

ARGOS FIRE PROTECTION TERRITORY BOARD

Tuesday, January 23, 2024, 6:30 PM

Call to Order:

Member Joe Stone called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Roll Call:

Present at the meeting were Members Joe Stone, Dean Zechiel, Ed Barcus and Fire Chief Mark Dean.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Member Joe Stone led those in attendance with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board Reorganization:

Member Dean Zechiel moved to nominate member Joe Stone for President. Joe Stone declined the nomination and moved to nominate member Ed Barcus President. Member Zechiel seconded the motion. No other nominations were heard, members Joe Stone and Dean Zechiel voted in favor, member Ed Barcus abstained, Ed Barcus was elected President.

Member Joe Stone moved to nominate member Dean Zechiel Vice-President; President Barcus seconded the motion. No other nominations were heard, member Dean Zechiel was elected Vice-President.

President Barcus led discussion regarding Secretary. After discussion, member Joe Stone moved to table the election of a secretary until further information could be gathered as to the requirements to hold the office of Secretary. Vice-President Zechiel seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

Minutes:

President Barcus presented the minutes from the December 19, 2023, meeting and mentioned the fact that none of the current board members were on the board at the time and possibly not able to verify the accuracy. Member Joe Stone stated that he was in attendance at the meeting and moved to approve the minutes as written. Vice-President Zechiel seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

Citizen Input:

Territory volunteer EMS driver Kevin Dunham thanked the board members for being willing to volunteer their services and serve on the board. Kevin stated that there were changes that in his opinion needed to be made and requested that the board review the department policy regarding facial hair, specifically beards. Kevin stated that he could be an added resource for tasks such as running a truck, assisting with hose cleaning and rolling and other tasks other than actual firefighting. Fire Chief Dean stated that according to the NFPA and OSHA facial hair that impeded with the face mask was not allowed. Chief Dean did note that Indiana is not an NFPA state however cited OSHA regulations that were similar. Vice-President Zechiel had questions regarding NFPA and OSHA as well as the requirements and or recommendations. Kevin was assured by the board that it would look at the policy and discuss it further after gathering more information. In closing, Kevin requested that the board be involved with the department and requested that they become familiar with the operations of the department as time allowed. Vice-President Zechiel as well as member Joe Stone and President Barcus assured those in attendance that they were willing to do whatever they can to assist as time allows.

Dennis Mark introduced himself as a Volunteer Firefighter and President of the Argos Volunteer Fireman association. Dennis too thanked the members for their willingness to serve and also requested involvement with the department as much as they were able to do.

Old Business:

Attorney Contract-

President Barcus advised that the previous board had tabled the contract for Attorney Alexander Hoover to provide legal services on an as needed basis. After review of the contract and discussion regarding the term and provisions for termination of the contract, Vice-President Zechiel moved to approve the contract as written, member Joe Stone seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

EMS Driver Compensation-

President Barcus presented the board with information regarding the current compensation for volunteer EMS drivers as well as a proposed revision to include a per call compensation in addition to the on-call compensation currently in place. Member Joe Stone moved to table the EMS Driver Compensation until after further discussion and additional information could be obtained. Vice-President Zechiel seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

Fire Chief Cost of Living Increase-

President Barcus informed the members that he had been made aware of discussion by the previous board President to entertain the implementation of a cost-of-living wage adjustment for the calendar year 2024. President Barcus informed members it was his understanding that the previous board denied any salary increase for Chief Dean due to him not having obtained EMT certification. Member Joe Stone expressed his belief that a raise of some sort was appropriate and moved to grant Chief Dean a 3% cost of living wage adjustment for 2024 retroactive to the first payroll of the 2024 year. Vice-President Zechiel seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

Remount of Ambulance –

Chief Dean stated the last update he had was a day or so ago and the ambulance was to be equipped with the decals. which to his belief was one of the final steps. Chief Dean will possibly visit the factory next week and get a better timeline with regard to completion.

New Business:

2024 Meeting Dates and Times-

President Barcus suggested moving the monthly meetings to the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm due to a scheduling conflict. Vice-President Zechiel stated that the 3rd Tuesday would work better for him as well. Member Joe Stone moved to hold the monthly meetings on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm at the Fire Station beginning in February 2024, Vice-President Zechiel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ambulance Remount Payment-

President Barcus informed the members present that Clerk-Treasurer Lisa Mullaney had advised him that there was a surplus of funds in the budget that could be utilized to pay off the remaining balance of the remount without obtaining a loan as previously discussed. Vice-President Zechiel and member Joe Stone expressed a favorable opinion doing this however there was no action taken at this time until Clerk-Treasurer Mullaney could be present to present additional information confirming this was a viable option.

S.O.P. 1.10 Policy Revision-

Fire Chief Dean presented a revised version of policy 1.10 and 1.11 to include language prohibiting any member from responding to the fire station or any scene while displaying an illuminated blue light with a non-department member inside the vehicle. Chief Dean stated that this was due to a potential liability issue and recommended passage of the revised policy. Member Joe Stone moved to pass S.O.P. policy 1.10 and 1.11 as presented by Chief Dean. Vice-President Zechiel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Fire Chief Report-

Chief Dean presented his monthly report which was his final report for calendar year 2023. Chief Dean informed the board that the department continues to pursue grant opportunities and recently was awarded a \$1,000.00 grant from Casey's as well as has been informed that the department was awarded a \$10,000.00 grant from the Indiana DNR however the funds have not yet been distributed. Chief Dean noted that it is a \$5,000.00 match to bring the total grant to \$10,000.00. Chief Dean informed the board that the department had applied for the same grant for the 2024 year which again was a \$5,000.00 match for a total grant amount of \$10,000.00. Vice-President Zechiel moved to approve the Fire Chief's report, member Joe Stone seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Claims:

Claims from December 20, 2023 – January 15, 2024 in the amount of \$27,012.79 were presented for approval. After discussion, Vice President Dean Zechiel moved to accept the claims as presented. Member Joe Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment:

Vice-President Zechiel moved to adjourn at 7:23 pm, member Joe Stone seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Ed Barcus, President

Attest: Lisa Mullaney