not to exceed \$2000. Second by Hauser. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Fire Administration Report:**

The board reviewed the calls for the month in detail. Hauser questioned what a service call was in the defined incident types. Department staff explained that it could include helping with a broken water line, assisting the police department, stuck elevator, etc. Chief Ostreng further explained it was any call that isn't fire or EMS related. Elam asked if the Chief had any statistics on overlapping calls. Chief Ostreng stated he would try to get those numbers to the board at least two times a year.

Chief Ostreng updated the board on notable calls for the month.

Chief Ostreng noted a new firefighter, Emma Zabel, was sworn in on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Chief Ostreng informed the board the Engine 1 was having issues again and it was related to an electrical component that was failing. Chief Ostreng stated the part was being sent back to the manufacturer to be fixed or replaced and that Engine 1 was functioning as a tender only.

Chief Ostreng stated that new command vehicle (New Car 1) was wrapping up at Thin Line Outfitters and should be in service in roughly 6 weeks. Chief Ostreng noted there was a delay with some additional parts but the vehicle would be put into service before those parts were available.

Chief Ostreng informed the board that Interstate Roofing had come out to inspect the roof and any potential causes for the leaks. Chief Ostreng noted that several minor issues were fixed. Chief Ostreng explained that prior to the fixes leaks were still occurring in the building and that staff would monitor for changes with future rain. Chief Ostreng stated it was his intent to get an air quality analysis done to test for mold and other issues due to the leaks.

Chief Ostreng handed out a Fire Department rank description packet to all board members since the board had multiple discussions recently that pertained to those details.

### **Fire Station Study:**

Chief Ostreng informed the board that the preliminary report was finished and materials were available to be distributed to Town of Holland and Village of Holmen board members. Chief Ostreng stated it was his intent to deliver them to individuals on Monday. Barlow offered to pick them up sooner and hand deliver them to individuals.

### **Review current apparatus and draft replacement plan:**

Chief Ostreng showed the board the updated form along with price estimates for replacements for the next 20 years not accounting for inflation. Hauser had a question about the departments use for a UTV. Chief Ostreng explained the UTV would be used for

EMT calls on the trails in the area in addition to grassland fire calls. Hauser noted that UTVs are often used by fire departments to respond to people hit on railroad tracks.

**Closed Session:**

Hauser motioned to go into closed session. Second by Elam. Motion carried unanimously.

**Reconvene in Open Session:**

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

**Actions on Closed Session Items:**

No action was taken on closed session items.

**Announcement and future agenda items:**

Barlow noted that July 31<sup>st</sup> the Town of Holland and the Village of Holmen would be meeting with Wendel Five Bugles to discuss the fire station study results.

**Next Regular Meeting:** August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**Adjourn:**

Motion to adjourn 8:30 p.m. by Elam. Second by Hauser. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes by Travis E. Elam, Secretary