



## MEETING MINUTES A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE FOREST LAKES FIRE DISTRICT OCTOBER 21, 2023



- 1 Call to Order. The meeting was called to order by STRAP Committee Chairman John Hennessey at 12:08 pm.
- 2 Roll Call of Committee Members. In addition to John, in attendance were committee members Julie Swanson, Dennis Massion, Israel Torres, Pete Batschelet and Chief Rodriguez. For the record, there was a quorum of the board. There were no members of the public in attendance.
- 3 Opening Remarks, Committee Chairman
  - a) Planning session only, no board actions.
  - b) Comments from the public welcome.
  - c) Overview of process, plan for remaining meetings.  
This item was addressed in the preceding board meeting, and was omitted from the discussion.
  - d) Finance Committee works the financial plan in parallel.
- 4 Brief Review of Foundational documents. In the interests of time, John stated subject documents are included in the 2022 STRAP Update document, with which team members are familiar. They will be included as is in the 2023 update.
- 5 Chief's "State of the District" Message. Chief Rodriguez's State of the District is the focal point of Session #2 of this STRAP Update process. It sets the tone for all follow-on discussions, and is included here in its entirety.



Chief Presentation for  
October STRAP 2023

### Key points from Chief's preso:

- The next 2 years will be challenging as we maneuver through the rising costs of goods and services. Inflation has impacted our small, rural fire district with no immediate financial relief identified.
- The previous year we encountered a shortfall which the Leadership Team responded admirably to the condition by utilizing Contingency Funds and not reducing service levels.
- This leads to questions which the Leadership Team must address.
  - When do we consider lowering service levels?
  - Property valuations will increase.
  - Will the new generation of property owners be as giving and supportive of the district and its needs?
- Chief's Top Priorities
  1. Maintain On-Duty Staff
  2. Identify Grant and Alternative funding opportunities
  3. Recruitment of POC candidates
  4. Maintain and enhance community relationships
  5. Entertain Auxiliary as a funding alternative
- How do we continue providing service that meets the needs of the district understanding the constraints we are facing? [financial & personnel]. Increase On-Duty staff when POC's are not available. (personnel safety). What can our tax base support with the current and future needs of the district?
- Succession Planning
  - Fire Board
  - Fire Chief
  - Technical Support
  - Merger/Consolidation/JPA
- Are there any unforeseen issues that would impact our service delivery model to the District?
- Can we predict any unfunded mandates in the near future?
- On-Duty Staff Wage Adjustment:  
PARAMEDIC



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Current - \$20.00/hr  
Proposed - \$22.00/hr

### FIREFIGHTER/EMT

Current: \$17.50/hr  
Proposed - \$19.50/hr

- Current Staffing Model
  - Two Paramedic/Firefighter
  - One EMT/Firefighter
- The staffing model has been in place for eleven years and serves the District adequately if resident POC are available for emergency response and transport.
- Important to note that First Responder Certification is for driving and equipment retrieval. This level of certification is not part of the patient care module and does not replace the EMT or Paramedic role and responsibilities.
- Our On-Duty staff are certified Firefighters, Engineers, Captains and Battalion Chiefs.
- Recommendation is to increase to 3 (seasonal and Holidays increase to 4 or 5) On-Duty Staff due to reduction in POC availability.
- Current Staffing Challenges
  - Reduction in Resident POC Availability
  - Time Commitment for Certifications
    - 1000 Hours for Paramedic
    - College Semester for EMT
    - Six Months for Firefighter
  - Residents have family and job commitments
  - Seasonal Residents—retired or here for recreation
- In previous discussions, the Board has been made aware of the condition the District would be facing when our resident Paid On-Call group began to diminish/fade away. We are now experiencing a reduction in POC availability. This condition is natural and replacement of POC's is not always an easy one. The labor pool in communities like Forest Lakes is extremely limited.
- Paramedic, Emergency Medical Technician and Firefighter certifications have requirements that require much more than our resident base is willing and able to commit to.
- A paramedic certification requires 1000 hours of training, EMT is one college semester and Firefighter can take as long as six months.
- Our residents, fulltime and seasonal, have taken a different life path which does not include a commitment that would take them away from family and relaxation.
- Studies have shown that volunteerism is at an all-time low in the united states. That trend exists in Forest Lakes as well.

FLFD 13 Years Ago



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Paid On Call Resident Personnel - "POC"					
Active Roster September 2008					
20	Kennedy, Sally	UL - CEP	85	Gallagher, Ed	Eng 01,02,04,13
21	Hill, Kathy	BEMT	87	Cooper, Trina	Fire Training
22	Wilson, Tama	BEMT/FFI & I/Wld	88	Hume, Mack	CFR/AD/1,2,4,11
23	Morris, Bill	FF I & II	92	Jeardoe, Gene	Support
24	Astemborski, Frank	BEMT/FIRE/Wld	93	Krohn, Ron	Eng All Veh
27	Wilson, Brandon	CEP - FF I & II	94	Mager, Al	Sup/F/W/WUIG
35	Mendez, May	BEMT - OM - AA	95	Hume, Mary	CFR/AD/1202
41	Etter, Derek	FF I & II	96	Cary, Ted	AD/01,02,04,11,07
43	Mead, Mike	BEMT - FF I & II	97	Taylor, Bill	Support
44	Pontious, April	BEMT			
49	Mannett, Robert	FF			
50	McKeever, John	BEMT - FFI			
55	Cooper, Grant	FF			
57	Bonfeld, Jesse	FF			
68	Schaider, Steve	FF I&II			
76	McKeever, Dana	Green Waste Site			
80	Scholl, Keith	UL - Support			
82	Mitchell, Bob	AD - Support			
83	Detzler, Don	Support			
84	Mitchell, Diane	Support - Office			

FLFD Today



Paid on Call Resident Personnel - "POC"				
Active Roster 2021				
25	St. Germain, Lou	CFR		Full-Time
88	Ruet, Joe	CFR		Part Time
33	Waggoner, LJ	CFR		Part-Time
22	Ulinger, Mick	CFR		Part-Time
87	Cooper, Trina	Scheduling		Full-Time

- Lou has stated his intention of phasing out of the POC program next year. Jim Weigold, the remaining fulltime resident member, has advised he will retire for health reasons. Joe Ruet and LJ Waggoner are seasonal POC members.
- Look around next time you are in the community and see if you identify any potential POC candidate. We are close to the natural transition of an extinct POC program.
- Budget Impacts (Plus-Deltas)
  - Pay Adjustments
  - Potential Mil Rate increase
  - Apparatus replacement
  - Forest Service response for medical
  - Statewide tax increase
  - Charging property owners for EMS response
- Hourly wage increase is being driven by the fire chief in order to stay competitive with mountain top wages. If proposed wage increase is affordable, this would place FLFD in the middle of the mountain top salary range.
- How do we manage inflation, competitive wages, rolling stock that maintains the service delivery model?
- Summary
  - POC Availability - Reduced and nearing extinction.



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- Maintain Current Level of Service by adding additional On-Duty staff.
  - Equipment Maintenance Efficiency.
  - Grant opportunities.
  - Alternative funding sources.
    - Approach Game and Fish to add a license fee to ATVs to help cover the cost of EMS support.
    - The preponderance of our calls are Forest Service related.
      - Call volume estimated at 40% Forest Service, 30% subdivision and 30% Highway 260
    - Chief will contact Flagstaff Fire Chief who is heading up an initiative to get more funding for rural fire districts to request a letter that Israel can take to the legislature to lobby for more support.
  - POC personnel numbers have reduced over the last 11 years.
  - Keep looking for potential POC candidates.
  - Our current emergency response works well for this community!
- 6 Top Priorities. Included in Chief's message.
- 7 Potential Five-Year Goals.
-   
7\_Five Year  
Goals.pptx
- 8 Master Planning Committee.
-   
8\_Master Plan  
Update.pptx
- FEL Shelter
    - Investigating lower cost metal structure
    - Snow load may be an issue
    - May require permitting and Community Development approval
    - Haley will report out at next month's meeting
  - Annex Garage Door Refurbishment
    - Make this a priority
- 9 Adjournment. There being no further business before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 1:18 pm.