

Town of Mosel Board/HFD Leadership Team Meeting

Minutes

March 31, 2016

Chair Dirk Zylman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. He reported that Clerk/Treasurer Sue Born had properly posted the meeting. Individuals present included Fire Chief Thad Athorp, Dave Govek, Jason Athorp, Mike Gabsch and Matt Russart of the Haven Fire Department. HFD President Todd Grunwald arrived at 7:45 PM. Also present were Town Supervisors Aaron Anger and Dave Wagner.

Chair Zylman asked the group to begin by discussing their thoughts on the long term future of the Haven Fire Department. Concerns were expressed about the difficulty of continuing to recruit new members. However, Chief Athorp remarked that current membership was 23, and the HFD Board was beginning a new initiative to recruit additional members. There was general consensus the HFD was doing relatively better than most other volunteer fire departments in Sheboygan County. Both the Board members and the HFD representatives agreed that HFD would be able to sustain itself for at least 10 years, and that our planning should assume that HFD will be strong and viable for many years to come.

The HFD representatives were asked about their main concerns for the future. Concerns seemed to center around personnel, equipment, facilities and finances.

Personnel

Residents, particularly our younger families, are very busy these days. There is a consensus among the group that our current department has strong leadership, a solid core of trained individuals, and an excellent culture of hard work and teamwork. However, it is difficult to attract new members.

The HFD is beginning a new initiative to identify and personally contact younger "prospects." One of the concerns is that the State is implementing additional training requirements, calling for at least 60 hours of instructional training, primarily at LTC. The HFD considered this a barrier that often "scared off" individuals who might otherwise be inclined to join. However, Board members were impressed with the thought that is being given to address that issue. Clearly HFD has already begun the process of identifying prospective members, recognizing that a membership in excess of 20 members is vital to the continuing strength of the department.

HFD is also researching whether it makes sense to attempt to get ISO certified. This would perhaps provide a training regimen that could be followed. One benefit to town residents would be that homeowners could save up to \$100.00 - \$150.00 annually if HFD raised its ISO rating to 6 or 7 from its present 9.

Equipment

Probably the key HFD equipment need is replacing the existing AIRPACs. HFD currently has 16 units that will need to be replaced by 2020-2022. Each new unit will cost about \$7000, so the total cost will be in excess of \$100,000. This equipment is a basic safety requirement that cannot be ignored. Board members indicated they understood this is a necessity and the Board must develop a plan for funding this equipment into the Mosel Town budget. One option that was discussed was staggering the purchases of the 16 units over three years.

HFD currently has 4 trucks. They are tightly squeezed into the existing facilities. The 2 main engines are 22 and 24 years old, respectively, but are in relatively good shape and the feeling seemed to be that their lives could be extended. HFD stressed the purchase of replacement engines should be staggered so the department was not operating with two 40-year-old engines. Chief Athorp indicated that, in a pinch, the small water tender could possibly be eliminated, dropping the fleet to three trucks.

HFD members did indicate a concern that the engines were big, and would be difficult to maneuver if there was a fire emergency, for instance, at the Ryder Cup or in a couple of facilities such as Sandhill or Christopher Farms. They indicated some attention should be paid to determining the value of purchasing a smaller, more maneuverable engine.

Facilities

Space is currently very tight. HFD looked into reconfiguring the doors on the fire station, but, after getting an estimate in the neighborhood of \$75,000, decided that the benefit did not justify the cost.

Some thought has also been given to adding a third 20' X 60' or 20' X 80' bay to the east side of the building. The firefighters indicated there is just no place to work or clean or repair equipment. HFD members also asked the Board representatives whether they thought the town would need additional space in the next 10+ years. This would need to be taken into consideration in any expansion plans. Board members mentioned that they did not see an immediate need, but would like to have input if building expansion plans moved forward because it would probably be cost effective to include town needs in the project rather than ultimately doing two separate projects.

Finances

The group talked about various approaches. The Town Board representatives indicated that, in the past, HFD had been very responsible with its finances and this was much appreciated by the Board.

The Board members reminded HFD representatives that fixing Dairyland Drive had been the main Board financial priority over the past 10-15 years. Now that this has been completed,

there is more flexibility in the budget. Also, the current low interest rate environment is conducive to funding long term capital projects.

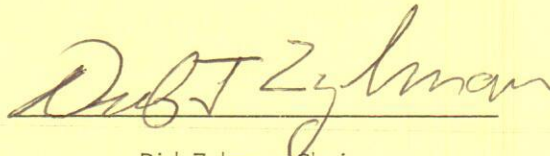
The group also discussed ways to give the HFD higher profile in the community so that all residents would be more aware of the tremendous contribution the department members make to our community. There was also some discussion of looking into additional fundraising approaches, although there was a consensus among the group that it is not HFD's responsibility to go out and self-fund their own projects.

Next Steps

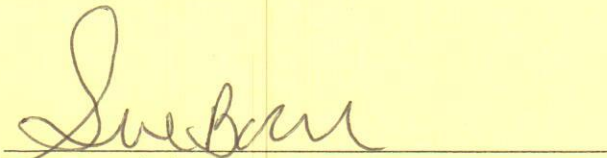
Capital Projects schedule – the Board representatives asked the HFD leadership to create a 10-year schedule detailing the projects HFD would like to have considered, assigning priorities to each project, providing an estimated cost for each project, and creating a timeline for when funding would be desired. This schedule would be updated annually and discussed during a joint meeting with Board members and HFD leadership.

Meeting Schedule – The individuals present agreed that a joint Board/HFD meeting should be held, at a minimum, annually. Board members suggested a September meeting so that any requests having financial implications could, potentially, be incorporated into the town's annual budget. The group agreed to meet in September 2016.

ATTEST:



Dirk Zylman, Chair



Sue Born, Clerk-Treasurer

Approved on 9/20/16