



## **WEST LICKING JOINT FIRE DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**March 15, 2012**

### **General Board Meeting**

Derek Myers opened the meeting at 8:15 p.m., and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **ROLL CALL:**

Jersey – Derek Myers

Harrison – Mark Van Buren

Etna – Randy Foor

Kirkersville – Brian Denton

Pataskala – Mike Fox

Reynoldsburg – absent

**RECOGNITION OF GUESTS:** None

**OPEN DISCUSSION:** None

Chief Fulmer reviewed the proposed FY2012 Operating Budget as presented to the Board.

Chief Fulmer stated that he and the Fiscal Officer would double-check the year-end revenue figures, which originate from the UAN System. He stated that the estimated EMS billing revenue is a low-ball figure of \$500,000; estimates are actually around \$750,000 to \$1,000,000. Property tax collections are down due to taxes not being collected, and valuation has decreased.

Mr. Foor inquired why there was a 42% increase in EMS Operating Supplies. The K\$70,000 increase was due to the fact that we now have to buy our own supplies; when you bill for EMS, the hospital does not restock supplies.

Union Wages – there was an 11% increase due to two things: 10% pension adjustment and 1% wage increase. Union Overtime included backfilling for all EDOs, even if EDOs weren't there. Paramedic Pay no longer exists as a separate wage category; that money has been rolled into the firefighters' annualized salaries. Chief Fulmer projected for a 3% increase in Part-Time Firefighter Wages. There were no questions from the Board on the Salary/Wage Section.

The pensions are set; we have no control over them. OP&F is down by \$330,000 but that money went back to salaries/wages because of the 11% adjustment.

Employee Insurance – there was a projected \$35,000 increase for BWC because we were kicked out of the pool. This caused our multiplier to be increased, which raised calculations substantially.

Medical savings – the Bargaining Unit is now picking up 4% of the premiums for major medical, dental, and vision insurance. Life insurance is provided at no cost to the District's employees.

Medical Surveillance has increased due to HEP vaccinations.

Tuition Reimbursement – Chief Fulmer stated that this appropriation goes toward specialized fire education for part-time firefighters and non-bargaining unit employees; the majority of it will go to paramedic school reimbursement for the part-time firefighters. Chief Fulmer stated that this covers the cost of the course, books and lab fees. Mr. Van Buren asked whether there is a cap they can receive. Mr. Fox asked what if they work for a neighboring Department – Chief replied the reimbursement would be split between the Departments. Chief Fulmer stated he would send a copy of the Part-Time Firefighters Tuition Reimbursement Policy to Board Members Van Buren, Fox, and Denton.

Legal counsel was budgeted on the high side due to current litigation.

Mr. Foor inquired why we do not separate the Medical Director fees from IT services. Chief Fulmer stated that was to reduce the number of line items in the appropriations.

Fuel was budgeted on the high side due to an anticipated increase in fuel costs.

Chief Fulmer stated that he hoped to reduce the cell phone costs – he hopes to have a policy in front of the Board in April for employees who only want to carry one phone.

Mr. Van Buren inquired whether we inventory chairs, recliners, etc. Chief Fulmer stated that we haven't for some time, but we're trying to play catch up and inventory everything over \$100. The District is not required to provide an inventory to the County, but we are trying to inventory everything we currently have. Any new purchases are inventoried immediately.

Mr. Van Buren questioned trash pickup at the Stations. Chief Fulmer replied that we only pay for Stations 1 and 3; the Association pays for the Jefferson Street Shop.

Capital expense – the Budget reflects that we're going to spend the entire \$454,000; however, that is a worst-case scenario. Whatever we don't spend, that money will stay in that account because it is dedicated to equipment and capital items only.

**Mr. Fox motioned to approve the FY2012 Operating Budget as presented in the last draft document. Mr. Denton seconded. Vote: Myers – yes; Foor – yes; Van Buren – yes; Denton – yes; Fox – yes. Motion carried.**

Mr. Myers began a discussion by the Board members regarding the FY2012 Operating Budget and anticipated revenue. Mr. Myers reflected on the fact that we overspent our revenue last year by \$300,000 which was largely due to the longevity buyout, that we knew would push us over. In the FY2012 Budget, our expenditures vs. revenues is projected at \$1.6 million over our projected revenue – knowing that we have \$500,000 EMS billing revenue that we didn't have before, but \$900,000 less in property tax. There is a \$2 million delta between the Budgets on the carryover. In just a very few years; that's very painful. Mr. Myers stated that he would like the Chief, even while we passed this Budget, to wrap his head around, from a business perspective – if AEP came to Mr. Myers and told him he's got what he's got, \$8.7 million, he has to cast a budget that spends \$8.7 million. Mr. Myers

stated that the District can't drain \$1.6 million every year. We need to plan for zero-based budgeting – we can't overspend. Mr. Van Buren concurred – just because the Board passed this Budget, doesn't mean we have to spend it. EMS will help to clean up some of our deficit, but not all. Chief Fulmer stated that 80% of this Budget is personnel related.

Mr. Van Buren questioned the capital expenses. Mr. Myers stated that the Capital Budget was always budgeted separately in the past. Mr. Van Buren stated that there used to be a list of wants – he would like to see that again. Mr. Myers said there used to be a five-year plan for vehicles. There are two new vehicles to be paid for, and specs for a new engine will be on the next Budget, not this one. Mr. Van Buren stated he wants to see a list of the Capital Budget items.

Mr. Van Buren stated that other things we need to look at are membership dues, training outside of the County, and what else in the Budget we can cut down. Our hands are tied with personnel, but what isn't a necessity? We may only save \$15,000 or \$20,000 but if we go to the public for a tax levy, we need to cut everything we can. Mr. Myers stated that FY2011 is the first year we have overspent – we probably won't see zero-based budgeting this year, but it's coming. Mr. Van Buren stated that if it's not contractual, those are items we can look at to protect our reserves. Mr. Fox questioned tuition reimbursement – it went up from \$5,000 to \$15,000; is that a necessity? He also questioned how another Station could be operated right now. Chief Fulmer replied that you're not going to staff it without additional revenue or dump all the EMS revenue into it.

Mr. Fox stated that with the change in the Fiscal Officer answering directly to the Board, the Fiscal Officer is now, in his view, an equal player with the Fire Chief in this, to where her recommendations and suggestions should carry more weight than what they used to carry. So as the Chief goes through this Budget and these expenses, and these expenditures happen, the Chief can work with the Fiscal Officer to make sure that we make this Budget as tight as we possibly can. Mr. Fox stated that the Chief makes sure this happens, and to work as a team with the Fiscal Officer.

Mr. Van Buren questioned whether the revenue was what the County Auditor estimated. Ms. Krugh stated that we accepted the estimate from the Auditor last fall; the budgeted revenue was essentially the same.

There was no further discussion regarding the FY2012 Operating Budget.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Myers motioned to go into executive session to consider proposed collective bargaining, pending litigation, and the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee at 9:07 p.m. Mr. Fox seconded. Vote: Foor – yes; Van Buren – yes; Denton – yes; Fox – yes; Myers – yes. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Fox motioned to come out of executive session at 10:06 p.m. Mr. Foor seconded. Vote: Van Buren – yes; Denton – yes; Fox – yes; Myers – yes; Foor – yes. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Fox motioned to terminate part-time Firefighter/Medic Cody Cole. Mr. Van Buren seconded. Discussion: Mr. Fox requested that the letter written by HR Technician Terra Metzger be attached to Mr. Cole's personnel file. Vote: Denton – yes; Fox – yes; Myers – yes; Foor – yes; Van Buren – yes. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Fox motioned to place a spending limit on Chief Fulmer of \$500 to replace the \$5,000 spending limit we presently have. Mr. Van Buren seconded. Discussion: Mr. Fox stated that in light of the possible deficit we have, he thought we have to make sure we have some checks and balances in place for expenditures which are unnecessary. Chief Fulmer questioned whether that was just for him, or is that for anyone, because it wouldn't make much sense if it's not for everyone because per the Purchasing Policy, purchases have to come to the Fire Chief for approval. He requested clarification if it's that he can't spend any thing or nobody can. Mr. Fox stated that we can certainly amend that, but if everyone has to come through the Chief for approval, then the Chief is going to have to go to the Board for approval. Mr. Van Buren clarified that what they were talking about was discretionary spending – he didn't have a problem with the utilities, buying gas, the Medic is broke down but no challenge coins that type of expenditure. Mr. Foor stated that if we are looking a deficit in the eye right now, then we are trying to rein everything in – we want to rein in everyone else as well. Chief Fulmer stated that the direction has to be clearer, more concise. Mr. Fox asked who else can spend – the Assistant Fire Chiefs. Chief Fulmer stated that they can spend up to \$500. The ACs can approve less than \$5,000 in the Chief's absence.

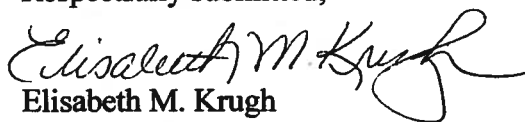
Mr. Fox amended the motion on the floor to reflect any purchases over \$500, other than standard purchases for utilities, gas, or non-discretionary purchases. Mr. Van Buren seconded. No further discussion. Vote: Fox – yes, Myers – yes; Foor – yes; Van Buren – yes; Denton – yes. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Fox stated that he would like to review all of the information given to him during executive session.

The Fiscal Officer clarified estimated revenue for FY2012 – Resolution 2011-09 confirms the millage that was expected was \$8.17; tax valuation was \$916 million, and the year before was \$960 million.


There being no further business, Mr. Myers requested a motion to adjourn. Mr. Fox motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Van Buren seconded. Vote: Myers – yes; Foor – yes; Van Buren – yes; Denton – yes; Fox – yes. Meeting adjourned at 10:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Elisabeth M. Krugh  
Fiscal Officer

APPROVED:

  
Board of Trustees

  
Title

Note: These minutes are unofficial, subject to amendment, until approved by the Fire Board Members.

Guests present: Larry Moon, Scott Hatten