

MINUTES
OF
PUBLIC HEARING/WORKSHOP
SEPTEMBER 25, 2023, 7PM
APPROVED MINUTES

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Supervisor Hall.
2. Present: Trustee Norman, Supervisor Hall, Clerk Winkelmann, Trustee Bradley, Sam Ball- Fire Board At Large
Absent: Treasurer Ouwinga.
3. 26 people in attendance.
4. The purpose of the meeting is to hear public input regarding the transition of the Lake City Area Fire Department and what the Township's next steps should be to operate solely. Item topics: leasing the City building, adding on to the Green Road Fire barn, purchasing property at another location.
5. Power point presentation by Fred West, LCAFD Deputy Chief. Described slides presented, discussed vehicles that are not antiquated as described in the Missaukee Sentinel. 7 rescue trucks and a rescue boat which are all up to date.
6. Public Input:
 - Sam Ball- Thanked everyone for showing up and stated that this meeting was intended to come up with solutions for a productive meeting.
 - Josh Fairbrother- curious why we were no longer with the city as far as our fire agreement? A. City decided to end our agreement and contract with Station 200. The city had a year and a half to go to complete the contract in full. The city relinquished rights to all equipment, was that because of the claims of antiquated equipment? A. Supervisor Hall stated that we don't have to worry about equipment not being up to date. The cost of one truck is approximately \$500,000.00 so the Township made out very well with the split. There are four payments left on an older truck and the city will be making one payment with the Township making the other three payments. Have we reached out to other Townships? A. Sam Ball stated that we made an offer to Lake Missaukee Dept and other Townships, in which they could contract for less amount of money. Sam stated that his approach was not received well from Lake Missaukee Dept.'s board. There was no other dialogue to Sam except Forest Township sent a letter to Supervisor Hall stating that they weren't interested.
 - Tony Fedewa- Has been to both fire departments since the discussion of the split between the Township and the city and stated that Lake Township (Station 600) and Missaukee Dept (Station 200) basically have the same equipment. Elaborated on his personal experience with a fire call at his home. He spoke with all Supervisors except Forest Township. Doesn't want to see hasty decisions being made. Township could buy services from Lake Missaukee Dept. Stresses wanting a 3-year lease with the city for

truck storage. Stated there is no energy in 200's fire department and that Station 600 should move forward with a lease until things settle down and understand what they want to do. He thinks there's a lot of reasons for two departments and there is a lot of reasons for one.

- Josh Fairbrother- With the election coming up for Mayor, would it be possible if a new mayor is elected that Lake City and Lake Township would be together again? A. There was a 10-year contract signed by the City with Missaukee Dept. Ben Vassar stated that you can FOIA the details.
- Terri Christle- Thinks we need to build our own fire barn. Stated that the city wanted to get rid of their fire department because they want to demolish the city building for their plans for a farmers' market.
- Tony Fedewa- Stated the city is not planning on tearing it down. It is a long-term plan. The city wanted to be out of the fire department.
- Gerard Winkle- The city was asked for a representative to attend the meeting tonight to clear up the misinformation that is out in the public. No representative from the city attended. He's met with Supervisor Hall to discuss future plans for the Fire Department. Talked with Dutchman Tree Farms about property they may have available for purchase, and they offered the end of the Sewer plant road. Worked on finding vacant land locations within the township that would be beneficial for fire department placement.
- Bruce Sparks- The spot Dutchman is offering is full of clay and the guys at Sanitary Drain have to pull out Dutchman when they are stuck.
- Dave LaRoche, Station 200 Fire Chief (Lake Missaukee Dept)-This is all about dollars and cents. Knows what they stand for as a fire service. There's a lot of rumors in the community so this is good to meet and figure it all out to dispel those. Stated if you take out ½ the trucks in the community, you'll be receiving ½ the service. It is necessary for two departments. Having ½ the inventory is a disservice to the community. 20 seated board members declined the 300k offer presented by Sam Ball. Stressed to build the service and not tear it apart. Having two departments is a good thing because we are dealing with volunteer departments, not full-time status. Fully supports Lake Township in keeping their own department and offered to assist in any way that he can to make that happen for Lake Township. Important to keep a good working relationship between departments through mutual aid.
- Sam Ball- Thanked Dave for his service and didn't mean to insult other townships or Missaukee Dept and feels that it came across that way. Asked if everyone involved with Missaukee Dept would be backing his statement? A. Again, Dave stated that two departments is a good thing and they are in support of Lake Township having their own department. Sam stated that there was miscommunication within the paper whether they were in support of one unit or a combination. Dave stated they were happy with the arrangement.
- Supervisor Hall stated two years leased rent to the city would be \$36,000.00.
- Ben Vassar, Station 200 Lieutenant- Gave an explanation on how mutual aid works.

- Pat Bierens- Provided proposal from Sam to every township board affiliated with Missaukee Dept. One township has no money and had to let their roads go to pay money into fire. They have contracts with other departments and mutual aid with other departments. She stated that Sam's proposal being declined was not about the money, it was about the residents and taking care of people. They wouldn't have taken 3 million dollars if it was offered.
 - Dick Morrow- Disagrees with the thought of having the fire department at the Green road location. Feels that it is a safety issue, it's a subdivision, too much traffic and he thinks it should be looked at from a safety perspective.
 - Terri Christle- consider the economics, the closer you are to a fire department the cheaper your homeowners' insurance. The more we have the better we are, and we all benefit.
 - Greg Brooks- Spent 30 years on the Lake Missaukee Dept when we were all one department. Has concerns from a safety aspect about having the fire department at the Green road location. Thought the Township should consider property that was near the township due to it being more centrally located within the township and that would space out the departments which would be beneficial for residents.
 - Gary Gunnerson- Sounds like we are agreeable the way it is
7. Public Hearing closed at 8:23 p.m.

Prepared by Korinda Winkelmann, Clerk.

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