

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE
TRI-STATE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT HELD 27 MAY 2025 AT STATION 123

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1800 hours by Trustee Wolski.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. ROLL CALL OF TRUSTEES – Trustee Joseph Wolski, Trustee Michael Mensinger; Trustee Danielle Scarpelli. Also Present: Chief Patrick Brenn, Deputy Chief Craig Jansen, Attorney Shawn P. Flaherty.

Trustee Wolski made a motion to move the first five bullet points under New Business to the top of the agenda, second by Trustee Mensinger. Voice Vote: Aye, 3; No, 0. Motion passed, 3-0.

Battalion Chief Joseph Ostrander was unable to attend the meeting, so Chief Brenn will present him with his 30-Year Service Award tomorrow. Lieutenant David Mayotte was presented with his 20-Year Service Award. Chief Brenn presented Lieutenant David Mayotte with a shadowbox for his Retirement Award.

Chief Brenn introduced Randy Reeder from Flashpoint Strategies, LLC. He does data analysis and assists fire departments with accreditation and ISO reviews. The District is looking to hire Mr. Reeder to assist with getting the first part of the process of accreditation done, which is the community risk assessment and the standards of how they are met. A strategic plan would have to be done, as well. Randy Reeder has a Masters Degree in Public Administration. He has over 40 years in fire service, 30 years full-time at Orland Fire Protection District, Battalion Chief, retired Lieutenant. He was their accreditation manager. And from this point, he worked with over a dozen and a half fire departments to work on their accreditation to reduce their ISO ratings. Mr. Reeder creates about a dozen of the community risk assessments and standards to cover. He brought a copy to pass around. He gave his presentation on what accreditation is and why the District should do it from top to bottom. It provides a blueprint for the future. Can you make the District better, faster, safer and smarter. That is what this is looking to do. 2 percent of the calls are fires. The District is far more than that. It is an all hazard response and the District needs to capitalize and market more of that so that the public really knows what the District does. ISO looks at four things: emergency communication systems, the fire department, water supply and community efforts. They don't look at EMS, Admin, fleet, the budget. Those four items are really what they are looking for. The District has to dig deeper to improve. Accreditation looks at everything top to bottom; budget and finance, fire prevention, pub ed, apparatus facilities, SOPs, Rules and Regs, deployment and staffing, operations, training, HR, Admin, dispatch and IT. There are 311 internationally accredited agencies. There 45,000 fire departments in the United States. Of those, 311 are accredited, with 12 in Illinois. There are only 119 with an ISO 1 rating in the entire country, with six in Illinois. Mr. Reeder works with half of them. He presented a roadmap on how to get there.

Trustee Mensinger asked how long does it take from start to finish for the first process. Mr. Reeder said the first thing recommended is the community risk assessment and standards. The strategic

plan can look at that to start incorporating the things in that. That would be about four to six months or three to six months. That is the first process. The whole process should take a year and a half to two years. It could probably be done in less than a year. Trustee Mensinger asked how many departments he has worked with have gotten their accreditation. He said Orland twice and Lisle twice. It is renewed every five years. Trustee Mensinger asked how much does Tri-State personnel, EMTs, paramedics have to contribute to this process. Mr. Reeder said a lot. They want everybody involved. They want this to be a process and not a project. It affects where your department is going to go. They get the self-assessment manual, the categories, and they build a team and they are assigned to those areas and look at the place top to bottom. Trustee Mensinger asked if it required more personnel to do this. Mr. Reeder said that would depend on the Chief and what they have covering that area, how busy everybody is, getting everybody after shift. Using the day shift as much as possible is a huge help. Chief Brenn said Deputy Chief Allenspach would be the accreditation manager, so he would head this up. And if it is R and A report writing, Lieutenant Buchowski handles that, so he would help with that portion. Director Jim Gutierrez would help with EMS or Deputy Chief Jansen. Trustee Wolski asked what benefit does this have. A lower ISO rating gives lower insurance rating for the taxpayers and businesses. Mr. Reeder said it helps to define the way the District responds, where your stations are located, is there enough staffing, is the organization flat, do different positions need to be looked at, does the District need to look at different positions or ways to spread the load, does the District have the financial plans to cover fleet replacement, is the District meeting national standards. It assures the public that the District has definite missions and objectives that are data driven. Chief Brenn said when the District analyzes responses, when they do the low, moderate and high categories, it could change some of the responses. Right now on a single family home fire alarm, an engine, a truck, an ambulance and a Battalion Chief are being sent. Maybe that changes to just a single engine because it is a low hazard. Maybe high hazard has to be increased. Number two, Tri-State is the biggest Department in Division 10 and should set the example. It is a good report card for the District. After the School Districts, they are the next highest taxing body on a person's tax bill. It shows that the District is doing everything it can to evaluate itself and provide a good service. Trustee Mensinger asked who the accrediting body is. Mr. Reeder said Central Public Service and CFAL. Chief Brenn said the District is currently waiting for their ISO grade. Once that is received, Mr. Reeder, as part of his service, would also look at that. If the District does not get an ISO rating of 1, Mr. Reeder would look and see if there is something that was missed. Mr. Reeder has found errors in ISO's numbers. Trustee Mensinger asked what future costs will be down the line. Mr. Reeder said once the Strategic Plan is done, it will probably be half of that cost. The District has an accreditation manager so he can walk through the process.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Approval of District Meeting Minutes – April 22, 2025
Approval of the minutes were tabled until next month to give the Trustees a chance to read them.

V. APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT

- Approval of April 2025 Treasurer's Report including expenses for the District
Trustee Mensinger made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report showing

disbursement of funds for the month of April 2025 in the amount of \$847,814.33 and showing total deposits in the amount of \$507,850.43 and to pay all invoices, second by Trustee Wolski. Roll Call Vote: Trustee Mensinger, aye; Trustee Wolski, aye; Trustee Scarpelli, aye. Motion carried, 3-0.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

- None.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- 30-Year Service Award – Battalion Chief Josph Ostrander
This item was moved to the top of the agenda.
- 20-Year Service Award – Lieutenant David Mayotte
This item was moved to the top of the agenda.
- Retirement Award – Lieutenant David Mayotte
This item was moved to the top of the agenda.
- Accreditation Presentation by Flashpoint Strategies LLC
This item was moved to the top of the agenda.
- Discussion and possible action on approval of a professional services agreement with Flashpoint Strategies LLC
A motion was made by Trustee Wolski to table this discussion until next month since there was a lot of material to digest, second by Trustee Scarpelli. Voice Vote: Aye, 3; No, 0. Motion passed, 3-0. Discussion and possible action on approval of a professional services agreement with Flashpoint Strategies LLC was tabled until the next meeting.
- Employment Contracts for Deputy Chief Craig Jansen & Deputy Chief Jeffery Allenspach
A motion was made by Trustee Wolski to approve the two-year employment contracts for the Deputy Chiefs as presented, second by Trustee Mensinger. Roll Call Vote: Trustee Wolski, aye; Trustee Mensinger, aye; Trustee Scarpelli, aye. Motion passed, 3-0.
- Annual Pay Increases for Non-Union Employees
Chief Brenn is requesting a 3.5 percent increase for non-union employees, which matches the CBA. A motion was made by Trustee Scarpelli to approve the annual pay increase for non-union employees, second by Trustee Wolski. Voice Vote: Trustee Scarpelli, aye; Trustee Wolski, aye; Trustee Mensinger, aye. Motion passed, 3-0.

VIII. COMMUNICATIONS – None.

- IX. COMMISSIONERS' REPORT – For the new firefighters application, there were 20 applications. Out of those, seven are eligible to proceed to the oral interviews with the Board of Fire Commissioners, which is Thursday. Out of those seven, five have said they will attend, one declined, one has not responded yet. The Lieutenants Preliminary List has been posted and waiting ten days for military points. The Final List will be posted either May 30th or June 1st. All seven passed so there will be seven on the Promotional List. The Battalion Chief test will be in August and there is only one person taking it. Trustee Wolski asked if it was only one because of the rules for eligibility to take the test. Chief Brenn said there were two eligible, but only one wished to take the test.

- X. CHIEF'S REPORT – Division Chief William J. Rybak, Jr., passed away on Thursday. He lived in the District and the crews treated him. His services will be Friday and burial will be at a later date. All the information on his services has been e-mailed to everyone if they wish to attend. He worked at Tri-State for over 26 years. He started as a POC. He worked at Clarendon Heights, which became Tri-State's Station 4, on 63rd and Western. He remained active until the end. He will be dearly missed.

Last Friday there was a structure fire at 7706 Warwick in Darien. There was a fire in the exhaust fan. Luckily someone was home and heard crackling and called 911. It could have been much worse. Also on Friday, there was a semi-truck extrication on I-55. One occupant was deceased. They were there for several hours. They had to wait for the State Police to finish their investigation and they went back there to get the patient when the cranes got there. Two people have been arrested in connection with that accident.

- XI. DIRECTOR OF EMS REPORT – Director Gutierrez had nothing to report. He did say they are getting ROSC rates. The District is getting pulses back on people almost as frequent as mentioned in the presentation. Trustee Mensinger asked what is Utstein. Director Gutierrez said it would be easier to send it to him.
- XII. DIRECTOR OF FIRE PREVENTION REPORT – Director Kevin Mulligan said the Fire Prevention monthly report for April was sent to everyone. Revenues were \$3,874.85 and the fines were \$400. The Warwick flash report went out. There was another fire on Monday and Howard has not yet had a chance to share the information or create the flash report. They hope to get that out tomorrow. That was at 437 Kirkwood in Burr Ridge. It appears the fire originated in the mulch, a natural process of decomposition. It began to ignite the siding on the attached garage on the home. Nobody was home at the time. The neighbors either smelled or saw some smoke and alerted the homeowner and told them they were calling the Fire Department. They asked if they could get their garage open. They gave the neighbors a code, but the code didn't work. They were using a garden hose to try and control it until the Fire Department got there. The Fire Department forced entry, so there was some damage to the front entrance. The resident stopped in today. They already made their insurance claim. They got a copy of the report. They said thank you to the District and the personnel who responded. They were concerned that they have a lot of mulch around the home and don't want to live through this kind of a situation again. They are still busy taking in new plans. For those looking for an alternative to Home Depot, there will be an Ace Hardware in the former Binny's property probably within less than a year. And Panda Express is submitting plans. They will be at 75th and Route 83, the vacant lot that was a Shell Station before it was torn down.
- XIII. ATTORNEY'S REPORT – There are nine bills that passed. The three mentioned the most, all three have passed. The lift-assist bill passed unanimously. It is expected to be signed into law by the Governor. So the five nursing homes, after the sixth call in a calendar year, the District can start billing them. It will take effect the first of the year. The PFAS bill, which is a good thought to make fire gear that doesn't have chemicals in it, but the problem is, they want to bar the District from buying gear. This hedges kind of close after January 1, 2027. They don't think there is any proof that they are going to have the alternative ready by then. So the date is the problem. That

bill did pass. It is going to get signed by the Governor. But they are either going to keep the date in the future or we're going to have to violate it. If we need gear and the only gear we have has it in there, we are going to have to buy it. The other bill, HB3388, passed. It is a good bill that expands the definition of a fire vehicle, Fire Department vehicle to things like ATVs, watercraft, aircraft, those sort of things. By definition, it will now be a Fire Department vehicle. SB1446 because the Feds aren't doing it, the State Offices of the Fire Marshal is going to track firefighter deaths, cause of deaths from this point forward. It was one of the things that got cut by the Feds. Breaking news as of around 2:00 today, SB1937, first amendment dropped 662 cases, and it guts the pension code and does a bunch of things. Mr. Flaherty said he hasn't read it all yet. He will have a clerk do that or have AI condense it. What he saw in a quick overview, it will change tier 2 pension to add the 3 percent to the end of the salary annually. It will kick the pension funding from 2040 to 2055 and are changing the actuarial calculation from PUC to earned unit credit, which is the right way of doing it. That part is good. They are getting away from the kind of suspect way of doing an actuarial to the right way to do it. The State has commitments that they have to make to their own pension funds. They have lowered the hiring age for firefighters from 21 to 18. There's more. That's the gist of it. It is not a single subject bill, which you are supposed to have in the Illinois constitution. Chief Brenn asked if it said they can retire at 48 if they make it 18. Mr. Flaherty said no. They did eliminate language about having to retire at 55 if you don't have your 20 years. They also changed the definition called de facto firefighter, who knows whatever that is. They define it as those who serve as firefighters but don't meet the definition of being involved in a pension. So this is attacking a couple districts out there who have created a full-time department without putting them in a pension. This might pass. We will know by the end of the week whether this has passed. If it passes, it is a disaster and Mr. Flaherty will tell us about it next month. Chief Brenn asked for the lift-assist bill, he doesn't recall when they get calls for the nursing home any coming as lift assist. They always come in as falls. How does the District determine whether that falls under the lift assist. Mr. Flaherty said if they fall and you're helping them get up and you don't transport them, that is lift assist. Deputy Chief Jansen said if there's an injury, then it's no longer a lift assist, correct? Mr. Flaherty said that is correct.

XIV. PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

XV. CLOSED SESSION – No Closed Session.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT - With no further business to come before the Board, Trustee Wolski made a motion to adjourn the meeting, second by Trustee Mensinger. Voice Vote: Aye, 3; No, 0. Motion passed, 3-0. The meeting adjourned at 1925 hours.

Respectfully submitted,

Danielle Scarpelli, Secretary
Michael C. Mensinger
Sec. Pro Tem.
MICHAEL C. MENSINGER