

Rochester Fire Protection District
700 East Main Street, Rochester, Illinois

Meeting Minutes

July 8th, 2020

I. Call to order

President Bill Riggs called to order the Regular Business Meeting of the Rochester Fire Protection District at 7:00 p.m. on July 8th, 2020 at the Rochester Firehouse.

President Riggs open the June Business Meeting that had been recessed due to a lack of quorum caused by communications logistics. The June Business Meeting was there by opened and closed at that time with no actions taken.

With the closure of the June Business Meeting, President Riggs proceeded to open the July Business Meeting of the Rochester Fire Protection District.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Roll call

Trustee Secretary Fox conducted roll call. The following board members were present: President Riggs; **present**, Trustee Treasurer McBride; **present**, Trustee Secretary Fox; **present**, Trustee Fairchild; **present**, Trustee Leonard; **present**. Also present was Chief Archer.

IV. Opening of the Public Budget Hearing

President Riggs opened the floor for any questions, comments or concerns from the public on the 2021 Budget which had been posted since May 14th.

There were no questions, concerns or comments expressed from the public.

V. Review and Approval of the Minutes from the May Regular Meeting:

Minutes from the May 13th Business Meeting were presented by Trustee Secretary Fox. Motion was made by Treasurer McBride to accept the minutes and seconded by Trustee Leonard.

No discussion requested.

Unanimously approved, motion passed.

(NOTE) Due to postponement of the June meeting, there were no minutes to present for June.

VI. Treasurer's Report

Trustee Treasurer McBride presented the Balance sheet as of July 8th. Also presented were the balances of June 11th to the end of the last Fiscal year. Trustee Secretary Fox made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report as presented, second by Trustee Leonard.

No discussion requested.

Unanimously approved, motion passed.

VII. Chief's Report

Presented by Chief Archer;

June 1 I would like to commend 2 members for quickly donning water rescue suits while responding to a water rescue call. FF/PM Brian Gilley and FF/EMT Nick Trader. Exemplary efforts were put forth during that call.

June 25 Nearing completion of district fire hydrant painting. Approximately 50 left. Grateful for community volunteers for their assistance on this project and the Village of Rochester for supplying most of the supplies.

June 29 Pre-plan tour and review of in progress construction of new Silverleaf Day Care construction

progress.

(Chiefs Report Cont.)

June 21-24 RFPD will be hosting IDOT car safety seat class at the station.

June Calls:

30 EMS

11 Fire

41 Total responses

5 Training Sessions

Comment was made by area department that the speedy response and actions of the Rochester Firefighters to the water emergency was very commendable. This action contributed to the attempt to resolve the situation as a rescue rather than a recovery. Though the attempt was unsuccessful, their quick response was commendable showing the professionalism of the members of the Rochester Fire/Rescue. Motion was made by Trustee Leonard to accept the Chiefs Report as read and seconded by Trustee Secretary Fox. No discussion requested, motion was passed by unanimous vote.

Radio Repeater Request:

Chief Archer requested the purchase of a radio repeater for Squad 3 to improve radio communication on the Squad while it is in response to some of the distant areas of the district. Squad 3 has been repurposed to respond solo on some response types. This would allow for improved communication in these responses. Currently the department has 2 active radio repeaters in other vehicles.

Request was made to purchase the repeater from GTSI who had installed the previous radios. The amount is \$3525.00 installed.

No discussion requested.

Motion was made by Trustee Secretary Fox to purchase the repeater radio for Squad 3 for GTSI for \$3525.00. The motion was seconded by Trustee Treasurer McBride. A roll call vote was taken with President Riggs voting: **Yes**, Treasurer McBride voting: **Yes**, Trustee Secretary Fox voting: **Yes**, Trustee Leonard voting: **Yes**, Trustee Fairchild voting: **Yes**. Motion accepted by unanimous vote.

VIII. Old Business

There was no Old Business to discuss.

IX. New Business

1. Approval /Authorization of Payment of June and July invoices:

Motion was made by Trustee Treasurer McBride to approve authorizations of June and July invoices. Motion was seconded by Trustee Secretary Fox. No discussion requested. Motion accepted by unanimous vote.

2. Technology Acceptable use Policy.

Policy established to allow security to the Departments internet access and usage. Establishment has been made for a “guest access and password” separate to the member guest password to allow scrutiny in internet access and usage.

No further discussion requested.

Motion was made by Trustee Secretary Fox to accept the “Technology Acceptable use Policy” as written. Motion was seconded by Trustee Treasurer McBride.

Motion accepted by unanimous vote.

X. Motion to Approve 2020-2021 Budget

Motion was made to accept the budget by Trustee Treasurer McBride and seconded by Trustee Secretary Fox. No further discussion requested.

A roll call vote was taken with President Riggs voting: **Yes**, Treasurer McBride voting: **Yes**, Trustee Secretary Fox voting: **Yes**, Trustee Leonard voting: **Yes**, Trustee Fairchild voting: **Yes**. Motion accepted by unanimous vote.

XI. Closure on the public hearing on the budget

2020-2021 Budget accepted. No request for further discussion from the Public or Board member.

Hearing was closed.

XII. Public Comment

A member of the public stating she had some handouts and “just had some comments” she wanted to address to the board. Introducing herself as a member of the community and district resident, pointing out that she had a vested interest in the Department. She stated that recently and over the last few years some things had occurred and wanted an opportunity to address the board and discuss them. The first question was concerning the removal of a member of the public by the police from the May meeting.

Note: the meeting in question was being streamed over the intranet via Zoom for safety concerns for the public and board members due to the Covid 19 virus and directives that had been put into place by the Governor for public meetings. Notice was given to the public and instructions were given how to stream the meeting. The public members in question entered the building ignoring the notice and directives. When approached, directed and refusing to leave, authorities were called to remove the subject. The public member was removed however was able to stream the meeting in its entirety from the exterior of the building.

President Riggs pointed out that this portion of the meeting was for “Public Comments” only, and the Board would not be engaging in an open debate or discussions of the matters. He further stated that he would be more than happy to get her answers to her questions and present them to her personally. However, there was not going to be a discussion back and forth in the “Public Comment” section of a business meeting. Requesting a meeting with the entire board, President Riggs informed her that this cannot be done outside of a public meeting. It was pointed out that although board members agreed that public “comment” was in order, open discussion during this period was not. By doing so would establish a precedence to provide the opportunity for all during the Public Comment section of the meeting to enter into discussion and/or debate. The policy of public discussion and comment is posted in plain view of all on the wall when entering the meeting room.

In conclusion, President Riggs will set up a meeting with the individual and a third party to discuss her concerns.

A member of the public offered opinion and provided a means that could change the meeting format. The change could enable limited public comment and discussion on matters. He also voiced his opinion on the ejection of the individual from the May meeting.

Another member of the public and community commented that as a member of the Fire Protection District the Fire Board was elected to administer the Fire Protection District. She further stated that the Board is following through with that process doing a very good job and she thanked them for that and relieving her of that worry. She also stated that the open discussion and debate of individuals personal agendas during the Public Comment of the meeting took away time and attention to address vital areas of the departments function.

A member of the public stated that she had in her possession from the Department of Public Health, in her words a “FOIA.” President Riggs questioned exactly what she had. Answering she stated a “FOIA” that stated no report was made by the Rochester Fire Department that one of its members was quarantined or had the Covid Virus. The public member further stated that she had contacted the Department of Public Health by phone inquiring if there was a member of the Rochester Fire Department that had tested positive to “the Covid”. They stated that they had none reported and that they sent, again in her words a “FOIA” stating so.

President Riggs and Chief Archer informed the individual that a member of the Fire Department working at an area ambulance company was sent to the Department of Public Health for testing by his employer. It was not known when he became infected. He tested positive and did not return to work nor had he been at the Fire House for some time. Personal health information such as test results are private. Sharing of any such information without patient consent constitutes a HIPAA violation.

No further comments were made.

President Riggs stated that he appreciated the comments and recommendations by the members of the public. Attention would be made to answer their questions and the Board would consider their recommendations.

Next Regular meeting will be August 12th

XIII. Adjournment

Motion was made by Trustee Secretary Fox for adjournment and seconded by Trustee Leonard.

Motion accepted by unanimous vote.

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