



St. Tammany Parish Fire Protection District No. 11  
Board of Commissioner's Meeting Minutes  
37546 Pine Street Extension, Pearl River, Louisiana  
Fire Chief Jack Dockery  
October 8, 2024  
7:02 pm – 7:45 pm

## **ROLL CALL**

Russell Lindsey – Present  
Ryan Dreux - Present  
Eugene Swann – Present  
Floyd Trascher – Present  
Michele Blackwell – Present

## **INVOCATION**

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

## **MINUTES**

The regularly scheduled meeting is called to order by Mrs. Blackwell at 7:01p.m. Roll is called, 4 Board members are present, Mr. Ryan Dreux arrived late. Mr. Floyd Trascher leads the Invocation and Mr. Lindsey leads the Pledge.

Mr. Trascher stated he reviewed the minutes and makes a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on September 18, 2024, with the video governing. Mr. Eugene Swann seconds, the minutes are approved with 3 yeas, no nays, motion carries.

## **FINACIAL REPORT**

Chief Dockery presents the Financial Report and states for the month of September, we are looking for a target rate of 75%. The monthly expenses seem to run in line. One item was checked on today, Fire Prevention, that is at 183%. The CPA was questioned about it and it looks like something was mis-coded. This will be corrected and it will fall back in line. Monthly expenses seem to be in order, even Fuel at 70.59%, which is under where we need to be. Mr. Trascher asked if Fire Prevention is top loaded and Chief explained a lot of materials were purchased for the month of October, which is Fire Prevention Month. Supplies are usually bought around this time of year.

## **FINACIAL REPORT - Continued**

Medical Billing, we spoke about this at the last meeting and will have to be adjusted at the December meeting.

## **EMS REPORT**

EMS Services, it is too early in the month for the EMS report but, the deposits totaled \$13,459.73, for EMS. Which is within the budget.

## **CHIEF'S REPORT - Chief Jack Dockery**

Chief Dockery said, alright, for the month of September, we responded to:

EMS	63
GRASS/TRASH FIRE	3
MVA	11
SERVICE/GOOD INTENT	5
FIRE ALARM	13
TOTAL	95

Chief Dockery said, just a reminder that October 26, is the Night Out Against Crime and the Trunk or Treat at Town Hall. Chief Dockery was invited to a meeting tomorrow to go over the details of it and plans to attend.

Heads up about fall cleaning or remodel at the other station (Station 112). Painting and freshening up is being done. I had a company come out to grind the stump in the yard and they cut the cable line again. Charter repaired it. This is while we are waiting on the other renovations to start. Mr. Trascher said doing maintenance on the other building is good. This work is being handled in house.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

BANK CONTRACT – Floyd Trascher

Mr. Ryan Dreux arrived. Mr. Trascher calls on Chief Dockery for details of the bank contract.

Chief spoke to Ms. Williams at Hancock Whitney about our concerns. We looked over what we have and she basically said we do not do enough business past due to have a fee. They will not charge us the fee for past due anymore for the Monthly Treasure Management. As of the interest rate, it ran hand and hand with Gulf Coast. Chief personally feels we have too much invested to go over to another bank that is offering the same thing. Mr. Trascher agrees and thanks Chief for his due diligence in exploring other options that may have been financially beneficial. If what we have is the same, he is in agreement to renew the contract.

Mr. Trascher moves to renew the contract with Hancock Whitney Bank. Mr. Eugene Swann seconds. We have to open for discussion first. Mrs. Blackwell asked for any discussion.

Discussion, Mr. Lindsey agrees we have a report with Hancock Whitney and agrees to stay with them. Chief agrees there is nothing to change his mind about changing banks. A roll call vote is called, 4 Yeas, no Nays. Motion carries.

#### UPDATE ON BUILDING RENOVATIONS – Floyd Trascher

We put this on the agenda to stay updated. Chief said he spoke to the architect after the meeting last month. He is still having some issues at home from the storm but, he is back in the office as of last week. He understands what we are asking and he will have plans for us next week.

Mr. Trascher asked about the temporary living quarters and is concerned that we may have to purchase something, like a FEMA trailer. Chief said we are still up in the air with that and have nothing concrete with the gentleman that has the trailers over by the Service Road. Chief has been talking with him and asking if he would be interested in leasing, renting or selling one and he is willing to work with us. Mr. Lindsey said they are one bedrooms and I am sure it has a bathroom in it but, we could set up two beds if needed. We could back it in and hook it up to the septic tank, run some wires to it and be done. If he could lease it to us then we would not have to worry about selling or anything like that. We can at least find out our options.

Mrs. Blackwell mentioned that it was brought up at the last meeting, if we bought it, it could be brought over the tracks by Station 113. Mr. Trascher said that we would have to prioritize a plan in place before we can actually begin the renovations. Mr. Lindsey said he has several of them and agrees it's a good option and saw on Facebook that he was trying to sell them and it's better than a camper trailer. Mr. Trascher also recalls being paid by the insurance for the trailer that is located there and paid approximately \$25,000 for it. Mr. Trascher suggest looking into placing the trailer there and making sure we don't run into issues with the Parish with hooking it up for the temporary quarters. Chief said he will check with the gentleman tomorrow for more information. Mr. Lindsey recalls his last name is Jeanfreaux or his wife was a Jeanfreaux.

#### STATUS ON WATER WELL/PUMP – Floyd Trascher

Mr. Trascher stated that Chief Dockery said Captain Sidney Anderson will address the progress.

Captain Anderson reached out to 6 different companies and only heard back from 2.

One company is getting a quote for us and want to do it where they supply the pump. That's the only way they will guarantee anything. He could do it with the line that we have now but, he won't warranty it because it's not his product that he uses.

Mr. Trascher asked if he will not warranty the line or the output? Captain Anderson said he would not warranty either one if he does not run the lines. He would warranty it if he runs new lines. He will give a quote for both options.

The second company reached out yesterday and will put something together. With this company, we would also need an electrician. The first company must have someone he subs out and all of it is included. He did reach out to me today and said there is a possibility that he may be able to use the 6" well to pressurize the tank to get water because it's such a big well. That would be without a pump and getting the amount of water we want.

Mr. Trascher asked what are we looking to achieve as far as the flow of water? Captain Anderson said he is asking for a minimum of 500 gallons per minute. Because we are single phase electric, the biggest pump we can get is 700-750 gallons per minute which will give you what you need at the end. If we had 2 phase or 3 phase electric it would be easier to get more water. Mr. Lindsey said if we were able to get 500 gallons per minute, that would be great.

Captain Anderson agrees and said, the second company wants to do his math and homework and see if he can use the actual well to pressurize the tank.

Mr. Trascher asked what was meant by "using the well to pressurize" it with the well? Chief Dockery said, something like your home well system. Captain Anderson said, yes. Chief Dockery said it's like how a home well is pressurize like 50 pounds. Mr. Trascher said this tank has no pressure, it's strictly gravity and what he would do is put a bladder or a air volume control. Captain Anderson said he assumes he would change the line coming out of the well from a 2" to a bigger line going into the tank to get more water. Mr. Swann doesn't mind paying more just as long as we are not in the same position that we are not getting the volume we need. Captain Anderson explained that the electric is the biggest problem because it's only 1 phase.

Mr. Trascher asked where is the closest 3 phase. It's suggested to see if Cleco could run a 3 phase electric to the station. They may be able to run 3 phase back here. If we had three phase back here we could get a 1000 gallons per minute pump. Mr. Lindsey said if for some reason we cannot get them to, what if we pressurize the tank and get a pump? Captain Anderson talked to them about pressurizing it but not sure if it would work. Mr. Trascher said depending on the amperage, they may be able to put a transformer on some of these transmission lines to make it three phase. Chief made a note to call. The companies that Captain Anderson spoke with guarantees 500 at the end of the building. They were asked to do the quote with the biggest pump available with single phase.

#### SCBA PURCHASE – Chief Dockery

Chief Dockery said it was previously discussed at our last meeting about buying 8 SCBA's along with 8 spare bottles. I met with the representative Thursday, and it's actually cheaper because they have a sale going on. It was \$72,000 and now it's \$69,488. I asked him to send me their sole provider letter and we double downed and we got a letter from the New Orleans Fire Department giving us permission to piggyback on their contract for the SCBA's

from the MSA. I have both of those and I ask the Board to approve the purchase.

Mr. Trascher said that it was good to piggy back on that. So, we don't have to do the bids and is the New Orleans contract recognized like the State contract? Chief Dockery said yes and Mr. Trascher asked, how much do we have in the restricted account because he remembers that we took from that account before. Chief Dockery said, right now we have \$119,380.95. Chief Dockery said, yes, that's the account we took out \$28,000, for Engine 111, when we did repairs, refurbishing.

Mr. Trascher explains that this purchase for equipment would comply with the pro ce verbal on the original millage proposal that these funds were collected on. Chief Dockery said, correct. Mr. Trascher said that he is satisfied with this is a specialty piece of equipment that is only provided by this company and you cannot get bids from anywhere else. Chief Dockery said, that's correct, and MSA is the product we use and 90% of the Departments in St. Tammany use MSA and Casco Industries is the sole authorized distributor of MSA in the State of Louisiana. Mr. Swann asked if they were on State Contract. Chief answered, I want to say they are.

Mr. Trascher states, with the understanding that we will be compliant with the Bid Law with the Sole Provider letter, we can piggy back on the contract with the city of New Orleans and this is an equipment purchase, we will be compliant with the pro ce verbal, I would move that we release the \$69,000 and some change, for this specific purchase. Chief said \$69,488. Mr. Trascher continues, from the Restricted Account for this specific purchase. Mr. Lindsey seconds the motion.

Mrs. Blackwell opens for any discussion on this matter. There is no discussion. Mr. Trascher made a motion, Mr. Lindsey second the motion. A roll call vote was called, 4 Yeas, No Nays, motion carries.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **INTRODUCTION OF 2025 BUDGET – Chief Jack Dockery**

Chief Dockery gave a copy of the Budget to the Board members that included the 2024 Budget along with the 2025 Budget.

The budget had to be adjusted due to inflation and will be published on October 16<sup>th</sup>, and will run until November 6<sup>th</sup>. This will be on our December meeting for approval. Our December meeting will be held on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Trascher asked if we were projecting a substantial ad valorem? Chief said, truthfully, he is not sure what we would get. Mr. Trascher said, from what the assessor provided, we would be getting less. Chief explained that, going off of the August Grand recap from the Assessor's office, which will not include anything after August.

Mr. Trascher said, the way the taxes have gone up, there will be a lot of appeals and there is no way of telling how the appeals will pan out. We should be cautious that we don't over

project.

Mr. Lindsey said that we talked about getting an increase of \$300,000 to \$350,000 and were thinking of using that for our ambulance. Mr. Trascher said he thinks we decided to revisit our millage rates next year.

Chief said, the only thing for sure is the Economical Development, being Rooms to Go came on line this year. Of course, we will not get the \$50,000, from the Pilot. We will actually collect whatever taxes from them this time around.

Mr. Trascher asked about the check book interest and the Bank Contract. Is the interest a fixed rate for the year that we have or going to be the prime rate? Chief Dockery said that would go with the prime rate. Mr. Trascher said, barring any changes they will bring the prime rate down which would be a reduction. Chief said that's why she gave us a 1 year contract and we can renegotiate next year. This time around it's only a 1 year contract. Mr. Trascher said we will probably collect less interest coming up.

Tonight, the Board officially receives the Budget for 2025. It will be up for public inspection and will act on this at the December meeting. Copies of the Budget will be available to the public if they want to review it.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – Michele Blackwell

Mrs. Blackwell asked if we had any public comments.

Mr. Trascher thanks the Chief for his due diligence on these matters that we ask of him. He has his hands full and congratulations and thanks to the Department. Do we have any awards coming up for our personnel?

Chief said it will be during our December meeting. We are going through the process right now. On another topic, I have Mitchel sending out an anonymous pole to the employees to vote for Fire Fighter of the year.

Mr. Trascher would like to post the awards on social media. Also, one last questions is about Civil Service. Have they that they rescheduled the meeting? Captain Anderson said they will hold the December meeting because only Tyler Reimer showed for the last meeting.

Mr. Trascher asked if it is required to call another meeting so we have quarterly meetings?

Captain Anderson said there was no Business on the Agenda's. They did try to have the prior meetings so the records will show that.

Mr. Trascher said he spoke to the Boards appointment and made sure she will make the next meeting. Captain Anderson said they can wait until December because they did attempt having the meetings. Georgette Rinkus was asked if she had something that would show they attempted the meetings and that they did not have a quorum. She stated she has the Agenda and also a page in place of the minutes that will state there was no quorum. Mr. Trascher said that he thinks that after 2 or 3 meetings missed, they expect you to take some action for that Board. We have had 2 meetings already with no quorum. Captain Anderson

said, the way it was when he was on the Board, if 3 meetings were missed, you got a certified letter and if you did not respond to the letter you were no longer... Mr. Trascher said that is for the individual representative. He is concerned with the Department, the liability. If we have 2 meetings missed because of no quorum, how does the Civil Service Commission comes down on the Department? Captain Anderson thinks maybe they would contact us to let us know we have to get someone else for the positions.

Mr. Trascher's concerns are, if there is an employee that needs to go to the Board and cannot reach them and if we have two meetings already that the Board didn't have a quorum, how will that go before the Civil Service Commission comes down on us. Captain Anderson said, if they cannot get to the Board, they can go to the State. Then, everything would be handled through the 22<sup>nd</sup>. We do not want to get in that position. We want the meetings available.

Mr. Lindsey asked, do we feel pretty confident that we will have something on the pump for next meeting? Captain Anderson said he thinks we should have something by then. Mr. Lindsey said he would like to move forward with this before the end of the year.

Chief will check with Cleco and email any information he receives.

Mr. Trascher makes a motion to adjourn, Mr. Lindsey seconds. A roll call vote was called with 4 yeas, no nays. Motion carried.