

Approved at the April 17th, 2013 Regular Town Board Meeting.

TOWN OF ALGOMA
WINNEBAGO COUNTY, WISCONSIN
MINUTES FOR SPECIAL TOWN BOARD MEETING
FIRE DEPARTMENT DAYTIME STAFFING

Tuesday, March 19th, 2013 at 6:30 PM
Algoma Town Hall
15 N. Oakwood Road, Oshkosh, WI 54904

1. Call to order.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Blake at 5:30 PM.

2. Roll call.

Chairperson Blake
Supervisor Timm
Supervisor Kierszh
Treasurer Edson
Deputy Clerk Kuehnl

Supervisor Hamann
Supervisor Drexler
Atty. K. Marone
Clerk Nelson

3. Receive and discuss the Volunteer Fire Department answers to the questions formulated by the Town Board in response to the Fire Department's request to hire three full-time staff members.

A copy of the answers to the questions formulated by the Town Board in response to the Fire Department's request to hire three full-time staff members is attached to the record copy of the meeting minutes. The questions and answers were gone through by members of the Town Board and members of the Fire Department Board of Directors question by question. Discussion was had on each question. Those discussions pertinent to the decision making process are documented below.

1) Clarification: How did the Fire Department come up with salary figures?

Response: The figures came from the Wisconsin Chief's Association survey data, which is an annual survey of pay ranges in the state of Wisconsin. The Fire Department used North Fond du Lac as a comparison, in which the department's requested chief's salary is less than that of the chief in North Fond du Lac.

Discussion ensued regarding comparing the Town of Algoma to that of the Village of North Fond du Lac. North Fond du Lac has a lot more businesses for a tax base than the town. The Town is basically residential taxes, not business tax. The board would like to see North Fond du Lac's tax base for which they operate. We need to compare apples to apples. The Town of Waukesha was then discussed which is almost a mirror community of the Town of Algoma. The Fire Department doesn't want this to be a decision based on tax base because usually the lower the tax base the higher amount of calls. They understand where the tax base comes into play fiscally, but the level of protection is compromised. There was discussion on the comparison municipalities, on the cost of living of these municipalities and other information that could be obtained.

2) The total cost for all position is \$600.00/week for a year total of \$31,200.

- 3) The positions asked for is for two full time positions with benefits and one full position to be filled by part-time people, but the cost is still for 40 hours worth of pay. No benefits will be paid for the part-time position. There is no benefit other than the LOSAP program and Accident/Sickness insurance.
- 4) There was discussion of the Fire Department purchasing a plow and a lawnmower so these tasks could be done in-house versus contracting these tasks out. Referring to the list provided in the Fire Department's response, these tasks are currently being done now even though there is no full-time staff. The Fire Department would like to be more involved in doing these tasks which would be possible if there was full-time staffing.
- 5) The three full-time people would not get their call, but the other employees would get paid. The weekends would be run no different than how it is being done now. It just guarantees there will be people in town who will respond.
- 6) There was discussion on the significant increase in daytime calls, but according to the chart, there hasn't been a significant increase in daytime calls over the last three years. The board requested a breakdown on the calls to see what type of call for service is being made.
- 7) No discussion.
- 8) The two full-time positions would include health insurance, vacation time, and sick time. The 35% is based off the average salary of an employee in the Fox Valley Area. They talked to the wife of a Board of Directors member who is a Human Resources professional.
- 9) The \$7,500 chief salary, fire inspections, and miscellaneous maintenance expenses would come off the department's budget. The Board of Directors didn't go through the budget in detail because the Town Board didn't ask them to. The Board of Directors only answered the questions that were asked.
- 10) Fire protection fees are sent by Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, of which the Town Board decided in the early 2000s to subsidize the fees.
- 11) The question was answered honestly. The Board of Directors honestly believes the body will not have an issue. There are several combination departments throughout the county and the country. It comes down to human nature which can't be predicted.
- 12) No discussion.
- 13) No discussion.
- 14) The Board of Directors believes that the call allowance is for retention, and doesn't believe that the members of the Fire Department would leave if there wasn't the \$15.00/call. Employers aren't letting people leave work because of state law. If the employee goes before arriving at work there isn't anything the employer can do, but once they're at work, the employee can't leave. Groth has a letter that he can give to members for their employers, but it's really the employer's call.
- 15) This is the same question as question #4.
- 16) Clerk Nelson did distribute the contract to the Town Board members. Drexler asked for more information which Clerk Nelson will get the answers to. There was discussion on the contract. Aurora subsidized the ambulance service for several years.
- 17) The agreement is that the town provides First Responders along with the ambulance, which would change if the town didn't provide First Responders.
- 18) The average response from when the call comes in until someone shows up at the door. Dispatch is done by priority and it's hard to determine the response times. Different calls have a different priority depending on the urgency of the call. The Fire Department only records from when they get

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dispatched until arrival on scene. There was discussion on different types of calls and different types of response times depending on the priority dispatch. There isn't an accurate average response time.

- 19) This document is attached to the record copy of the minutes.
- 20) 5/8 is for hydranted area and non-hydranted area; therefore 5 is for hydranted area and 8 is non-hydranted areas. The town does have pockets of hydranted areas. Volunteer departments can only get a rating that is so high and different factors go into this rating.
- 21) No discussion.
- 22) There was discussions on hazmat certification and the certifications levels were talked about.
- 23) Atty. Marone checked her records and have not found anything paperwork indicating there was "Articles of Organization".
- 24) Atty. Marone hasn't had a chance to speak with Black Wolf on that.
- 25) No discussion.
- 26) Discussion ensued regarding the Town of Menasha Fire Department which is a population of 17,000 who has four full-time staff members with the remaining volunteers.
- 27) No discussion.
- 28) The Board of Directors are open to discussion regarding budget cuts. If it got to that point, Groth would meet with his senior official to analyze the budget. The overall cost for the three full-time employees would be thirty cents a day for a year, or \$100.00/year per household that taxes would raise or the Town Board would have to find a way to cover the costs.
- 29) There was discussion regarding the town both area (land) and population (number of people) is going to decrease with the boundary agreement.
- 30) No discussion.
- 31) No discussion.
- 32) No discussion.
- 33) Discussion ensued regarding certification. The First Responders could potentially move up to EMT, in the future. The First Responders are certified to the first responder level and the few who are EMT certified on the department can only provide care up to the First Responders level.
- 34) There is some who want to become a member, but most are college students who are gone most of the year. There just isn't the dedication there used to be and members tend to leave for full-time paying firefighter jobs with area municipalities. It's difficult to retain members.
- 35) No discussion.
- 36) No discussion.
- 37) No discussion.

There was discussion on doing a cost/benefit analysis with the City of Oshkosh.

4. Next meeting – To be determined.

The next meeting will be scheduled via a doodle from Clerk Nelson.

5. Adjourn.

Motion by Kierszh/Hamann to adjourn. No further discussion. Motion carried in a voice vote, 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

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Respectfully submitted,

Charlotte K. Nelson, WCMC
Town Clerk
Town of Algoma, Winnebago County, WI

- 1. Where did the salary and benefit figures come from? The Fire Chief has \$60,000 plus benefits of \$40,000. Where did these figures come from?**

The wages and benefits submitted in the proposal did not include benefits of \$40,000 for the Fire Chief. That number is incorrect.

The proposal did include a total of approximately \$175,000 annually for wages and benefits for all of the proposed positions.

The proposal was based upon salary data gathered from the 2012 Wisconsin State Fire Chief's Association Salary Survey. The data submitted was evaluated based upon geographic area and population size. For example, we used the Village of North Fond du Lac as a reasonable comparison point.

The estimate submitted for fringe benefits costs was based upon estimates from a local Human Resources professional who indicated that a reasonable base benefits cost is roughly 35% of base salary.

- 2. If 3-4 people are on a weekend shift, what's their pay? Are there benefits included in this pay?**

3-4 individuals would be assigned to the weekend shift which would run from 6pm Friday evening through 6pm Sunday evening. All of these individuals would be "on-call" during this weekend shift and required to respond to all Town of Algoma pages during this time period. These individuals would be paid \$3/hour of "on-call" pay for the 48 hour period totaling \$144 for the weekend. In addition, they would receive the normal \$15/call allowance. There would be no additional benefits or pay for this time period.

- 3. The three full time employees are cross trained as both firefighter and first responder. Who would fight the fire?**

To clarify, the proposal did not include a request for three (3) full-time employees. The proposal was for two (2) full-time employees and additional part-time resources to cover an additional forty (40) hours per week.

Depending upon the nature of the page, the three (3) person crew would respond to provide whatever type of service is required, either firefighting or emergency medical care. As is current practice, both First Responders and Firefighters are paged out to all Town of Algoma structure fires. In addition, a City of Oshkosh Paramedic Unit is also paged to all TOA structure fires.

As is current practice, each scene would be evaluated by the Officer in Charge who would assign the appropriate personnel to needed scene duties.

4. What are three full time employees going to do for forty hours a week?

First and foremost, the employees would be available for all emergencies within the TOA. In addition, they will complete the following duties:

- i. Fire Inspections;
- ii. Station Maintenance and small equipment maintenance;
- iii. Yard Maintenance, including snow plowing and lawn care;
- iv. Fire prevention and education;
- v. Development and administration of TOA Department Training;
- vi. Administrative duties to include NIFERS Reports, WARDS, payroll, training logs, incident report, call logs, scheduling large equipment maintenance and other required recordkeeping;
- vii. Organization and enhancement of fund raising activities;
- viii. New Member Recruitment and Retention of department members;
- ix. Enforcement of fire-related ordinances; and
- x. Hose & Ladder testing

5. Do the three full time employees get their full time hourly rate of pay if they are called to a fire on the weekend?

No.

6. What are the differences between now and two years ago in staffing? Two years ago, Chief Heidemann wanted a full-time fire chief and you were totally against it. What's changed?

There are three (3) primary changes that have taken place over the last several years that have negatively impacted the ability of the TOA Fire Department to serve the citizens of our town:

- i. Overall Department Membership numbers are down;
- ii. The number of department members available to respond to daytime calls has declined since employers in the area who used to allow members to leave during the day to respond to calls are no longer allowing that practice; and
- iii. There has been a significant increase in daytime calls.

7. In the submittal, there was a pay rate increase for the employee for each year of service. What would the rate of increase be?

Any pay rate increase granted to any employee would be the decision of the Town Board.

8. The \$20,000 benefits, how was this figure arrived at?

The estimate submitted for fringe benefits costs were based upon an assumption of benefits cost as roughly 35% of base salary.

9. The town budget is \$179,000. What would be the fire department budget be with the addition of the full-time employees?

While the proposal requests an additional amount of approximately \$175,000, the actual incremental cost to add the requested staffing is less than the \$175,000 estimate. Line items currently budgeted as extra expenses would be eliminated under the proposal. For example, separate costs now paid for fire inspections, building and grounds maintenance, per call pay for Fire-Chief and one additional full-time employee, would be eliminated. In addition, the full-time salary for the Fire Chief would be offset by the \$7500 currently paid to that position.

10. Why are the fire protection fees so high?

Please contact the Town of Algoma Sanitary District regarding the amount of the Fire Protection Fees. The TOA Fire Department is not involved with setting these fees.

11. Do you think there will be an issue with volunteer firefighters and first responders responding to a call knowing that others are being paid full-time wages to respond to the same call? Do you think they would do the job as well as they have in the past?

No. Yes.

12. Who or where would the maintenance of the fire trucks be done if John Kolb isn't there and Jim Kolb retires? Would one of the full time employees be able to do mechanical work on the fire trucks or is this something a certified mechanic has to do?

Some general and basic maintenance can be performed by the full-time employees. However, it is in the best interests of the Town and its' citizens that heavy equipment maintenance be done by a local professional mechanic who is specifically qualified to perform such work.

13. What would happen if this went in front of the electors and it didn't pass? What would the fire department do?

The TOA Fire Department would look to our elected official for guidance in finding other means to address the need for additional daytime resources to serve our Town.

- 14. Out of all the volunteer fire departments in the area, the Town of Algoma is probably the highest paid. Generally most area departments are volunteer or paid very little. Why are we considering full time employees when most fire departments in the area aren't paid anything or very little?**

TOA Fire Department has a lack of resources for daytime response.

- 15. If the fire department doesn't get a call for a day or two, what are these three full-time employees going to do?**

Please refer to the answer to question #4 above.

- 16. Copy of the EMS Patient Transport Service Contract with the City of Oshkosh.**

Please contact the Town Clerk to obtain a copy of this contract.

- 17. Details of the following, if not included in the above requested contract:**

- a) What does the city charge the town when an ambulance is sent and the town does not send a first responder?**
b) What are TOAVFD first responder duties and responsibilities at the scene?

A) \$0 B) Scope of Practice document will be provided.

- 18. What are current response times for fire and first responder calls through December 31st?**

Clarification is needed on this question,

- 19. What is the breakdown of runs as follows:**

Fire Runs

Weekdays: 6am-6pm: 6pm-6am:

Weekends: 6am-6pm: 6pm-6am:

EMS Runs

Weekdays: 6am-6pm: 6pm-6am:

Weekends: 6am-6pm 6pm-6am

Clarification to go back three years, 2010, 2011, & 2012

Document will be provided.

- 20. What is the current insurance rating or ISO rating?**

21. What services other than fire and first responder calls does the TOAVFD provide?

In addition to the fire and emergency medical services provided by the TOAVFD, the Department does a large portion of its' own fund raising. And other services provided include: fire prevention and education, ordinance compliance; fire inspections; assistance with authorized burns; and member training.

22. What services does the town contract out that cannot be provided by the TOAVFD? (Example Hazmat or poison) Things that the town may need but the TOAVFD don't provide. Provide a list of the Fire Department certification.

Medical transport. Need additional clarification on what is meant by "Provide a List of Fire Department Certification."

23. Is the TOAVFD a non-stock corporation under chapter 181? If so, please provide a copy of the 'Articles of Organization'. (The Fire Department would refer to Atty. Marone)

Attorney Marone.

24. Who does the Town of Black Wolf have fire protection mutual agreement with and what does that agreement entail? (Possibly with Van Dyne Fire Department) (Atty. Marone will look into this question)

Attorney Marone.

25. The Town of Algoma has had a policy related to healthcare insurance which is not to provide any. This policy goes back to Jeanette Diakoff. There was one exception to that policy; a small stipend was given to Clerk Betsy Kunde. Why should the town change that policy now?

We felt the proposal should include fringe benefits to ensure we attract qualified Fire and EMS candidates for these critical roles.

26. What is the staffing detail for all the other volunteer fire departments in Winnebago County? Meaning paid staff vs. volunteers.

Winnebago County volunteer Fire Department's staffing range from four full time staff personnel to paid on call personnel, paid per call personnel and volunteer personnel.

27. Considering the capital outlay that would be considered on behalf of the Town of Algoma, are you steadfast in your belief that it is necessary for three full time fire personnel?

Yes

- 28. Would the Fire Department be willing to concede to some budget cuts? This refers back to the tremendous amount of capital outlay the town would be incurring. Some areas of the town budget would have to be cut back, is the Fire Department willing to cut their budget as well?**

Yes

- 29. Looking down the road 10 years, what other aspects would the fire department be looking for, i.e. vehicles, building, etc?**

The TOAVFD will operate under the current Vehicle Replacement Plan. Replacement or upgrading of the current station to meet Department needs.

- 30. Other than the Fire Chief, how would the remaining two full time employees be selected?**

All hiring would be at the discretion of the Fire Chief and Senior Officers. The Fire Department Board of Directors will be informed of all hiring's.

- 31. Right now the By-Laws call for an annual election for fire chief. If this goes through for full time employees, this isn't going to work. How would this By-Law be changed?**

By amending the current bylaws.

- 32. What does the Fire Department anticipate a timeline for completing this task?**

As soon as the Town Board approves the recommended positions.

- 33. Are all three full time employees going to be certified as first responders?**

Yes.

- 34. Did the Fire Department advertise for daytime personnel? If so, where did you advertise for them, i.e. churches, Northwestern, etc.?**

Yes. The TOA newsletter, the parade, the pancake breakfast, FVTC, Service Oil, the picnic, the Town Hall/website, Facebook, networking/word of mouth.

- 35. The proposal is for three full-time people. Who would cover if one of these three employees were on vacation or sick? Who would fill in? What would the rate of pay be? Are benefits included in this pay? What would happen if the person covering for vacationing person were**

to get injured? What would the workers comp be? How would the department handle being two people short?

A coverage list would be established through our membership and FVTC to provide vacation or other absence coverage. The rate of pay would be \$12/hr with no benefits. Any individual who is injured during the course of performing duties as a Firefighter/First Responder is subject to coverage by our Workers Comp insurance. The coverage list would be used to provide coverage if two people were absent.

36. The Fire Department had presented a plan they would like to have. What steps have been taken to try to get more response during daytime hours? Have you advertised for additional day time help?

Please refer to #34 above.

37. The statement was made, currently there is only one first responder responding to calls during the day. Is there a reason for more than just the chief respond should the chief be full-time and available to respond to daytime calls?

It is true that there is only one First Responder who is available the majority of the time to respond to daytime calls. This level of coverage is not adequate.

2010 TOWN OF ALGOMA FIRE RUNS

	NO# CALLS	% TOTAL CALLS
DAYTIME WEEKDAY (6A-6P)	40	55.56%
NIGHT TIME WEEKDAY (6P-6A)	19	26.39%
WEEKEND	13	18.06%
TOTAL 2010	72	100.00%

2011 TOWN OF ALGOMA FIRE RUNS

	NO# CALLS	% TOTAL CALLS
DAYTIME WEEKDAY (6A-6P)	34	47.22%
NIGHT TIME WEEKDAY (6P-6A)	5	6.94%
WEEKEND	18	25.00%
TOTAL 2010	57	100.00%

2012 TOWN OF ALGOMA FIRE RUNS

	NO# CALLS	% TOTAL CALLS
DAYTIME WEEKDAY (6A-6P)	33	51.56%
NIGHT TIME WEEKDAY (6P-6A)	10	15.63%
WEEKEND	21	32.81%
TOTAL 2010	64	100.00%

2010 TOWN OF ALGOMA FIRST RESPOND

	NO# CALLS	% TOTAL CALLS
DAYTIME WEEKDAY (6A-6P)	101	65.00%
NIGHT TIME WEEKDAY (6P-6A)	19	12.00%
DAYTIME WEEKEND (6A-6P)	26	17.00%
NIGHT TIME WEEKEND (6P-6A)	10	6.00%
TOTAL 2010	156	100.00%

2011 TOWN OF ALGOMA FIRST RESPOND

	NO# CALLS	% TOTAL CALLS
DAYTIME WEEKDAY (6A-6P)	105	60.00%
NIGHT TIME WEEKDAY (6P-6A)	22	13.00%
DAYTIME WEEKEND (6A-6P)	38	22.00%
NIGHT TIME WEEKEND (6P-6A)	10	5.00%
TOTAL 2010	175	100.00%

2012 TOWN OF ALGOMA FIRST RESPOND

	NO# CALLS	% TOTAL CALLS
DAYTIME WEEKDAY (6A-6P)	101	60.00%
NIGHT TIME WEEKDAY (6P-6A)	27	13.00%
DAYTIME WEEKEND (6A-6P)	39	22.00%
NIGHT TIME WEEKEND (6P-6A)	15	5.00%
TOTAL 2010	182	100.00%