

**CLEARWATER FIRE COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 16, 2021**

1. Call to Order: 6:00 p.m. via Zoom Web Conference

Chair Kris Crandall called the Clearwater Fire Commission to order Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom Web Conference. Members present were City of Clearwater representative Kris Crandall, Member Rose Thelen from Clearwater Township, and Member Tom Plaggerman from Lynden Township. Also present was Fire Chief Ryan Pridgeon and City Administrator Annita Smythe.

2. Review Annual Report

Fire Chief Pridgeon reviewed the 2020 Annual Report and answered questions.

- Page 1 of the report outlines the approved officers for 2021. Pridgeon noted that there have already been a couple of changes. James Kirchenbauer has left. His Secretary spot will be filled by Brandon Hanebuth. His Lieutenant spot will be filled by Andrew Struffert.
- Page 2 of the report shows the five-year call history by entity and the type of call. Pridgeon explained what is included in the various call types. Medical calls are the most prevalent, with motor vehicle accidents (MVA) second. Townships asked if it would be possible to obtain the call type breakdown by entity. Pridgeon stated that he will see if this is available. He stated that we could begin tracking it this way going forward but was unsure if the state database had it broken down this way. We will check into this and report back at the next meeting. Member Plaggerman stated they would like to see both the address and call type for each call as well.
- Page 3 of the report outlines the membership list and number of calls for 2020. Pridgeon explained that we lost several members in 2020 due to people retiring or moving out of the area. Because of COVID-19 and the uncertainty about the fire contracts, a hiring freeze was put in place. Our current membership is at about 22, with other interviews in progress. Normal full staffing is around 30. We will be pushing to add members this year and the township members also agreed to help spread the word about recruiting. Member Thelen asked if this would make the salary line item in the budget go down. Pridgeon explained that the number of calls are what drives the salaries rather than membership. Low membership numbers just require other members to respond to a higher number of calls.
- Pages 4 & 5 of the report outline the 2021 budget and contract expense splits agreed to in the new contract. Smythe explained that the items highlighted in yellow are state pass-through funds, so those amounts are excluded from the budget total that is split for contract purposes.

3. Discuss 2022 Budget Needs

- Upcoming annual meeting dates for the townships' budget review are March 2 for Lynden Township and postponed to July for Clearwater Township. Township representative asked for an estimate for the 2022 budget.
- Smythe explained that she can create an estimate, but it would be subject to change by the City Council if an extraordinary event occurred before the city sets its levy. Right now, she expects the 2022 budget to increase perhaps 1-2% for salaries. Pridgeon concurred, stating there are not any major capital expenditures planned over the next 2-3 years unless

something fails. Our remaining vehicles have about 10 more years of useful life before replacement is needed.

- Pridgeon further outlined our next largest purchase as replacing the SCBA tanks. They were all purchased at once with grant funds and are about to expire. They have a useful life of 20 years. Once expired they are no longer in service. The city is working on a grant application to FEMA requesting funding to replace them at a cost of just under \$200,000. If we receive the grant, we will have a match, but there are sufficient reserves in the Fire Capital fund to cover the matching costs.
- Smythe will create an estimated 2022 budget and submit to the townships prior to their budget meeting.

4. Planning for Future Contract

Township representatives were not ready to discuss possible planning for a contract extension. They preferred to see how things go and revisit this topic at a Fire Commission meeting planned for mid-June.

5. Other Business

Next meeting date will be mid-June. Date to be determined.

6. Adjournment

MOTION to adjourn by Thelen, seconded by Plaggerman, all voted aye.
Meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

ATTEST

APPROVED

Annita M. Smythe, City Administrator

Kris Crandall, Chair