

SOMERSET FIRE/RESCUE COMMISSION
Minutes of the March 20, 2006 Meeting

Call to Order: Chairperson Roy called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. at the Town Hall.

Roll Call: Present - Shane Demulling, Rita Lawson, Bartt Palmer, Tom Roy, and Fire Chief Bruno Reed. Absent - Gerry Mullenberg. Also attending - many members of the Fire/Rescue Department.

Minutes from Previous Meeting: *Motion by Demulling, second by Palmer to approve the minutes of the February 13, 2006 meeting.*

Financial Report: Brian Duggan, Treasurer, noted the right amount for the annual pension payment needs to be in next year's budget. He explained there was no charge to cancel the cell phones because there had been no contract. Travis Belisle reported they didn't get the amount they were asking for the old compressor on e-bay. Scuba people seemed the most interested so it was decided to try listing it again in a month or so. *Motion by Demulling, second by Palmer to approve the financial report dated February 28, 2006.*

Public Input

Pea Soup Days in June - The department is planning to participate in the Sunday parade. There was also discussion about the possibility of staging a water fight with other departments, perhaps after the parade.

Fire License Plates – Discussion about the need for former members to remove fire plates from their personal cars.

Former chief using department copier – Department members asked how to respond if the former chief again visits the office. Demulling to speak with Sheriff Hillstead about options.

Old Business

Fire/Rescue Commission Bylaws - Tabled. It was decided a special meeting would be best for working on the bylaws.

Complaint Form – The form is available in the department and appears adequate for now.

Grants - FEMA grant for turnout gear (boots, coat, helmet, gloves, etc.) - Travis Belisle reported the department is trying for 20 sets because so much of the current equipment is outdated and/or worn out. The grant requires a 10% match.

Future grants – The department hopes grants will be available in 2012 when all new pagers will be needed because of changes in the county system. Now the 5 new pagers bought by the department each year are capable of narrow band. The department's radios are mostly capable of narrow band except the ones in the main trucks.

Phone Allowance-Chief & 1st Assistant – *Motion by Demulling, second by Palmer to reimburse Chief and 1st Assistant \$25/month for department related use of their personal cell phones.*

New Offices – Request for bids has been posted in the paper.

New Business

Fire Chief Report – Commission members complimented Reed on his written reports. Reed noted the department is discussing fund raising ideas and has completed EMT refreshers. Discussion about defibrillator training for the Senior Center, Town Board and the Town's road crew.

Bill for Fire Calls - \$500 Maximum – Fire and false alarm calls are billable. With surrounding departments, including St. Joe, billing, discussion was to gather information about policies and procedures and have this topic on the agenda for the April 26 joint meeting.

Captain Position – Department bylaws allow for one captain appointed by the Chief but they want 2 captains, one for fire calls and one for EMS to handle grants and spread out the workload. Travis Belisle is applying for the fire captain position but does the Commission's August 29, 2005 motion preclude his being appointed? *Motion by Palmer, second by Demulling to lift the 3-year suspension regarding positions appointed by the chief but kept in place for the chief and assistant chief positions.*

New Members – Three new members were introduced: Justin Eckhof, John Ryther, and Kevin Breure. The department has two additional applicants but can't buy gear for them because the 2006 budget amount for gear is needed for current members' gear.

Audit - 2004 – Copies of 2004 audit were distributed. Auditor has offered to help with the budget at no charge because of issues, especially pension.

2005 – Information will go to the auditor by early April and the audit hopefully completed by May 15.

Other Business

US Fish & Wildlife Service – The Service will have a prairie burn sometime from April to June and has offered training in wild fire burns at that time. As trade for helping with the burn they have also offered some of their older equipment when they write it off. They noted some grant money may be available for fixing up the equipment.

5-year plan – Jason Crotty reported the plan is being updated.

Hydrants in the Village – Department members expressed their ongoing concern about the multiple sizes of hook-ups on the hydrants in the Village causing delays in their ability to fight fires quickly there. They feel all the new hydrants should have STORZ and the old ones retrofitted. Item to be on April 26 Joint meeting agenda

Plourde Letter – Tom Roy reported he had talked with Dan Plourde right after the last meeting to give them information about their family's incident and to discuss their concerns.

Meeting Time – It was agreed to continue starting the Commission meetings at 7:00 p.m.

Motion by Demulling, second by Palmer to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 9:19 p.m.

Next meetings: Commission meeting, Monday, April 24, 2006, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall.
 Joint meeting, Wednesday, April 26, 2006, 7:00 p.m., Village Hall.