

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THE PRINCETON FIRE ADVISORY BOARD  
HELD AT 7:00 P.M., ON SEPTEMBER 4, 2012, AT THE PRINCETON CITY HALL**

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**1. Call to Order** – Chair Whitcomb called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Those in attendance included:

**Members present:**

Paul Whitcomb, Chair      City of Princeton  
Gene Stoeckel              Princeton Twsp.  
Stephen L. Dolin            Greenbush Twsp.  
Cathy Lundeen              Wyanett Twsp.

**Members present:**

Roger Nelson              Blue Hill Twsp.

**Staff present:**

Jim Roxbury, Chief P.F.R.D.  
Mark Karnowski, City Admin.

**2. Review/Consideration of August 7, 2012 Minutes**

STOECKEL MOVED TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 7, 2012 MEETING AS PRESENTED. LUNDEEN SECONDED THE MOTION. ALL IN FAVOR, THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**3. Agenda Additions/Deletions:** Roxbury asked that “Fire Run Billing” be included under Old Business. There was no objection.

**4. Run Reports/Department Update:**

**A. Run Reports**

Chief Roxbury handed out the monthly summary and advised that a more detailed report for each township will be mailed out later. We’ve had 179 runs for the year compared with 161 at this time in 2011. It appears that medical runs account for much of the increase. Jim feels that number is increasing because dispatch is finally sending the PFRD out.

**B. Wyanett Tanker**

Roxbury also noted that the Wyanett tanker now has a drop tank attached to the vehicle, the light bar is not yet attached but will be soon. The body shop will be doing the painting of the vehicle.

**C. Relocation**

The PFRD did their annual training at the school this past month and had about 90 participants, including the spouses and “significant others” of some of the firefighters. Jim noted this is good because we will need female volunteers if there ever was an event. Roxbury advised that the state is looking at setting up another site in Stearns County. He finds it interesting that other cities are not jumping at the opportunity since it’s been a real positive experience for Princeton. In fact, Homeland Security has asked Jim to meet with representatives from possible locations to advise them of the advantages.

**D. 800 MHz Radios**

The PFRD now has over 40 800 MHz radios; the Mille Lacs County training is coming up here at City Hall...it’s a “training the trainer” course. Jim expects that the Mille Lacs radio system should be up and running sometime in October. Roxbury is pleased that North Ambulance will have a separate channel to enhance the ability of local FDs to interact with North.

**E. Blue Hill**

Jim advised that the extra grass rig is not located in Blue Hill Township and is passed back and forth between two firefighters who live in that area. Jim indicated this has been good for the department in that they can get someone to the scene sooner and determine whether a full contingent of firefighters and equipment is necessary. He's working on getting a new defib for that grass rig plus one other for the department.

#### **F. Grants**

Roxbury advised that the department was awarded a \$3,600 grant for specialized training from the State Fire Board. He's also been advised that the training for firefighter I, II and Hazmat Response will now be made available to departments at no cost.

#### **G. Other**

The Board was advised that firefighter Dan Pierce is retiring from the department after serving 15 years.

### **5. Old Business:**

#### **A. Public Safety Building Update**

Karnowski advised the board that a committee of Council Members, PFRD, PD and City Hall representatives. That group is now working with Greystone Construction who the group selected as the Construction Management consultant for the project.

He briefly reviewed both the current building layout and proposed site plan and re-emphasized that the proposed cost for the building is to be around \$2 million and that those funds are to come from the municipal liquor store profits.

#### **B. Fire Run Billing**

Chief Roxbury asked for feedback from the Board on how to pursue payment of past due fire run billing. Apparently there are still some unpaid billings from 2-3 years ago and Roxbury asked how long we should pursue the past-due billings before we either give up. He asked if the Board wanted us to turn the unpaid billings over to a collection agency. He noted that the city finance director felt we should continue to pursue payment.

Whitcomb indicated he did not favor using a collection agency.

Dolin initially suggested that the city continue to pursue payment for a year's time and then turn the bill over to a collection agency. He added that process should be outlined as part of the initial bill. He then clarified that we should bill quarterly and, after three quarters, then turn the bill over to a collection agency.

The Board discussed the options and agreed to bring the information back to their respective governing boards and come back in October with their responses.

Karnowski was directed to send out a copy of the minutes early so the board members could share the board's initial thoughts and get the necessary feedback.

## **6. New Business:**

**A. Milaca Situation** - Chief Roxbury advised that the Milaca Fire Chief recently tendered his resignation as Chief but will remain on the department as a firefighter. Milaca has requested Roxbury's assistance in re-organizing the Milaca FD. Toward that end, Roxbury questioned whether the Board would like him to inkle that there may be some logic in collaboration between the two departments. For instance, there may be logic to having one Administrative Chief serving both cities with each city retaining a Station Chief. The Administrative Chief would be in charge of monitoring the necessary paper work, applying for grants, etc.

There appeared to be support on the Board to at least start the conversation. Both Stoeckel and Dolin expressed receptiveness to a conversation. Dolin indicated, "We have to crawl before we can walk".

**B. 2013 Budget Discussion** - Chief Roxbury suggested that the Board begin considering the approach for the 2013 budget. He reminded the Board that, in the past, the approach was to increase the budget a little bit each year to avoid having to consider a significant increase after several years of no increase.

The Board appeared to agree that the three percent (3%) increase adopted each of the past couple of years seemed reasonable.

## **7. Next Meeting(s) & Agenda**

The board agreed that the October meeting could remain on its regular date (the 2<sup>nd</sup>) but, because the November meeting date is scheduled for Election Day (the 6<sup>th</sup>), the meeting should be moved to Monday, November 5<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM..

## **8. Adjourn**

There being no further business:

STOECKEL MOVED TO ADJOURN. LUNDEEN SECONDED THE MOTION. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY AT 8:16 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Karnowski, City Admin.