



OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES
SOUTH AREA FIRE & EMERGENCY RESPONSE DISTRICT
Fire Commission Regular Meeting
Tuesday, April 8, 2025 @ 16:00

A. Call to Order

The regular meeting of the South Area Fire and Emergency Response Fire Commission was called to order at 16:01 by SAFER Fire Commission President Harlan Hebbe.

Members Present

Campbell, Hebbe, Jackan, Phelps, and Tatro were all present. Also present: SAFER – Fire Chief Finke, Deputy Fire Chief Lang, EMS Division Chief Gordon-Haessly, Fire Marshal Christiansen, Battalion Chief Genrich, Battalion Chief McBain, Battalion Chief Meyers, Captain Klapoetke, Lieutenant Zellner, Engineer Brandt, Engineer Ewan, Firefighter Haas, Firefighter Haessly, Firefighter C. Hanson, Firefighter Rheinschmidt, Firefighter Walters, Chaplain Swanson, and Administrative Assistant Latimer. There was twenty-nine guests present.

B. Correspondence/Comments from the public on issues related to the SAFER District

None

C. Consent Items

Approval of prior meeting minutes from January 14, 2025.

***Motioned by Jackan to approve prior meeting minutes from January 14, 2025. Second by Phelps.
Motion carried 5:0.***

D. Ceremony

Badge Pinning.

- EMS Division Chief Gordon-Haessly, Firefighter C. Hanson, and Firefighter Walters were sworn in and pinned.

Awards.

- Leadership Award – Captain Klapoetke; Firefighter Service – Engineer Brandt; EMS Service – Engineer Ewan; Administrative Commendation – EMS Division Chief Gordon-Haessly; Ten-year service – Fire Chief Finke, and EMS Division Chief Gordon-Haessly; Five-year service – Battalion Chief Meyers; Save (1) – Battalion Chief McBain, Engineer Brandt, Firefighter Rheinschmidt, Firefighter C. Hanson; Save (2) – Lieutenant Zellner; Save (3) – Engineer Ewan; Save (5) – Battalion Chief Genrich

E. Business Items

Staffing Updates.

- Deputy Chief Lang said since the last time we met, we've had a couple of initiatives. The first is Paid Per Call Firefighters, we did a search, and we have four paid-per-call firefighters that will start academy. The other update we have is the Firefighter Internship Program. We interviewed nineteen people, of those nineteen we selected three individuals, and they'll be live-in interns. We have a unique opportunity at station 2 with the PD merging and moving, we have the office space that we can turn into dorm-style rooms, and community area. We're offering them room and board free of charge, we're going to pay them to work shift, and we're going to pay them to go through school. We're going to pay 100% Firefighter I, Firefighter II, Driver/Operator, and EMT-Basic, and 50% Paramedic over a 24-month period. They'll live at the station and

be assigned to a shift, at the end of the 24 months, they're free to find employment wherever they'd like. They don't owe us anything, if we have positions, we will offer them. They will be part-time employees, they will be able to do interfacility transfers if they want when they're not on duty, if they're in the fire station and we get a fire response, they can respond and get paid. We have on-boarding dates in May, they'll be moving in June 1st, their first duty day is June 2nd, and they will all be in EMT class. The whole thing is the Chief's idea, historically there's fire internships in Appleton and Madison areas, there haven't been opportunities like this in the Northwoods.

Internship Update.

- Mentioned above.

F. Staff Reports

Report from Fire Chief

- Fire Chief Finke said the biggest project going on is what Deputy Chief Lang talked about with the Internship Update. Other than that, it's been business as usual. We're hoping that the SAFER Grant will come out, which is the federal grant for hiring firefighters. We're currently working with the Board to apply for that grant if and when it comes out, typically it comes out in March, it has not come out yet. I did get some reassurance late last week or early this week, that it is coming either late spring or early summer.
- We're doing our second Officer Development Class, when we promote somebody, they're required to have this class before they can operate when they're running a shift. Everybody but one person that's in it now is not in an officer role, but they're taking this class to get ready for that when those promotions come up down the line. It's a 64-hour class that's being taught by myself, Deputy Chief Lang, Battalion Chief Meyers, and Battalion Chief Genrich.

Report from Deputy Fire Chief

- Deputy Fire Chief Lang said there are a couple of reports in your packet. We've had an increase in fire responses. I am sending them to all of you gentlemen now every month. If you have any questions, I will try to answer them the best I can.
- **Personnel Report:** Listed.
- **EMS & Fire Incidents:** Listed.
- **Training:** Listed.
- **Apparatus:** Listed.
- **Fire Prevention/Public Education:** Listed.
- **Grants/Projects:** Listed.

G. Remarks from the Fire Commission to set the next meeting date as well as discuss items for the next meeting agenda.

- Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, June 10, 2025, at SAFER Station 1.
- Campbell has nothing.
- Jackan said I think this is a real morale booster to have these meetings with the awards ceremony.
- Phelps has nothing.
- Tatro has nothing.
- Hebbe has nothing.

H. Adjourn

Motion by Jackan to adjourn. Second by Tatro. Motion carried 5:0.

Hebbe adjourned at 16:37.

Respectfully submitted by Cher Latimer, SAFER District Administrative Assistant.