



Michael Geissler
Fire Chief

St. Tammany Parish Fire Protection District # 3

P.O. Box 849

Lacombe, Louisiana 70445-0847

(985) 882-5977 Office (985) 882-6664 Fax

admin@stfd3.com

Public Meeting of the Board of Commissioners

October 9, 2024

Meeting Minutes

Called To Order:

Chairman Danny Hall called the meeting to order on Wednesday, October 9, 2024, at 6:00PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

Prayer

Roll Call:

Danny Hall, Leo Casanave, Jeanne Hutchison, Murphy Arsenaux and Raymond Batiste were present.

Chief Geissler and Assistant Chief Guillot were present representing the Fire Department.

Chad Danenhower and Mark Waniewski were present representing PMI.

Secretary Minutes:

Approve minutes of September 18, 2024, special meeting.

Mr. Casanave made a motion to approve the minutes from September 18, 2024. Mrs. Hutchison seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Employee Recognition:

Employee Recognition. Chief Geissler recognized the following employees.

New hires: Keith Kern is back part time

Jordy Johnson – Full time firefighter with 10 plus years of service

Daniel Fortun – Part time

Anniversaries: Chuck Adams, Part time paramedic/operator has 7 years of service

Spencer Bally, part time paramedic/operator has 4 years of service

Theresa McCarthy, 12 years of service

Gary Artigue, part time firefighter/EMT has 20 years of service

Board of Commissioners award: This award was presented to Captain Justin Stiehl. Mr. Hall stated that the Chief's feel that he has stood out for his leadership. He has developed comradery and

making sure that people feel they have a place here. Captain Stiehl was presented with a gift card and certificate from the Board.

Treasurer Report:

Mr. Waniewski stated that on page 4 of the Receipts and Disbursements that it is positive news, the Department is 75% through the year and is at 97.94% of the budget and within \$60,000.00 of meeting the max goal for the approved budget. The Department will exceed that before the end of the year. The budget is on track with the adjustments approved by the Board.

Mr. Hall also stated that the accounts that the department had has been condensed down to the Operating account and the sinking fund. The Department does have a Money Market now which was approved at the last Board meeting.

Mr. Casanave made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. Mr. Batiste seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Chief's Report:

Chief Geissler stated that there were 1383 calls YTD, September had 149 calls, and 0 mutual aid as of this report. There were mutual aid responses in Oct. There were a couple of structure fires and mutual aid was requested. Mr. Hall stated that he went to one of the structure fire calls and stated that he was satisfied watching the guys working and he left. He wanted to compliment the people of the department based on that fire, that it was very well done.

Chief Geissler stated that a few days later there was another structure fire, and they also gave mutual aid to District 7 and also a medical in Pearl River which was canceled.

The med unit coverage for the last month, the department was at 100% paramedic coverage.

Old Business:

Update on accounts receivable. Mr. Hall stated that Mrs. McCarthy has been working with Koronis billing and Tim at PMI and it looks like there will be a process that will show how much is billed out and how much is owed.

Top-Down Review/HR Audit (On-site Interviews 10/07 & 08). Mr. Waniewski stated that Ms. Taylor was onsite and was able to meet with 90% of personnel, including part-time personnel and the Board of Commissioners. Those that were not interviewed can be interviewed by zoom call. He stated that the atmosphere of the Department is extremely positive. She asked some critical questions of "can you see this to be a department you wish to retire from?" and the universal answer was yes. He stated that the improvements that the Board has made are already being seen in the workforce and workplace. Some known issues are Station 32 and the status of some of the equipment. There will be a full formal report hopefully within the next 30-60 days. Everything was positive. She did both a summary questionnaire and a verbal engagement with everyone. He thinks that the Board will be pleased with the outcome.

New Business:

Mr. Hall stated that there are a lot of housekeeping Resolutions.

2024:032: BOC Resolution (Approve Unrecoverable Debt Forgiveness) Record Keeping.

2024:033: BOC Resolution (Approve Establishment of Classification to be determined from the OSE questionnaire for Training, Supervisory and Administrative Duties) Record Keeping. Mr. Waniewski stated that the Administration has engaged with OSE for the questionnaire and that may be a 30-90 day process to recommend what the classification should be.

2024:034: BOC Resolution (Approve District Credit Card Holders & Increased Spending Limits) – Record Keeping. Mr. Hall stated that this terminated the former Chief's card and added an Assistant Chief card with the \$20,000.00 increased limit for both the Chief and Assistant Chief cards.

2024-035: BOC Resolution (Approve Interview of Employee Benefits Broker/Agency Relationship) Record Keeping.

2024:036: BOC Resolution (Approve Advertisement of 2025 Budget for Public Comments) Mr. Waniewski stated that this was just to advertise the proposed 2025 budget. Mr. Hall stated that the hearing be the regular scheduled meeting of November 13th. Legal counsel reviewed the notifications for advertisement to the newspaper and the website and endorsed both. Mr. Batiste made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-036. Mrs. Hutchison seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Uncollectable debt. Discussion took place regarding debt for the ambulance billing. Mr. Hall stated that the writing off of EMS debt is in violation of the Louisiana Constitution, the Revised Statutes and the guidance of the Louisiana State Attorney General as well as the LLA. By law the department has to make every attempt to collect debt owed. There are accounts that go back four years, \$4,785,291.00 was billed out and of that billed out the department received payments of \$1,468,391.00. The subtotal of \$3,316,000.00, \$3,202,000.00 of that money was written off. The write off included Medicare and Medicaid which have limits and was a large sum of that money. There was some of that money that was forgiven. If it was a Lacombe address, no attempts were made to collect debt owed to the department. There was also bad debt, which was not paid. This equaled about \$114, 000.00. There is a total of write off or bad debt of \$3,316,899.00. Mr. Hall stated that some of this is too old to try to collect. See attached.

Mr. Hall stated that when the old administration was here, there were some write-offs that could be recovered. If that money was pursued, there is nearly \$400,000.00 with potential to recover.

The action on uncollectible debt was tabled until the November meeting. Mr. Casanave made a motion to table until next month. Mrs. Hutchison seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Annual Leave Buy back. Mr. Hall stated that Chief Geissler wanted this on the agenda. He asked Chief Geissler if a decision was made as to what the policy would state on how much an employee could accumulate and Chief Geissler stated that it was agreed to leave it at 300 hours. Chief Geissler wants to buy back \$25,000.00 this year. Assistant Chief Guillot stated that this was an old problem, and this will not be an issue moving forward. Mr. Arsenaux made a motion to approve \$25,000. 00 buy back. Mrs. Hutchison seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Discussion took place as to what rate to pay Chief Geissler for his buy back, either at the Assistant Chief rate or the current provisional Fire Chief rate. Mr. Casanave made a motion to pay at the Fire Chief's rate. Mr. Batiste seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Mr. Casanave made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Hutchison seconded. A vote was taken.

Motion carried.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 7:15pm.

4 new Business -
- uncollectable Debt

Accounts that have NO potential to collect	
Billed	\$4,785,291.25
Received	\$1,468,391.64
Subtotal	\$3,316,899.61
Minus Write off	\$3,202,110.03
Minus Bad debt	\$114,789.50
Total of write off and bad debt	\$3,316,899.61

The accounts that have no potential to collect were the result of either being Medicare, Medicaid, debt was forgiven by previous leadership or too old to collect.

These funds, a total of \$3,316,899.61, need to be accounted for and cleared from accounting as uncollectable debt.

Accounts that have potential to collect	
Billed	\$723,733.50
Received	\$127,274.68
Subtotal	\$596,458.82
Write off	<\$217,454.72>
Potential to still collect	\$379,004.10

These accounts have potential of recovery and are being directed to Koronis Revenue Solutions for collections.