

Board of Fire Commissioners

Greenfield Fire District
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A Special Meeting of the Greenfield Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners was called to order at Co #3 by Chairman Kugler at 8:25 pm on June 11, 2008. The reason for the meeting was to discuss the possibility of hiring a truck consultant to investigate the needs of the District regarding ladder trucks.

Present were:

Commissioners: B. Bishop, Kugler, Spackmann, Waite; Secretary Petkus, Chief McConkey
A/C's: Gibbins, Chandler, Ellsworth; various other members of the District and community.

Chairman Kugler then turned the meeting over the Commissioner B. Bishop, who at the last workshop asked from the membership questions or comments they might have for the truck consultant. He then handed out a list of questions/comments he had received.

A long discussion resulted including:

- What makes an expert and expert? 2nd A/C Davis felt that it should be up to the officers, we are the ones doing all the stuff, not the Board. Commissioner B. Bishop felt that spending even \$10,000.00 for a consultant, which is only 1% of what a truck would cost would be worthwhile; he is not the expert on this issue. Commissioner Spackmann said his definition of an expert is someone who has accepted industry expertise, who has experience, been around the block a few times.
- Buildings are getting bigger – Commissioner Spackmann pointed out that Wilton zoning now allows 55 foot buildings. He also noted that we have not followed all the original truck consultant's recommendations. Commissioner B. Bishop noted that the last report was done 7 years ago, and this is the exact reason why it should be done again, things have changed since then.
- Commissioner Waite agreed with Commissioner B. Bishop regarding looking at the whole district, not just the area that Maple Avenue covers.
- The last truck consultant report was 7 years ago, and the Board back then should have been planning for the replacement back then, but now we have to fix this mess, given the changes in the last 5-7 years. The whole District has changed.
- A/C G. Gibbins felt that if you purchased Co #4 truck, it is going to be another 7 years before we can purchase another truck and it doesn't cover 85% of the district. He felt it is was a no brainer, if you have the money, purchase Co #1 truck now and utilize it for the other 85% of the district. If Co #4 truck goes down, Saratoga's got 2 of them.
- Commissioner B. Bishop said that currently we can not buy the 100 foot ladder truck for Maple Avenue as we don't have the money and that is part of the argument. We have the money to buy the 75 foot and to put money into the ladder and nurse it a little bit and then we have 2 ladder trucks.

- Captain Bullard noted the problems with the setbacks and parapet walls they have to get over, a 35 foot ladder is not going to do it and the 75 foot is going to be a stretch because now you have to get down the parapet wall.
- FF B. Gibbins pointed out that if you look at the statistics of fires, there was only 1 major fire in Maple Avenue since 1975 and the number of structure fires in Greenfield Center, Middle Grove and Porter Corners is increasing.
- Chief McConkey said that Maple Avenue's truck needs to be replaced, have put a lot of money in that truck already and need to look at the safety of the firefighters.
- Commissioner Spackmann asked the officers if they would abide by the consultant's recommendations. A/C Chandler explained that we have already had a consultant come in and tell us what we need, we have our own professionals that spent numerous hours and it comes down to the fact that we have only so much money; with the 2 trucks we can cover 100% of the District. Commissioner Waite said that whatever the consultant says we go by it. Commissioner Spackmann felt that we should be doing our own homework on this. Commissioner B. Bishop pointed out that if you tell him to go figure out what ladder truck we need, it may as well be in a foreign language because he does not speak that language, which is why we need the consultant. There are now so many personalities involved, we need to get that out of the equation.
- FF Jack Atwell noted that as both a taxpayer and a firefighter, the two sides are not going to agree and that we need the consultant, and if you go with their recommendation, it will be money well spent. You just keep going on and on and you are tearing this department right in half. A decision needs to be made and the firefighters are going to have to live with it.
- The consultant should not have anybody to escort them around, they should be able to do their research on their own on a non-biased basis, and we should wait for as long as it takes until the report is complete before making a decision. Commissioner Kugler added that he does not want the same consultant as the last time. A/C Ellsworth felt that by getting a consultant, it shows the taxpayer that we are doing our homework, and justifying spending that money.
- Secretary Petkus noted, at the risk of overstepping her bounds once again, she wanted to remind everyone that Bill Young highly recommended getting a consultant because of this issue, and it would eliminate the bias, and they may want to take this into consideration.
- Commissioner B. Bishop suggested that they create a set of guidelines or specs for the consultant to follow including:
 - Looking at the entire district;
 - Hi-light some key areas on a map that we definitely want them to look at;
 - Pictures of where they have been;
 - Look at setbacks, access to driveways, water supply, ISO ratings; etc;
 - Give them a map of the District.

Chairman Kugler then asked the officers their opinion if they agreed with getting a consultant and would they abide by their decision? Chief McConkey, A/C's Gibbins, Chandler and Ellsworth all agreed. Captain Bullard noted that after listening to everything tonight he would agree, but not with the same guys as last time, and he would like very distinct timelines and answers back from them. Commissioners B. Bishop, Waite and Kugler agreed, and Commissioner Spackmann agreed as long as they have a list of what we need answered.

RESOLUTION #196 TO MOVE FORWARD WITH LOOKING INTO GETTING A TRUCK CONSULTANT; THE TRUCK COMMITTEE TO SET UP PARAMETERS IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE BOARD, AND THE DECISION OF THE TRUCK CONSULTANT TO BE BINDING.

MOTION: B. Bishop

SECOND: Kugler

RESOLVED to move forward with looking into getting a truck consultant; the truck committee to set up parameters in conjunction with the Board, and the decision of the truck consultant to be binding.

VOTE: B. Bishop, yes; Kugler, yes; Spackmann, yes; Waite, yes; Robarge, not present.

Motion carried.

Motion was made by Commissioner B. Bishop with a second from Commissioner Waite to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 PM. All in favor, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce A. Petkus
District Secretary