



Southern Ozaukee Fire & EMS Board
MINUTES
DATE: Wednesday, July 9, 2025
LOCATION: 250 Elm Street, Thiensville,
WI
TIME: 5:30 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order by Mayor Nerbun at 5:30 PM

II. ROLL CALL

Mequon

Mayor Andrew Nerbun

Administrator Will Jones

Alderman Gregg Bach (Excused)

Alderman William Gebhardt

Citizen Lynn Streeter

Thiensville

President John Rosing

Trustee Kristina Eckert

Administrator Landisch-Hansen

Citizen Doug Chimenti (Excused)

Alternate Trustee David Lange (Absent)

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. May 14, 2025 (att)

MOTION to Approve by President Rosing **SECONDED** by Alderman Gebhardt. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Aye: 5

No: 0

Abstain: 0

IV. PERSONAL APPEARANCES AND PUBLIC COMMENT

A. Personal Appearances and Public Comment: Citizens wishing to address the SOFD Board on any matter not on the agenda may do so at this time. If you desire to be heard on agenda items, you may be heard when that item is considered on the agenda. The time limit is FIVE minutes.

None.

V. FINANCE

A. Review and Action Regarding the 2024 Final Financial Audit for Southern Ozaukee Fire and EMS Department (att)

Alderman Gebhardt inquired about the timing and plan for addressing identified material weaknesses.

Chief Bialk replied that new accounting software that is more suited to the Department's needs would address most of the identified material weaknesses. This software is expected at the beginning of 2026.

Administrator Landisch-Hansen noted that in organizations of the Department's size it is not unusual for there to be some material weaknesses, often due to not having enough administrative staff. New software can help mitigate these challenges, but some material weaknesses may still remain.

Alderman Gebhardt inquired about the increase in invoices being dealt with by the Department and whether that increase raised any concern in regard to appropriate filing practices.

Chief Bialk responded that there is no feeling within the Department that there is a gap in terms of invoicing. Chief Bialk also shared that the Department would be having the ambulance billing company do a rate survey in order to discover if additional hires would be needed in certain areas. That survey information will be considered in the upcoming budget process.

Citizen Streeter inquired how the new software was being chosen.

Administrator Landisch-Hansen replied that the Village of Thiensville was currently using BS&A Software and that there may be an opportunity to add additional funds to the existing service in order to assist the Department rather than investing in brand-new software.

BS&A Software was chosen after an exhaustive implementation process and scales well for the Village and the Department's needs.

MOTION to Approve the 2024 Final Financial Audit for Southern Ozaukee Fire and EMS Department by President Rosing **SECONDED** by Citizen Streeter. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Aye: 5

No: 0

Abstain: 0

ROLL CALL VOTE

Aye: Nerbun, Streeter, Gebhardt, Rosing, Eckert

No: None

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

B. Review and Discussion of 2nd Quarter Financial Report (att)

Chief Bialk provided the 2nd quarter update.

Administrator Jones inquired about the notably balanced gender distribution among staff members and asked if Chief Bialk had any insights or comments on the matter.

Chief Bialk responded that the split is almost fifty-fifty, which is rare. Most municipalities in the state don't achieve this level of gender parity.

Citizen Streeter mentioned that it was a topic that came up as a positive in staff interviews.

VI. GOVERNANCE

A. 2025 Workplan Update and Action Items (att)

Chief Bialk reviewed the workplan and provided an update on progress made since the last Board meeting.

Chief Bialk provided a handout outlining 18 action items recommended by consultant Chris Bell and highlighted several key points from the document.

B. Review and Discussion of Strategic Plan (att)

Chief Bialk provided an overview of the Strategic Planning process and shared identified objectives.

Citizen Streeter inquired about the timing of the facilities' assessment process. Is there clarification in regard to whether one location would proceed ahead of the other in terms of timing.

Mayor Nerbun replied that a discussion on timing still needed to be had.

Administrator Jones pointed out that the City of Mequon is currently engaged in the civic

campus master planning process, which should be taken into consideration when evaluating the SOFD Strategic Plan. That planning is something to consider in relation to the SOFD strategic plan with regard to timing.

Citizen Streeter asked whether the SOFD Board should focus on learning from the civic campus master planning process at this time, rather than actively influencing it.

Administrator Jones answered in the affirmative.

Chief Bialk asked that any feedback or questions on the plan be emailed.

Citizen Streeter noted that if the strategic plan is approved in September, it is important that the Board feels comfortable that the five objectives match the work that's been done, and that the items addressed during the sessions are reflected in the final product.

President Rosing's initial impression was that the format was easy to understand and the recommendations succinct, leading to easier execution in the end.

Mayor Nerbun shared that there is a very similar document for the City of Mequon that is often referenced and updated and feels this can be treated the same way as a living document.

Citizen Streeter mentioned that there is a monitoring tool that can be used to track when the Board wants to review the Plan and see where its status lies at any given time. Citizen Streeter suggested that in September Chief Bialk come back with an answer to how the strategic plan would be tracked after adoption.

Citizen Streeter also believed that the strategic plan needs to be integrated with the budget.

Administrator Jones agreed, with the caveat that currently there are revenue limitations in place at the State level that impact what can actually be done by SOFD.

Administrator Jones noted that the tempo for implementation is naturally set based on the number of items spread across the timeline. Command staff need to make sure that this is understood and that the goals are achievable within the timeline.

The Board invited command staff to also offer feedback by the end of July, the same as Board members.

Administrator Jones confirmed that July 31 is the feedback deadline.

VII. CAPITAL

A. Discussion Regarding Ladder Truck Sale Update (att)

Chief Bialk shared that the ladder truck is up on the website for sale, and that the Department is seeing interest with a couple of calls being received a week.

Trustee Eckert inquired as to how the price was arrived at.

Chief Bialk explained that the wholesaler offered to buy the truck for \$273,000. Comparable trucks had more mileage and usage, so the asking price here was increased to reflect the lower usage.

Administrator Landisch-Hansen asked if it was possible to see where the inquiries were from.

Chief Bialk replied yes, inquiries have been received countrywide.

VIII. OPERATIONS

A. Bi-Monthly Update

Chief Bialk summarized the bi-monthly update.

Chief Bialk highlighted that since the last meeting of the Board in May there are 3.3% hours uncovered, somewhat expected in the summer, and noted that with the new hires that number will go back down.

B. Presentation and Discussion Regarding Community Paramedic (att)

Heather Kreiger and Deputy Chief Boelhke presented a proposal to explore the implementation of a Community Paramedic program. Ms. Kreiger recently completed a semester-long course, qualifying her to serve in this role. The proposed initiative is intended to support community outreach and address non-emergency medical needs, particularly for high-risk residents. It was noted that Department personnel have shown strong interest in supporting resident education through this program.

Deputy Chief Boelhke stated that initial steps include coordination with the State of Wisconsin to create a licensed service. The current request is to obtain the Board's support to begin planning and fundraising for a pilot program. The estimated cost for a three-month pilot is \$5,000; however, that timeframe may limit the ability to gather comprehensive data. Deputy Chief Boelhke added that the program could be scaled to align with departmental capacity and financial resources.

Trustee Eckert inquired whether this would be the first such program in Ozaukee County. Deputy Chief Boelhke confirmed that it would.

Citizen Streeter noted that similar programs have been studied at Froedtert Hospital and are focused on preventative care, such as fall risk mitigation, to reduce emergency calls. Citizen Streeter expressed support for the program, citing potential benefits for residents and opportunities to connect individuals with additional county resources. It was noted that the program could be implemented in a fiscally responsible manner.

Mayor Nerbun commented that call volumes have increased significantly over the past 15 years and suggested the potential for the program could have a meaningful impact on addressing that trend.

President Rosing asked how long the proposed pilot could be sustained on the estimated \$5,000 budget. Deputy Chief Boelhke responded that the funds would cover approximately three months but reiterated the limitation on data collection within that period.

Citizen Streeter added that potential grant opportunities and restricted funds from civic organizations may be available to extend the pilot program, enabling more meaningful data collection.

Trustee Eckert clarified that the current request is not for full implementation of a Community Paramedic program, but for approval to proceed with planning and development of a pilot.

Administrator Landisch-Hansen asked whether other agencies with existing programs have assigned full-time staff. Administrator Landisch-Hansen expressed support for the concept but noted concerns about launching a program that cannot be adequately staffed or sustained.

Mayor Nerbun observed that there appeared to be a general consensus among Board members to support Department staff in initiating groundwork for a pilot Community Paramedic program.

Public Comment:

Resident Jerry Deutsch, 11623 N. Grace Ct., Mequon, requested clarification that the proposed pilot is not an immediate implementation but rather an exploration of the program's feasibility. Resident Deutsch also inquired if this program is a paramedic program and not other staff.

Mayor Nerbun confirmed that the purpose of this discussion was to determine if staff should begin gathering information and assess the qualitative value of a pilot program. This could lead to the possibility of a future budget proposal.

Citizen Streeter explained that the program would be paramedic, not paramedicine.

Deputy Chief Boehlke added that while the State of Wisconsin permits both practitioners and paramedics to be involved, the SOFD program would be initially led by Ms. Kreiger.

By general consensus, the Board directed staff to proceed with planning efforts for a Community Paramedic pilot program.

IX. NEXT MEETING

A. September 10, 2025

Administrator Jones noted that the September 10th meeting is important as it will have the Strategic Plan vote and budget discussion.

X. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to Adjourn at 6:36 by President Rosing **SECONDED** by Alderman Gebhardt. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Aye: 5

No: 0

Abstain: 0

Submitted by,

Ben Honeck
Deputy clerk

Signed by,

Colleen Landisch-Hansen
Village Administrator/Clerk