

968th Board of Directors Meeting, November 30, 2023

The meeting was called to order by President Gina Kline at 19:00.

Pledge of Allegiance

Board Members Present: Bruce Appell, Brian Baldwin, Jeff Bernetich, Jeff Borges, Nancy Crozier, Jamie DiPace, Steve Gwizdak, Gina Kline, Tom Post, Kristen Shaw, and Jim Speich.

Other Members Present: Andrew Kline, Tom Kline, Sue Jansen, Dave Theriault, and Mark Wilson.

The October 26th Board meeting minutes were approved with a motion from Nancy Crozier and seconded by Jamie DiPace.

Oaths of Office: Kristen Shaw

-) The oaths of office were taken by Jeff Bernetich, Mark Wilson, and Jamie DiPace.

Communications from Members:

-) Andrew Kline spoke on behalf of the Explorers asking that they be eligible to receive expense reimbursement. The board will be exploring options for modernizing the points system and will evaluate the Explorer request at that time.

President's Report: None given due to length of agenda.

Treasurer's Report – Kristen Shaw

-) Reviewed YTD expenses – clarified that the expenses that were presented included those funded by the grant and fundraising dollars.
-) The fundraising campaign has raised \$52k through November 29th.
-) Steve Gwizdak received a communication from the IRS regarding our request to change our tax status and was directed to another form which he will complete.
-) FY 22/23 Audit Report was reviewed. One exception was evaluated and discussed an item may be called into question by the Town's Finance Committee. Jim Speich advised that going forward, funds should only be encumbered if there is an invoice, quote, or purchase order for specific items.

Town Representative's Report James Speich

-) Provided an update on the Building Committee's efforts. Expecting a proposal from the selected architect(Tecton) to review at the December 13th Building Committee meeting. Once approved, it will go to the Town Council for approval. Expecting it will be available for Town Council to approve at their January meeting.

Committee Executive: Jamie DiPace

-) No updates from committees.
-) Concerned that Recruitment and Retention has not been meeting and no events have been organized.
-) Scholarship information available for those studying fire science. Jamie will send information to be shared in Running Card.

Communications from Other Board Members – Nothing of significance noted.

Reappointment of External Board Member – A motion was made to reappoint Steve Gwizdak for another year from Brian Baldwin and seconded by Nancy Crozier. Motion passed unanimously.

Election Of Corporate Officers:

-) Per Attorney Harrington, the discussion of Board members performance and qualifications for positions can be discussed in Executive Session so long as all individuals being discussed are informed and have the opportunity to specify whether they want the discussion held in open session.
-) All members were asked to consent individually to having the discussion in the Executive Session. Consent was received.
-) Vote to enter into Executive Session was approved by a motion made by Nancy Crozier and seconded by Biran Baldwin. Board went into Executive Session at 7:40 pm
-) Mark Wilson, Board-member-elect, was invited to attend so that he could participate in the discussion for the 2024 positions.
-) Following the discussion in Executive Session, the Board voted to reopen the meeting with a motion from Brian Baldwin and seconded by Tom Post. Motion carried. Board came out of Executive Session at 8:15 pm.
-) The proposed slate for Board executive officers was stated as follows:
 - o President: Gina Kline
 - o Vice President: Jamie DiPace
 - o Secretary: Brian Baldwin
 - o Treasurer: Kristen Shaw
 - o Assistant Treasurer: Steve Gwizdak
 - o Committee Executive: Jeff Borges
-) The Executive Officers were approved as presented with no further discussion by a motion made by Kristen Shaw and seconded by Jeff Borges.

Old Business:

-) **22-04** Fire Chaplain- Brian Baldwin and Chief Appell will explore options for filling the Fire Chaplain position and provide an update to the Board at their next meeting.
-) **23-29** The Board reviewed the draft for the Fire Chief Appraisal form. A request to add specific leadership metrics was made. Board members were tasked with reviewing offline to provide more specific recommendations to be discussed at the next Board meeting.
-) **23-43 Capital Improvement Budget 2024/2025** – PowerPoint presentation was sent to the town.
-) **23-45 Board Modernization – Task Force Charter** The Board modernization efforts have been tabled so the Board can address other priorities at this time.

New Business:

-) **23-51 Communications and Public Relations Coordinator**
 -) Board members will review the job description for the Communications and Public Relations coordinator and provide feedback at their next meeting. The tentative plan at this time is to solicit candidates internally and if unsuccessful, recruit a new volunteer member to perform this function. The last resort will be to explore contracting or hiring options.
-) **23-52 AOG EX-3 Lost Time Reimbursement**
 -) Following a discussion, the Board decided the per day max of \$280 referenced in AOG EX-3 was sufficient and did not need to be changed. Direction was provided to Grace Bianchi to make the clerical change to the associated form.
-) **23-53 EB Trust Restriction Release Exploration**
 -) Steve Gwizdak will take on researching options to update the EB Trust requirements and/or see if the funds can be released from the Trust. If released, they would continue to be restricted. Dissemination of the funds would continue to follow the Department's lost time policy.
-) **23-54 Healthtrax Proposal**
 -) Review was tabled pending further exploration of options from other fitness providers.

New Business cont.

-)] **23-55 AOG MEM-6 Tax Abatement – Proration Update**
 - Reviewed tax abatement award schedule and discussed impact of activity point increase that was previously approved. After significant discussion, it was decided to leave the schedule as currently presented pending further discussion to modernize the overall point system.
-)] **23-56 AOG EX-4 Point Reimbursement Modernization**
 - This item was discussed briefly and agreed to be a priority for 2024 due to its impact on Recruitment and Retention.
-)] **23-57 Lifetime Tax Abatement – Proposed Revisions**
 - Several points were presented (i.e., Activity point schedule, eligibility of out-of-town residents, qualification of active members with 25 years of service and award abatement to surviving spouse for line of duty deaths) but changes were tabled until recommendations to modernize the point system were received so we only go to the Town Council once with proposed ordinance changes.
-)] **23-58 Chief's Staffing Plan for 2024**
 - The Chief stated that he does not anticipate any changes but will present his staffing plan for 2024 at the January Board meeting.

Chief's Report: Chief Appell

-)] There are 31 entry firefighters and 24 support firefighters. That gives us 55 members that can help at a call but this is only if all 55 can respond, which is unlikely. There are 11 fire police. So, adding all these members brings us to a total of 66 members who can respond to calls but actual members who can put out fires is 55 totaled.
-)] Safety Committee – Chief Appell had 3 members interested in this committee. He asked Assistant Chief Sedlak to talk to members. Still need members from Company 1, 4 and HQ to get this committee going.

Meetings Schedule:

-)] Meeting Schedule was reviewed and discussed,
 - Agreed to cancel the December 28th Board meeting and hold a joint strategy meeting on December 21st.
 - The proposed 2024 Meeting Schedule was reviewed and approved by a motion from Kristen Shaw and seconded by Brian Baldwin. **(See Attachment A)**

Meeting adjourned at 10:13 with a motion made by Kristen Shaw and seconded by Brian Baldwin.

MEETINGS & DRILLS SCHEDULE

(fluid document subject to change)

2024 BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

January 25, 2024
February 29, 2024
March 28, 2024
April 25, 2024
May 30, 2024
June 27, 2024
July 25, 2024
August 29, 2024
September 26, 2024
October 31, 2024
November 21, 2024
December 19, 2024

2024 CORPORATION MEETING SCHEDULE

January 8, 2024
February 12, 2024
March 11, 2024
April 8, 2024
May 13, 2024
June 10, 2024
July 8, 2024
August 12, 2024
September 9, 2024
October 7, 2024
November 18, 2024
December 9, 2024

* The Annual Dinner is scheduled on the Saturday following the Annual Meeting will be November 23, 2024.