

**CLEARWATER FIRE COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 31, 2022**

1. Call to Order: 5:30 p.m. – Clearwater City Hall

Chair Kris Crandall called the Clearwater Fire Commission to order Monday, January 31, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. at Clearwater City Hall. Members present were Kris Crandall, City of Clearwater, and Tom Plaggerman, Lynden Township. Scott Miller, Clearwater Township, was absent. A quorum was present. Also present was Fire Chief Mike Keller, City Administrator Annita Smythe, and Rose Thelen (via Zoom) from Clearwater Township.

2. Introduce New Fire Chief Mike Keller

Introduction of new Fire Chief Mike Keller was conducted. Former Chief Pridgeon retired December 31, 2021.

3. Approve Minutes from June 8, 2021 Meeting

MOTION by Plaggerman to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Crandall, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 2-0.**

4. Review Annual Report

Chief Keller reviewed the annual report. He noted calls in 2021 were a record total and that there were already over 40 calls for the month of January 2022. Member Plaggerman had a question about training hours. Keller noted that the training hours shown in the report are for regularly scheduled department training meetings. Specialized position training is completed by department members on a volunteer basis, though the class fees are paid by the department. These class hours could exceed 100 hours for a single member. Smythe noted that the budget in the annual report is the final approved 2022 budget.

5. Discuss 2023 Budget Draft

Smythe explained that this is a preliminary budget. It is intended to provide a basis for the townships' annual meetings in March. Some factors that could change would be staffing levels, number of calls, and changes to the economy, for example, cost rises due to inflation. Smythe also noted that the 2021 audit is expected to be completed the end of March and approved by the City Council in April.

6. Fire Department Recruitment Efforts

Members discussed shortages being felt nationwide in recruiting new fire department members. Members brainstormed some recruitment ideas, some of which have already been implemented by the city. Ideas proposed:

- Door-to-door direct recruitment
- Word of mouth
- Facebook or other social media
- Recruitment brochure, highlighting department and outlining the time commitment
- Flexibility with call responses/expand membership region/area
- Open house/Heritage Days

- Check into recruitment options with other fire organizations, state, federal
- Place information in township newsletters
- Banners/signage/newspaper
- Produce short 20-second recruitment video
 - o Keller will check to see if any fire organizations already have a video
 - o Plaggerman will see if his daughter is interested in assisting (she recently did one for a project)
 - o Plaggerman suggested reaching out to local schools
 - o Smythe suggested using cell phone video clips and splicing together
 - o Crandall stated he could splice together video clips. He also suggested getting a quote from a marketing firm to produce a short video.

7. Other Business

- Members asked if the new Fire Chief plans to attend the townships' annual meetings. Keller replied that he will attend and asked for dates. Lynden meets March 8, 2022 and Clearwater meets March 9, 2022.
- Smythe stated that another Fire Commission meeting held in early summer would make sense to review final 2021 numbers and update where things stand with the 2023 budget proposal.

8. Adjournment

MOTION to adjourn by Plaggerman, seconded by Crandall, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 2-0.**
Meeting adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

ATTEST



Annita M. Smythe, City Administrator