

PROPOSED MINUTES

4534 60<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
HOLLAND, MI 49423  
(616) 335-3050

SERVING LAKETOWN AND FILLMORE TOWNSHIPS

December 2, 2014

ARTICLE I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bob Yonker called the meeting to order at 5:41pm and opened with prayer.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cal Haverdink, Bob Yonker, Jim Lorence, Doug Den Bleyker, Terry Hofmeyer, Mark Hop, Todd Szakacs

MEMBERS ABSENT: Gary Dewey

STAFF PRESENT: Al Meshkin – Township Manager  
Diane Ybarra – Recording Secretary

ARTICLE II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board reviewed the minutes of the November 6, 2014. **Following discussion, a motion was made by Jim Lorence and seconded by Mark Hop to approve the minutes. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE III. OLD BUSINESS - None

ARTICLE IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. FIRE CHIEF RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Jim Lorence asked for a background on the department and its staffing. Al Meshkin responded that the department had been formed in the 1940's as a volunteer department and most were not paid volunteers at that time. It existed as a separate entity with limited government structure based on an informal agreement. The townships shared the support of the department with Fillmore at one-third and Graafschap at two-thirds responsibility. The department ran without a fire board and the department members elected their own chief. Eventually with changing times more structure and formality was necessary so a formal agreement was formed in the early 1990's

between the two townships. At some point the on-call fire fighters were paid and a small salary was paid for officers. In 1996, The PAR Group, a consulting firm, was hired to perform a thorough study of the department and the areas it supported. The cost of the study was approximately \$10,000 resulting in a report of valuable recommendations most of which had been put in place and are still in effect today. One of the recommendations was to get a full-time chief in place as the need for administrative tasks, call volume; reporting and other requirements were put forth by the state and federal government. The new fire station and formal department structure including the formula to support the department were all a result of the study. The consultant developed a formula based on the number of calls weighting 75% and tax base weighted at 25% as a means to of support from the townships for the service. It has remained quite consistent at these percentages with Fillmore at 20-25% and Laketown at 75-80%. Doug Den Bleyker added that Chief Haverdink started as part-time and transitioned into full-time around 2002.

Lorence asked how the chief's salary had been determined. Meshkin responded that Cal Haverdink was the first full-time fire chief in Graafschap and his recollection was that it had been derived from the wage survey available through the Michigan Township Association. Meshkin commented that it would be great to conduct a study again since it has been 20 years since the last one was done and the recommendations were instrumental in the growth of the department including the implementation of the ISO certification. He will scan the report and send it to everyone.

Al Meshkin and Diane Ybarra reviewed the points of the attached outline with board discussion as noted:

- I. Timeline – Search for replacement will begin in January to have individual in place no later than mid-March. Cal is willing to stay on to assist with training if needed.
- II. Job Description – Cal and Diane to review job description with a draft prepared for the Fire Board review at the January meeting. Jim Lorence asked that Cal review his current duties to determine if there are tasks that could be delegated or automated to better utilize the chief's time. Cal responded there are administrative duties such as some of the reporting that is required but could potentially be reassigned if there is staffing available. Cal reviewed the various levels of fire fighter and officer, most of which he has been grandfathered into with the exception of incident command certification.
- III. Compensation Plan – Benefit package will likely mirror that of the Laketown Township employees; salary will be reviewed for current market value and also based on the updated job description. The salary should also reflect not only the current need of the department but a long-term 10 to 15 year candidate. The chief's salary is paid from the fire department budget which is funded by both townships. The salary range will not be included in the position description. Al will provide a copy of the benefit plan to all board members.

- IV. Advertise – The position will be posted internally (within the department) and externally simultaneously. External advertising will be in West Michigan to include the Michigan Fire Chief Association, Holland Sentinel and Michigan Works Talent Bank. The posting will be done no later than 1/10/15 with a 2/1/15 deadline for applicants. Jim Lorence said there could be a case made for limiting to internal candidates only for ease of assimilation to the area but agrees the search should include external candidates as well. Mark Hop feels a 20 mile radius is acceptable and Todd Szakacs commented that the new chief would be required to live within 20 miles of the station as that is a state law.
  
- V. Selection / Interview Panel – The panel will consist of Mark Hop, Jim Lorence, Bob Yonker, Gary Dewey/Terry Hofmeyer, Diane Ybarra and ideally a member of the West MI Fire Chief Association to lend expertise. Uniform questions will be asked of each candidate to maintain consistency and fairness in the process. The Fire Board represents two members from each township one of which is a board member of the township. The selection panel makes recommendation to the two township boards for final vote. It may be necessary to hold a special combined township meeting prior to the regularly scheduled March 10 and 11 meeting dates.
  
- VI. Diane Ybarra will review all resumes submitted. Ideally, the panel will interview no more than 5-6 first round candidates and 2-3 second round candidates. This process would begin in early to mid-February.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 6, 2015 at 5:30pm. The agenda will include the topic of compensation and annual budget discussion. Chief Haverdink would also like final decision in January on the Automatic Mutual Aid Agreement with the City of Holland.

ARTICLE V. CITIZENS COMMENTS - None

ARTICLE VI. ADJOURN

**A motion was made by Jim Lorence and seconded by Mark Hop to adjourn the meeting at 6:46 PM. UNANIMOUS DECISION MOTION APPROVED**