

**SAUGATUCK TOWNSHIP FIRE BOARD
REGULAR MEETING**

**MONDAY, JULY 14, 2008, 7:30 p.m.
SAUGATUCK TOWNSHIP HALL
3461 BLUE STAR HWY, SAUGATUCK, MICHIGAN 49453**

MINUTES

Vice Chairman Jerry Bekken noted Chairman Bill Kaye would not be in attendance and called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Members present: Douglas City Representative Jerry Bekken, Saugatuck Township Representative Eric Beckman, and At-Large Member Lance Winchester.

Also present: Chief John Blok.

Absent: Chairman and Saugatuck City Representative Bill Kaye.

Bekken noted the open At-Large position vacated by outgoing Cliff Asbel. He then offered public comment. Receiving none, that portion of the meeting was closed at 7:30 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: **Moved by Winchester, seconded by Beckman to approve the minutes of June 9, 2008, Fire Board regular meeting.** Motion to approve as presented carried unanimously. **Moved by Beckman, seconded by Winchester to approve the minutes of June 23, 2008, Fire Board workshop meeting.** Motion to approve as presented carried unanimously.

Bills and Financial Review:

- A. Discussion and Approval of Bills & Payroll. Bekken presented bills in the amount of \$19,727.58. **Motion by Beckman, seconded by Bekken to approve paying the bills as presented.** Beckman verified Tammy Cook is the instructor for the First Responder classes. Motion to approve bills as presented carried unanimously. Bekken presented payroll in the amount of \$12,245.88. **Motion by Beckman, seconded by Winchester to approve the payroll as presented.** Carried unanimously.
- B. Review of Financial Statements. Board reviewed and had no questions. Wright noted all income and expense line items concluded the year within the amended budget figures.

Correspondence:

- A. None.

Unfinished Business:

- A. Beckman stated he attended the meeting last Friday of Old Allegan Road residents with house number and street name problems at the township hall. He thanked Blok and Janik for attending and stated the outcome was positive with some changes to be made.

New Business:

- A. Election of Officers. **Motion by Winchester, seconded by Bekken to table the election of officers until a full board is present.** Carried unanimously.

- B. Open At-Large Position. Winchester stated he had been in contact with Kaye who received two applications for the At-Large position. He noted one application was for either a board position or a Firefighter/First Responder position and the individual was accepted as a Firefighter/First Responder. He added the other applicant is a retired Firefighter with experience on the STFD department and stated Kaye supports this appointment. **Motion by Winchester, seconded by Bekken to appoint Scott Phelps to the open At-Large Fire Board Member position.** Motion carried unanimously. Wright stated she would prepare a letter for each of the three municipalities asking for their approval of the appointment.

Chief Blok's Report:

- A. Blok stated a number of Firefighters and First Responders would like to bring the issue of allowing lights and sirens on personal vehicles to the Fire Board. He stated some people on the department want them and his policy has been to only allow officers to run them. Blok stated he asked the members to wait until the workshop meeting to present the issue, so the Board would have time to investigate and think about it. Discussion took place and Blok agreed to check with the insurance company for any rate changes that might take place should the policy be changed. Blok stated the law reads that the Chief is responsible for issuing lights and sirens and would put a lot of responsibility on his shoulders should an accident occur. Beckman asked if a particular problem brought this up. Blok stated no, but many people are interested in having them. Blok relayed the laws regarding running vehicles with lights and sirens to the board. Winchester asked how long it has been since allowing any department member to run with them. Blok replied it has never been his policy to allow any member outside of Officers to run them. Blok stated typically the Officers are the ones assigned to driving emergency vehicles and therefore the reason for them to expedite their arrival to the fire barn. Other members might go directly to the emergency site, but sometimes they need to go to the barn to get a ride. He added if a member misses the first vehicle they have a 2nd truck waiting and sometimes a 3rd for latecomers. Beckman stated the law states it is the Chief's responsibility so it should be at his discretion. Blok stated if an accident occurs and a court lawsuit ensues the board would be equally responsible. Bekken noted changing policy has the potential to create a sticky situation. Beckman noted members will want to discuss their opinions and offer insights at the next workshop meeting and all should listen. He added the issue might need to be tabled and discussed further.
- B. Have a couple of new members to report. Dan Marczuk has been accepted by the personnel committee and received his physical and is now a full time on call Firefighter/First Responder. He is currently a nurse and will take the next firefighter school. There are 2 other recruits, one went through the physical last year and now wants to come back, the other was on the Fennville Fire Department but lives in Saugatuck Township. She just turned 18 and has gone through the cadet program and completed training. She works in town and would like to get on our department for the First Responders.
- C. Had a house fire in Douglas Saturday morning. Turned out well. Started from wires wrapped around trees after the previous storm and then back fed into the house and created an electrical fire in one wall and charred the basement.
- D. Runs to date; 230 year to date and 260 same time last year. July has been busy with 299 as of today and 303 same time last year. No calls were minor so far this month.

Beckman noted a street light is still damaged from the storm. Blok stated the Road Commission pushed the tree out of the way and called Consumers as the street light wires were still hot. He noted the response from Consumers is getting worse again. Bekken asked about billing them for time watching downed wires and Blok indicated they could start doing that again. There being no further business it was **Moved by Winchester, seconded by Bekken to adjourn at 8:14 p.m.** Carried unanimously.

Jane Wright, CMC, Township Clerk

Date

Jerry Bekken, Vice Chairman

Date