

Approved at 11-23-31 Board Mtg

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
OF THE O'FALLON FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
October 28, 2021**

A Regular Session of the O'Fallon Fire Protection District Board of Directors was held on Thursday, October 28, 2021, via Zoom due to COVID-19. Director Laughlin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Notice of said meeting had been provided at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting by posting the meeting time in the case on the outside wall of the Administrative Offices. The following Directors were present: Director Bill Laughlin, Director Matt Gober, and Director Matt Simmons. The following staff members were present: Chief Tom Vineyard, Assistant Chief Ken Vomund, Assistant Chief Andy Parrish, Fire Marshal Mark Morrison, Battalion Chief Brian Moore, Captains Kevin Davis, Gary McCutchen, Darren Daly, Chad Vesely, Bud Marchlewski, and Shop Steward Eric Johnston, Firefighters Jeff Woodson, and Brett Tichenor, numerous employees, and Board Administrative Assistant Karen Lucido.

The following guests were present: Attorney Neil Bruntrager, and Attorney Jon Bruntrager

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, followed by the firefighter prayer.

A motion was made by Director Laughlin to approve minutes of the prior Regular Board Meeting of September 23, 2021, and Regular Board Work Session of October 14, 2021, seconded by Director Simmons. Upon roll call the vote was:

- Ayes: (3) Directors Laughlin, Simmons, and Gober
  - Nays: (0) None
  - Absent: (0) None
- Motion declared and carried.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Director Laughlin stated a current checking account balance of \$1,697,703.35. There being no comments or questions, a motion was made by Director Laughlin to pay bills as presented, seconded by Director Simmons. Upon roll call the vote was:

- Ayes: (3) Directors Laughlin, Simmons, and Gober
  - Nays: (0) None
  - Absent: (0) None
- Motion declared and carried.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS:** None

COMMUNICATIONS:

Chief Vineyard stated a retirement ceremony was held this morning for Captain Mark Ballmann. It was well done and a well-deserved send-off for Captain Ballmann. The Board stated their congratulations and their thanks to Captain Ballmann for his many years of service.

Board Administrative Assistant Lucido thanked the Board, Chief, and Fire District employees for their well wishes and expressions of sympathy on the loss of her brother.

Board Administrative Assistant Lucido read the following communications:

1. A thank you to Chief Vineyard, Board and staff for the flowers and heartfelt words of sympathy from the family of David Baumann; Ms. Lucido's brother.
2. An email from St. Paul Grade School thanking the firefighters for giving the students a fire safety talk.
3. A card from Firefighter Brett Tichenor's family, thanking Chief Vineyard, Board, and staff for the flowers and expressions of sympathy on the loss of Firefighter Tichenor's grandmother.
4. A letter from Chief Bergsten, Poudre Fire Authority, congratulating Chief Vineyard on receiving the designation of "Chief Fire Officer" by the Commission on Professional Credentialing. Board Members congratulated Chief Vineyard on receiving this hard-earned CFO designation.

OLD BUSINESS

There was further discussion regarding the Pension Plan. Chief Vineyard stated the documents and amendments for the Defined Benefit Plan will be essentially completed and ready for the Pension Board's approval and recommendations at the upcoming November 16, 2021 Regular Pension Board Meeting. Based on a recommendation to move forward with this plan from the Pension Board, the Plan's documents would be ready for approval at the November 23, 2021 Regular Board Meeting; the DBP would be up and running January 1, 2022. Ekon Benefits (Actuary) completed packets for 8 employees who gave notice of retiring in 2022. Chief Vineyard reviewed a letter received from the Shop requesting to reopen Article 40 of the CBA, regarding Pensions. Discussion held. A motion was made by Director Laughlin to open

the current Collective Bargaining Agreement, Article 40, seconded by Director Gober.

Upon roll call the vote was:

Ayes: (3) Directors Laughlin, Gober, and Simmons  
Nays: (0) None  
Absent: (0) None  
Motion declared and carried.

There was further discussion regarding the Firefighter EMT/P Hiring process. Assistant Chief Parrish reviewed the testing process, and stations, with interviews scheduled for November 3. He stated there are many good candidates in this group.

There was further discussion regarding the Captain promotional process. Chief Vineyard stated 12 employees are going through this process; practicals and interviews will be held next week; recommendations made; and this process will then be complete.

There was further discussion regarding the Battalion Chief promotional process. Chief Vineyard stated 4 employees turned in resumes for this position, and the goal is to have this process complete by the first of December.

There was further discussion regarding the Assistant Chief-Training promotional process. Chief Vineyard stated this process is complete and he will make his recommendation this evening during Closed Session.

NEW BUSINESS:

Chief Vineyard stated the current Administrative Assistant position is being updated to an Executive Administrative Assistant that will be an exempt position. He reviewed the revised policy, and Labor Management has recommended approval. This policy was posted with one comment received, that Chief Vineyard will address. Discussion held. A motion was made by Director Laughlin to approve SOP#121- Executive Administrative Assistant as presented, seconded by Director Gober. Upon roll call the vote was:

Ayes: (3) Directors Laughlin, Gober, and Simmons  
Nays: (0) None  
Absent: (0) None  
Motion declared and carried.

Chief Vineyard reviewed the Ad to be placed to hire an Executive Administrative Assistant before the end of 2021. Discussion held. A motion was made by Director Laughlin to approve moving forward with the hiring process for an Executive Administrative Assistant, seconded by Director Simmons. Upon roll call the vote was:

Ayes: (3) Directors Laughlin, Gober, and Simmons  
Nays: (0) None  
Absent: (0) None  
Motion declared and carried.

Director Laughlin expressed his wishes to return to in-person Board Meetings in the near future. Discussion held. Attorney Bruntrager stated his recommendations that when returning to in-person meetings, all attendees should be vaccinated or wear N95 masks, and social distancing should be maintained per District policy; and an on-line video presence should also be maintained; generally he recommends Zoom meetings. Chief Vineyard stated that so many more employees are engaged in the Board meetings because of the ease of attending via Zoom, that he recommends continuing Zoom through 2021, and then setting up a hybrid of both Zoom & in-person meetings with guidelines beginning January 2022. Resuming some sort of in-person meetings will be COVID-19 dependent. Consensus that a hybrid approach to Board meetings beginning January 2022 will try to be established, with a software professional overseeing the video portion. The November 16 Pension Board Meeting will be held in-person for a very limited number of people due to the amount of paperwork that must be signed; and will also be zoomed.

Director Laughlin made a motion to go into closed session at 7:29 p.m. under RSMo 610.021 (1) Legal Actions involving a public governmental body and confidential or privileged communications between a public governmental body, its representatives and its attorneys; (3) Hiring and promoting of particular employees, and (13) Individually identifiable Personnel Records; seconded by Director Gober. Upon roll call the vote was:

Ayes: (3) Directors Laughlin, Gober, and Simmons  
Nays: (0) None  
Absent: (0) None  
Motion declared and carried.

A motion was made at 7:41 p.m. by Director Laughlin to adjourn the Closed Session and reconvene in Open Session, seconded by Director Simmons. Upon roll call the vote was:

Ayes: (3) Directors Laughlin, Gober, and Simmons  
Nays: (0) None  
Absent: (0) None  
Motion declared and carried.

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Director Laughlin announced that during the Closed Session, the following motion were made:

A motion was made by Director Laughlin to promote Battalion Chief Matt Braile to the position of Assistant Chief-Training effective immediately, seconded by Director Simmons. Upon roll call the vote was:

Ayes: (3) Directors Laughlin, Gober, and Simmons  
Nays: (0) None  
Absent: (0) None  
Motion declared and carried.

A motion was made by Director Laughlin for Assistant Chief-Training Braile to take the role of Assistant Chief-Training effective January 1, 2022, seconded by Director Simmons. Upon roll call the vote was:

Ayes: (3) Directors Laughlin, Gober, and Simmons  
Nays: (0) None  
Absent: (0) None  
Motion declared and carried.

Congratulations were given to Assistant Chief Braile by the Board and members.

Director Laughlin announced the next Regular Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 10, 2021, at 7:00 p.m., via Zoom due to COVID-19.

A motion was made by Director Laughlin to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Director Simmons. Upon roll call the vote was:

Ayes: (3) Directors Laughlin, Gober, and Simmons  
Nays: (0) None  
Absent: (0) None  
Motion declared and carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

  
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William Laughlin, Chairman

ATTEST:

  
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Karen Lucido, Recording Secretary  
Board Administrative Assistant