

# KETTLE MORAINÉ FIRE BOARD MINUTES

Approved

**Call to order:** R. Spurrell called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm on December 27, 2021 at the North Prairie Municipal Building at 130 N Harrison St.

**Roll Call:** A. Rasmussen, D. Malek, P. Jensen, E. Westrick, G. Nickerson, A. DeValkenaere and R. Spurrell all present. Also present was Chief Kugel.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Pledge of Allegiance was led by R. Spurrell.

**Citizen comments/concerns:** A. Rydzik, 113 N. Harrison St, asked if the KMFB meeting can possibly be at a different time/night due to training with the department. That would allow officers, or any employee, to attend if they would like to; and allow the Chief to attend the trainings. He also stated he would like to see the dual trained requirement removed. He believes being a new department we should be taking whoever we can because we need people.

D. Bliese, 301 South St Eagle, stated she is the current EFD fire commission secretary until the end of December. She had heard reports that she was angry and unwilling to train the new Administrative Assistant, this is incorrect. She was just ignoring the comments until now. The comments have become slanderous and affecting her reputation. She was informed that KMFB member P. Jensen's services were offered to Katie (Hritz) to watch over the training due to a concern of hostility, which Katie declined the offer. Deborah stated she has always performed her job with integrity and professionalism. She formally requested the Fire Board, and its employees it governs, to immediately stop spreading rumors and remarks that are inaccurate and slanderous to her character.

**Discussion/action to approve minutes from November 22, 2021 meeting:** Motion by A. DeValkenaere to approve the minutes as corrected. Motion seconded by G. Nickerson. Motion carried unanimously (7 - 0).

**Discussion/action regarding a press release to the media about KMFD:** This item was requested to clarify if press releases will be approved by the Chief or if they need to be approved by the Fire Board. Chief Kugel stated there are not any current press releases pending. After general discussion there was general consensus that the Chief and his staff could release press releases. Motion by A. DeValkenaere to designate the authority to release press release to go thru Chief Kugel or his designee. Motion seconded by A. Rasmussen. Motion carried unanimously (7 - 0).

**Discussion/action regarding the KMFD Administrative Assistant position:** R. Spurrell stated he felt the discussions and hiring of the Administrative Assistant has been misleading. It was stated the agreement states the Administrative Assistant reports to the board, yet she is still being told she reports to the Chief. The fire board stated the Administrative Assistant was hired as a temporary position but she is willing to consider maintain the position permanently. R. Spurrell stated the Administrative Assistant told him she absolutely does not want to maintain the Administrative Assistant position. He feels there is a major disconnect between what the Fire Board is saying, what Katie is willing to do, and what the position is supposed to be. R. Spurrell suggested the board re-advertises for the Administrative Assistant position to hire a permanent employee. Motion by R. Spurrell to repost the

ad for Administrative Assistant. Motion seconded by A. DeValkenaere. During further discussion it was clarified to post the job on the municipal websites, WCA website and Indeed, at a pay rate of \$20/hr and at 15 to 20 hours/week. Motion carried unanimously (7 - 0).

**Discussion/action to determine health insurance contributions:** R. Spurrell handed out a sheet with the breakdown of how the Village of Eagle determines the percentage of contributions by the employer. Limitations by the state are the employer cannot pay more than 88% or less than 25% of the average premium of eligible insurance plans. Motion by A. DeValkenaere to pay 25% of the premium for eligible employees working less than 1044 hours, 50% of the premium for eligible employees working 1044 to 1819 hours and 88% of the premium for eligible employees working 1820 or more hours. Motion seconded by A. Rasmussen. Motion carried unanimously (7 - 0).

**Discussion/action regarding Chief's discretion to use EMTs only to fill Part-time schedule:** Chief Kugel stated North Prairie had an employee that is only EMT, he would like to use those employees that are EMT only to fill in the vacancies in the part time schedule. Motion by P. Jensen to allow Chief's discretion to use EMT only employees to fill part-time schedule. Motion seconded by G. Nickerson. Motion carried unanimously (7 - 0).

**Discussion/action regarding combining Administrative Assistant and Full-Time positions:** Chief Kugel is looking to combine the Administrative Assistant position with the fulltime position based on the same person being recommend as the fulltime position that the KMFB hired as the Administrative Assistant position. P. Jensen stated he thought the only option the board has is to combine both positions until the board is able to hire a permanent Administrative Assistant. A. DeValkenaere questioned possible conflicts of the wage of the Administrative Assistant with the wage of an EMT/firefighter. R. Spurrell stated combining the Administrative Assistant position with an EMT/firefighter position is a logistic nightmare for WRS (WI Retirement System) because they are two different categories with different contribution rates. R. Spurrell suggested to take the title of Administrative Assistant away and simply have Katie do the administrative work during 'down time' as the fulltime employee until a permanent Administrative Assistant is hired. Motion by R. Spurrell to not combine the positions of Administrative Assistant and full-time position. Motion seconded by P. Jensen. Motion carried unanimously (7 - 0).

**Discussion/action regarding Scott Ahles and Brandon Ellsworth to attend Fire Officer 1 Class:** Motion by P. Jensen to approve sending S. Ahles and B. Ellsworth to Fire Officer I class. Motion seconded by G. Nickerson. Motion carried unanimously (7 - 0).

**Discussion/action regarding transferring utility bills to Kettle Moraine Fire District:** Chief Kugel asked if he should be transferring the utilities to the KMFD. R. Spurrell stated even though the Town and Village of Eagle haven't finalized the agreement on how they will handle the jointly owned buildings the utilities shouldn't be transferred because the Village will pay the bills in the interim. Motion by R. Spurrell to not transfer any utilities to the KMFD. Motion seconded by P. Jensen. Under further discussion G. Nickerson asked if this was permanent because he believes the utilities would be the responsibility of the fire district because they are not fixed assets. R. Spurrell stated he was under the impression the utilities were the responsibility of the municipalities. R. Spurrell stated

this should be a line item at the next meeting to clarify so everyone can have the same understanding. Motion carried 6 – 1 with G. Nickerson opposed.

**Discussion/action regarding approval of accounts payable:** Chief Kugel presented a list of bills that need to be paid. Motion by A. Rasmussen to approve the presented list of accounts payable with an amendment to include Von Briesen's invoice for \$1,462.50. Motion seconded by P. Jensen. Motion carried unanimously (7 - 0).

**Discussion/Action for approval of KMFD SOGs 33101 – 33122:** R. Spurrell questioned Chief Kugel if he had edited the SOG's after the last discussion. Chief Kugel stated he had. R. Spurrell made a motion to table until the Chief sends out the edits for the board members to review. Motion seconded by P. Jensen. Motion carried unanimously (7 - 0).

**Chief's report:** Chief Kugel said thank you to everyone that attended the swearing in ceremony. He also reported that most items on the punch list of items to do for the merger are done. The few items that remain do not affect the starting of the merger on January 1<sup>st</sup>. The EMS license has been received, and all but 3 employees have been credited.

**Adjournment:** Motion by D. Malek to adjourn. Motion seconded by E. Westrick. Motion carried unanimously (7 - 0). R. Spurrell adjourned the meeting at 7:41 pm.