

**VILLAGE OF MARSHALL
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 26, 2015**

President Hensler called the special Village Board meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call: Mark Shepler, Chad Diedrick, Marc Peters, Mary Bunch, John Schuepbach and Marlin E Hensler Jr. were present. Spencer was absent. Others present: Sue Peck-Village Administrator; Scott Alain-EMS Director, Tristian Mc -Courier; Fire Department representatives: Fire Chief Blair Pierce, Jared Blaschka, William Blaschka, Paul Mohrmann, Dan Timpel; Town of Medina: Steve Schulz, Sue Zingsheim, Mike Schlimgen, Timm Kersten; Town of York: John Prosser and Dean Helwig;

The purpose of the meeting was to hear Fire Department concerns on their availability to have enough volunteer members during day time hours.

Fire Chief Blair Pierce said they are having a hard time completing calls during the day time. Currently their roster doesn't have anyone that works a second or third shift. During the day they have 11 available firefighters; one of the 11 is retiring in February and another one has taken a different job. Some have their current members have 20 years of service in.

They are real short of staff during daytime calls between 5 am and 5 pm. He expressed concerns that the daytime roster is going to get harder to fill. The department has been recruiting and they have four new people, none of them are employed on a 2nd or 3rd shift or work in town. Fire Chief Pierce noted that half of their calls come between 5am and 5 pm.

In the current situation they can't guarantee a truck out the door. He felt hiring some staff seriously needs to be looked at. He suggested hiring four LTE employees or part-time. Mr. Pierce didn't have an answer to the cost of having paid staff. It was noted that Columbus has a part-time paid staff and the volunteers get paid minimum wage when on a call. There are a variety of pay scales for departments. Waterloo has two full-time staff that is paid by the hour. Sun Prairie has added some full-time. No one was sure as to the number of paid staff they have. They also are providing coverage 24/7.

Medina Supervisor Schlimgen asked what age done has to be to join the department. Marshall requires 21, state says 18.

Village President Hensler agreed we need help. He suggested prior to that maybe there should be a full fledge campaign to possibly get more involved. He asked what we can do right now to make sure we are somewhat staff to help the day watch. We aren't gaining, we keep losing, which isn't helping. What can we do to make sure we have fire protection? What is the backup plan for now?

William Blaschka said the department can call for mutual aid. They have mutual aid contracts with other departments where departments are helping each other out.

Fire Chief Pierce said they now have an "I am responding" system in place. Fire personnel can get pages through their phones now; they can respond back immediately if they can come to the call. This shortens the decision if mutual aid is needed. This system also brings only one piece of equipment per department. Sun Prairie had us set up as the first response.

Fire Chief Pierce said their number of firefighters per call is up 6 persons per call. The department is required to staff a truck with 1st engine out with five people. Non-compliant is not meeting this staffing requirement. William Blaschka says with mutual aid they need to look at keeping some people in town on a mutual aid requirement. Some retirees have also stepped in to help at times as well.

Town of York Chairperson Mr. Prosser said we need to figure out what some of the costs are going to be. Pay some part-timers that are available during certain times. Would there be paid benefits? Mr. Pierce said the next issue will be managing these people. Even with full-time you can have periods of none available.

Village Trustee Chad Diedrick questioned if they have paid positions will that hurt volunteers. Fire Chief Pierce said some departments have Full-timers, LTEs, and Volunteers. He wasn't sure if that is an issue or not.

Trustee Diedrick asked what the avenue has been for recruiting volunteers. Dan Timpel said they have a committee, on their Facebook, sign up at the bank, they have been selective. Need a signature by two active firemen to get on. There are times now when the Fireman may sign and they don't necessarily know the applicants. They want the Applicant to come and meet the Firemen. They have a welcoming committee once they are getting on. They do background checks. They must hold a valid Driver's License and go through a personnel committee as well. They have one-year probation. Schooling is the biggest hurdle. It is a lot of training. 148 hours of training is required. State pays for the training. Town of York Supervisor Dean Helwig asked if there could be an opportunity to include junior members in training, that we build the department. We are losing a lot of youth; it would be an opportunity to assist them. Could there be an incentive to businesses if they let an employee fight fires?

Mr. Hensler said we are all short of money, what about delaying the tanker and use the funds in another direction such as staffing?

What about combining the EMS & Fire Departments? Some felt there would be a lot of logistics with that. Scott Allain said he would be willing to have that be part of the discussion. There were many great ideals expressed. It was asked when you are hiring people or recruiting who will be doing that? If the members are being stressed already there will be more added to their duties. People are being pulled many directions.

Part-time employees are always second to other employers. You are always second hand to full-time. Fire inspections and reporting should be done by full-time staff. Mr. Hensler thinks at the minimum of two-full time should be hired immediately. He suggested a decision as soon as possible to cover the day watch.

Town of Medina Supervisor Kersten said the municipalities need to have guideline of what it will cost for paid staff; ex: salaries. If someone that is currently on the roster is interested in a full time position would that be a plus?

Town of York Supervisor Helwig said as the fire district (municipalities) is we are working with the fire department. Who would be the employer in this situation- Village? If they were Village employees they would be under Village HR policies. That would need to be worked out. Mr. Hensler said there also could be a Fire Commission established. There are numerous items that will require further discussion along with the possibility of rewriting of current agreements.

Supervisor Schlimgen asked if they can't provide enough staff could another truck be sold. William Blaschka said the department has three pumpers now, if one is out getting repairs it is good to have the additional trucks. They have kept some of the older trucks and those do get put to use from time to time. Currently they can staff the trucks nights and weekends.

Fire Chief Pierce said he will get some numbers on potential salaries/wages. He preferred not to be responsible for figuring out the department structures (commission, etc...) Supervisor Helwig requested the Fire Department provided potential salaries and an impact statement on how many staff would be needed. Along he requested to provided position descriptions and the work rules/policies that would need to be in place for the paid staff. Mr. Pierce will gather the information and another meeting will be set up among the municipalities in a couple of weeks.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Shepler, and seconded by Diedrick to adjourn at 8:19 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Peck
Village Administrator

Board approved: February 10, 2015

A copy of the complete minutes are on file at the Village Clerk's office at 130 S. Pardee Street, Marshall for public inspection during office hours or can be viewed on the web at: www.marshall-wi.com