

APPROVED
Cedar Area Fire & Rescue Board
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, May 1, 2024 at 2:00 pm
Cedar Fire Department

Call to Order

Chairman Greg Julian called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. Present on roll call were Greg Julian, John DePuy, Chris Comeaux, and John Imboden. Ron Schaub was absent. Andy Doornbos and Dana Boomer was present as staff.

Discussions/decisions will be for the direction of the Cedar Area Fire & Rescue Board as previously published, per the Open Meetings Act. Potential quorums of township boards will be noted in the minutes.

Citizens Comments – Solon and Cleveland have re-appointed DePuy as the member at large.

Consideration of Agenda – The board briefly discussed the agenda. **Motion by Imboden to approve the agenda as presented, second by DePuy. All in favor, motion carried.**

Minutes: Approval of April 3, 2024 General Meeting Minutes – Language was added to New Business item b regarding Cleveland’s position on the construction of a second station (added language in italics). **Motion by Comeaux to approve the April 3, 2024 General Meeting Minutes as amended, second by Imboden. All in favor (DePuy abstained), motion carried.**

Correspondence Received – None

Financials –

Boomer had previously provided a handout to the board which detailed the financial statements for April. The board briefly discussed the vendors payable and payroll. The updated unpaid bills detailed list was presented, and briefly discussed.

DePuy moved to accept the April vendors payable as presented, Pleva seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

Imboden moved to accept the April payrolls as presented, DePuy seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

The board discussed the approximately \$45,000 in extra funds left over from the 2023/2024 budget year. There is \$20,000 remaining owed from the operating fund to the capital fund, and the contingency account currently stands at just over \$120,000.

Comeaux moved to use the excess funds from 2023/24 to pay off the remaining debt from the operating fund to the capital fund in the amount of \$20,000, and to move an additional \$20,000 to the contingency account. DePuy seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

Imboden moved to accept the April financial statements as presented, Comeaux seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

Unfinished Business:

- a. Second Station Assessment – Doornbos stated that staff is working on additional assessment documentation for a second station, covering growth, traffic, call volume, population and other issues. Julian stated that Kasson Township is working on moving forward with a second station. A special Kasson board meeting was held on April 24 to start the process for hiring an architectural design firm for renderings, community engagement, and final designs. This is being done as a committee of the whole of the Kasson Township Board, plus the Fire Chief. They will have a regular board meeting on May 8 and continue to discuss the issue, and will be looking at issuing an RFP for the next stages of the design process. Kasson is still looking at an ideal location for a station in Kasson Township. The fire board briefly discussed a location for a new station – the two main locations that are being looked at are the general areas of the intersection of CR616/CR669 and the intersection of M72/Maple City Road. DePuy advocated for looking at where the growth is likely to be over the next 10+ years. Future demographics should be a large part of the decision for a new station location.

Imboden confirmed that while the capital costs for a new station will be borne by the township building the station, the operating cost would be borne by the fire department. The overall department operating cost would not double, because at this time there are no immediate plans for additional staffing in concert with the new station, so the costs that would effectively double would be the building operating costs. DePuy also advocated for working with Glen Lake to improve coverage on the western side of the Cedar coverage area and the eastern side of the Glen Lake coverage area. Julian and Doornbos continue to speak with the Supervisors and Fire Chief from Glen Lake regarding the possibility of mutual improvement of coverage between the two departments. DePuy wishes that the National Park Service would assist local departments more, as the local departments are responsible for much of the emergency response, including all of the medical response, for the park. DePuy wants to see FEMA and other government agencies contacted to see if money can be contributed based on the coverage of federal lands.

Comeaux stated that the Solon Township Board is happy that Kasson is moving forward with a new station, and continue to be committed to the interlocal agreement. They want to continue to see a minimum of two staff members on duty at the Cedar station. Julian stated that the citizens of Solon and Centerville have been committed to the existing facility, and have made improvements to the facility. However, the existing building was not set up to be the sole station for a full-service ALS department with multiple full-time

first responder and administration staff. Kasson is hearing support from their citizens for this endeavor.

Imboden asked whether new equipment would be needed. Doornbos stated that he feels one additional piece of apparatus that might be necessary, but overall the majority of the current apparatus would be split between the two stations. This is laid out in the long-term capital projections. DePuy asked whether it would be possible to get the Park to contribute to equipment. Doornbos stated that he is in ongoing communication with the Park regarding the possibility of receiving surplus equipment. There was continued discussion regarding the construction and operating costs of a station, and the responsibility for those. There was continued discussion regarding staffing and organization with the potential of a new building. The board discussed continued growth in the service area; Comeaux stated that Solon is already looking at the long-term growth on their southern edge and the possibility of the long-term need for an additional station in southeastern Solon Township. The board and staff discussed the continued growth in the service area, including full-time population, seasonal populations, and commercial populations.

DePuy brought up the possibility of Cedar, Leland and Glen Lake working together to optimize staffing and responses. This has been an ongoing discussion in the region. The departments need to look at optimizing the service for the region as a whole, not just their own particular areas. Comeaux agreed that consolidation of services is needed.

New Business:

- a. Part-Time Employee Hiring – Doornbos recommended the hire of Samuel Kelly as a part-time employee currently finishing fire school who will be going through the EMT class after. **DePuy moved, Comeaux seconded to approve the hiring of Samuel Kelly as a part-time probationary employee effective May 1, 2024. All in favor, motion carried.**

Comeaux asked whether it would be possible to amend the interlocal agreement to remove the requirement for the board to approve the hiring of part-time staff, and leave this responsibility to the Fire Chief. Julian will bring it up at the next interlocal agreement meeting.

- b. Any New Business – None

Reports:

- a. Fire Chief – The Chief’s Report was provided in the meeting packet. Doornbos summarized his report.
- b. Department Staff – DePuy has been re-appointed by all four townships as the Member at Large. The department audit will have the in-person portion conducted next week.
- c. Chairman – The first union negotiations meeting will take place at 1 pm prior to the June meeting. There is also an upcoming interlocal agreement meeting.

Citizens Comments – None

Board Member & Chair Comments – DePuy has been involved in public safety for most of his life, and he has seen people die because emergency services couldn't get there in time. It is paramount to him to be able to help the citizens properly in life-threat situations. He wants to see more joint cooperation in the region, and more support from the park service.

Julian said that at the quarterly supervisor's meeting, there was good support for the work that has been done with the local fire departments. With regarding the possibility of hiring a consultant to conduct a survey about the need for a new station, it has been determined that this would likely not be cost effective.

Next Meeting Date – The next regular board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 5, 2024 at 2 pm.

DePuy moved, Imboden seconded to adjourn the meeting. With no further business, Julian adjourned the meeting at 3:19 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dana Boomer
Recording Secretary