

CHRISTOPHER KOHL'S FIRE DISTRICT
MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING
FEBRUARY 9, 2009
STATION 51

Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm, 9 February, 2009. Pledge of Allegiance.

In Attendance: Deborah Dawson, Chairman
James Oliver, Clerk/Treasurer
Electra VanEckhoutte, Fire Chief
Absent: Margot Fish-Holmes, Vice Chairman

Agenda Item 3.

A. The Minutes from the 12 January, 2009, Board Meeting was approved by the Board after a motion by Mr. Oliver and a second by Mrs. Dawson.

B. The status of the District Bank accounts for January, 2009, was given by Mr. Oliver and accepted by Mrs. Dawson.

C. Chief VanEckhoutte gave the Chief's report and discussed the status of the Department and activities of the members of the Department. Chief VanEckhoutte brought up her activities in preparations to acquire Forest Service land at the triangle between the loop, the highway, and Hunter Creek Road. She said that Hellsgate District was seeking land for a new station, and our efforts were combined with their efforts. Agenda Item 7 covered this topic, and the Chairman took this issue out of order. The procedure was briefly described by Chief VanEckhoutte. Mr. Oliver said that Chief Hatch was the lead on this issue with the Forest Service, and that Chief Hatch wanted a Board statement that the Board was in favor of these efforts, and sought to acquire the land. Chief Hatch has met with the Forest Service, and the Forest Service would like to work on all local requests at the same time. Mr. Oliver said that no formal obligation was needed, but just that the Board wished to pursue the matter. Methods of financing the purchase were briefly discussed. Mr. Oliver said that the County was interested in a joint facility of some sort. A discussion of the present station and the need for better facilities took place. Mrs. Oliver asked a question concerning the size of the land being discussed. The suitability of the location was discussed. Mrs. Dawson and Mr. Oliver both thought that the Chief should pursue the acquisition of land for a new Fire Station 51. No formal obligation was made by the Board.

Agenda Item 4. Information/Discussion/ On the recent AFDA conference that two Board members attended. Mrs. Dawson stated that she learned a lot at the conference and had made a list of questions. Chief VanEckhoutte, Mr. Oliver and Mrs. Dawson discussed the questions and observations that Mrs. Dawson had as a result of the Conference. Operating policies were discussed, and the ongoing status was reviewed. Background investigations and fingerprinting for employees and Board members was discussed. Mr. Oliver felt that Board members should not be subject to background investigations and fingerprints as they are elected officials, and the State Laws gave the requirements for those officials. The progress towards developing employee and workplace policies was discussed. Mrs. Dawson said that she had given the Fire Chief several handouts obtained at the conference. Board member appointment after a resignation was discussed. Information from the conference suggested that the procedures be outlined in the By-Laws. Mr. Oliver felt that State Law was sufficient. Posting of meetings and the required notice of posting places was discussed. The County has asked for a yearly notice of when and where meetings are posted. Mr. Oliver said that State Law did not require that, but that the District had complied with the County request, and would do so yearly. Executive sessions were briefly discussed. The Open Meeting Law was also briefly discussed.

Agenda Item 5. Information/Discussion/Action on the FY 2009 budget. The timeline for the budget was discussed, and Mr. Oliver said that by the April meeting a tax rate would be needed for contracts. Mr. Oliver was asked to address his view of the Budget. Mr. Oliver presented his priorities and goals for the upcoming Budget. He felt that personnel issues were the big factor, and he felt that the Department should have one paid Firefighter/EMT on duty, with two persons on duty, 24 hrs a day, for four months during the summer, and on weekends throughout the rest of the year. Mr. Oliver felt this could be obtained with minimal tax rate increase, if any. Mr. Oliver said that the equipment was in good shape, utilities would go up as would vehicle

maintenance. Money set aside for capital would decrease compared to previous years. The trend for valuations over the next few years was discussed by the Board and Fire Chief. Mr. Oliver said that Chief VanEckhoutte's vision and goals for the Department had worked out much better than his would have over the last seven months. Mr. Oliver's goals were discussed. Chief VanEckhoutte felt that it might be difficult to get personnel for only a few months. Mrs. Dawson said that there was one firefighter on duty now, and asked the Chief if her goal was two firefighters on duty. Chief VanEckhoutte replied that it was her goal, and that was the new NFPA requirement. Mr. Oliver asked about that requirement, and was informed that it was a new NFPA requirement. Mrs. Dawson felt that there may be an adverse public reaction to two people on duty. Chief VanEckhoutte said that our volunteer base was decreasing. Mr. Oliver said that public comments made to him was to increase medical response. The overall lack of volunteers was discussed, and that it was a nationwide trend. Chief VanEckhoutte again stated her desire for two firefighters on duty at all times. Mr. Dawson, who attended classes at the AFDA conference, said the same issues were discussed at the conference, and Departments statewide had the same problems. Mr. Dawson said with the economy as it is, he couldn't take time off to attend training that he wanted to attend. Mrs. Dawson said that she was at a disadvantage on the budget as she was new to the process. She indicated that she thought a modest tax rate increase was in order. Mrs. Dawson said that she would like to see a new drive through station, with berthing facilities other than a trailer. She would like to put some money into the budget for the new station this coming year. Mr. Dawson commented on cost sharing with other public service agencies. Mrs. Dawson goal was not to raise the tax rate to the max, but felt that a reasonable increase was needed. Chief Van Eckhoutte discussed the Department needs in the way of capital items, saying most of that was done this year. When asked, the Chief said she may have a budget at the March meeting.

Agenda Item 6. Information/Discussion/Action On updating and on improving the telephone system. Mr. Oliver said this item was at the request of Mrs. Holmes-Fish. The need for this was discussed, and the Chief was tasked to develop plans, and present costs to the Board for an improved system.

Agenda item 7. Information/Discussion/Action On land acquisition for a new station. This item was covered in detail during the Chiefs report.

Agenda item 8. Future agenda items. Mr. Oliver asked that the budget be on the agenda, along with updates on the land purchase plans. Mr. Oliver commented that the CPI grant was cancelled, and the administrators were working to get the money that was owed to the Department. Mrs. Dawson expressed a desire to get the Firebelle's to a meeting for a fiscal report.

Agenda item 9. Call to the public. There was no comment.

Mrs. Dawson adjourned the meeting at 8:23 pm, 9 February, 2009

Submitted : 16 February, 2009, by James Oliver

Approved: _____ Chairman _____, 2009