

# CLOQUET AREA FIRE DISTRICT BOARD (CAFD) MEETING MINUTES

June 11, 2009

CAFD Station #2 Perch Lake Town Hall, 6:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Members present: DeCaigny, DeMenge, Harms, Johnson (Council Appointed Alternate)  
Members absent: Ahlgren, Nemmers  
Staff: Anderson, Buhs, B.DeLovely, D.DeLovely, Klatt, Kolodge, Langenbrunner, Olson, Peterson, Saddler, Schroeder, Toboleski  
Others: Fritsinger (Cloquet City Administrator), Eames (Recorder), Yetka (CAFD Attorney)  
Guests: Jason Juntunen, Captain, Thomson/Esko Fire Department  
Jason Hill, Supervisor, Thomson Township (Board)  
Sarah Buhs, Scanlon Fire Department

2. Approval of June 11, 2009, Meeting Agenda

Board members accepted the agenda without a motion to approve.

3. Approval of May 13, 2009, Meeting Minutes

**MOTION (DeMenge/Harms): To approve the minutes as recorded with minor changes. Motion carried.**

4. Presentation/Visitors

Langenbrunner introduced Jason Hill from the Thomson Township Board of Supervisors, and Jason Juntunen from the Thomson Fire Department.

5. Old Business

A. Update on Communications Efforts  
Website Update – Jesse Buhs

Buhs recalled how the District's website was set up with a basic format that only the web designer could manually update, add pages to, or manipulate. Since then, the District has discussed adding pages for photographs and other items. Buhs discussed this with the web designer who recommended a new format and software to redesign the website and allow the District to manage its own content. Cost: \$918.00.

Langenbrunner supported the upgrade, emphasizing the web's use for public education and information. If the District forgoes this upgrade, it would have to keep adding patches to do extra things.

Buhs noted that the \$918.00 should be a final cost, with no more expense through the web designer. The proposal also includes ninety days for support. Also, there are no additional hosting or miscellaneous fees.

Board members agreed to delay action on this matter until they have had a chance to review the budget.

B. Training Update

Klatt presented a complete report, a copy of which can be obtained from the Cloquet Area Fire District.

Klatt also distributed minutes from the CAFD Safety Committee meeting held May 21, 2009. Members include S. DeMenge, J Langenbrunner, J. Peterson, J. Hutchinson, G. Foster, S. Kolodge, K. Klatt, and C. Vermeersch, M. Garberg, and S. Waters. These meetings are joint management-labor safety committee meetings. All Board members are welcome to attend.

The upcoming House Burn will be held June 13, 2009, at 102 Ketola Road. Board members are welcome.

Johnson asked if both stations drill together. Klatt explained that Station 1 and Station 2 drill together on Monday nights between 6:00/7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. Station 2 personnel who are unable to attend Monday nights can pick up the same training at Station 1 during the week.

C. Fire Relief/Pension Discussion

Fritsinger reported that the Fire Relief Committee recently met with Fire Relief members at Station 2 to address the pension issues. The discussion blended with the Paid-On-Call concerns. The committee heard a concept which sounded fair, but must be tied to the budget. DeCaigny emphasized the need to have a proposal or resolution for the next budget discussion.

D. Paid-On-Call (POC) Compensation

Fritsinger noted that this was part of the same discussion with the Fire Relief Committee.

E. District Membership Update – (Thomson and FDL)

(1) Discussion - Fond Du Lac Reservation (FDL)

Acronyms used for this discussion:

Reservation Business Committee (RBC)

Minnesota Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board (EMSRB)

Primary Service Area (PSA)

- (a) Fritsinger reported that the RBC Attorney, Dennis Peterson, recently contacted the CAFD Attorney, Frank Yetka, asking to meet and discuss the recent legislation. Fritsinger and Yetka met with Dennis Peterson, Wally Dupuis (RBC member) and Karen Diver (RBC Chair).

Both Yetka and Fritsinger summarized the meeting as follows:

- Both RBC members clearly expressed the FDL's desire to join the CAFD and to have it provide both fire and ambulance services for all lands within the reservation.
- Cloquet currently provides fire protection for reservation land within the city limits. No tax is applied.
- If the FDL joins the District, the new legislation would not allow the District to tax tribal properties.
- Since the FDL is interested in joining the District, they are willing to work out an appropriate method of compensation.
- Fritsinger and Yetka promised to bring this membership request back to the CAFD Board for review.
- Carlton currently provides ambulance service to the Black Bear Casino, which is in Carlton's ambulance PSA. FDL questioned whether or not this new legislation would allow the FDL and CAFD by agreement to supersede the existing PSA boundary established by the EMSRB?

- (b) CAFD discussion:

Yetka noted that he and Peterson have reviewed the new legislation and believe it allows FDL and CAFD to form an agreement which supersedes the existing district boundary.

Langenbrunner explained how the State of Minnesota assigned PSAs in 1970. Borders were established by the EMSRB in 1997. The EMSRB is a regulatory board which reports to the state legislature.

FDL does not pay for fire and ambulance to its northern boundaries. It pays Carlton for both fire and ambulance services on its southern boundaries. Its contract with Carlton expires on July 1, 2009, and it is anxious to join the CAFD as soon as possible.

CAFD staff and Board members emphasized the importance of initiating tactful discussions with the city of Carlton concerning FDL's request. Fritsinger suggested that the Board send a letter to the EMSRB and the City of Carlton regarding FDL's request to join the CAFD as soon as possible.

(2) Discussion - Thomson Township

(a) Jason Hill, supervisor, reported that the Thomson Township Board is interested in joining the CAFD. He explained that it is more economically feasible for Thomson to join a district, than to go it alone

(b) CAFD discussion:

DeCaigny asked staff for their ideas about managing the potential growth. Both he and DeMenge expressed concern about being overwhelmed with growth associated with bringing in new members.

DeMenge asked everyone to step back and recall the original plan:

- The Board always intended that FDL should be a major player from the start.
- The District must be stable and work out issues before inviting others to join.
- There must be a probationary period for new members.
- The District must know more about the budget before taking on additional new members.

Fritsinger agreed and suggested that first, everyone must agree on the budget. Then, everyone must look at the "big picture" issues involved with adding each new member. (Each new member will bring its own organizational and financial issues to the mix.)

DeCaigny agreed and advised that the CAFD does not yet have the desired stability. He expressed concern about growing too fast and having to take a step back. However, he predicted that staff will forecast a budget compatible with expansion. So, he advised the CAFD to continue the dialogue with Thomson and authorize staff to gather information for consideration by the Board.

Langenbrunner suggested having Thomson and the District work together for the next year, i.e., joint training, purchasing, opening lines of communication, and other cooperative ventures.

(3) Closing Discussion and Letters

- (a) Fritsinger summarized the Board's expectations of staff:
  - Continue to engage FDL and Thomson and bring budget issues, operations, and other matters related to these two entities back to the Board as needed.
  - Letter to Carlton, informing them of FDL's request before the Board and the Board's intention to pursue the matter.
  - Letter to EMSRB should be on hold until the District has confirmed the opinion that the new legislation supersedes the PSA concept.
- (b) DeCaigny: The Board is authorizing three actions:
  - Letter to EMSRB – staff to obtain clarification on District/PSA boundary issues.
  - Letter to Carlton – staff to apprise Carlton of discussions with FDL and their request to join the CAFD. This is important, as the end result could impact Carlton's capital purchases.
  - The Fire Chief will begin working with Thomson to evaluate possible joint training and automatic aid agreement.
  - Continue the dialogue with Thomson and FDL and laying all issues on the table.

6. New Business

A. Replace Ambulance #110 with Used Ambulance

Langenbrunner recalled how earlier in the year, the Board considered replacing Ambulance #110. At that time, staff recommended holding off until October. Mechanics now say the ambulance is no longer safe and should be removed from service as quickly as possible. After some checking, staff has found a used ambulance with about 60,000 miles and a 7.3 liter diesel engine for an amount between \$8,000 and \$10,000.

Purchasing the used ambulance would buy the District time. It would replace an old ambulance and allow the District to look at remounting Medic #9, a newer ambulance with a 6.0 liter diesel engine which has been a problem here and elsewhere in the field of emergency medical services.

**MOTION (DeMenge/Harms): To authorize CAFD staff to move forward with the purchase of a used ambulance for under \$10,000, to replace Ambulance #110. The remount of Medic #9 is not part of this motion. Motion carried.**

B. Medical Director Stipend

Langenbrunner acknowledged the request from Dr. Kenneth Ripp, dated June 1, 2009, for an increase of \$100 per month in his stipend. The Fire Department has paid Dr. Ripp \$6,000 per year since 1997.

**MOTION (DeMenge/Johnson): To accept and approve Dr. Kenneth Ripp's request for a \$100 per month stipend increase. Motion carried.**

Board and staff members expressed gratitude for Dr. Ripp's service for the last twelve years.

C. Thomson Township EMS (Emergency Medical Services) Agreement

Fritsinger recalled earlier discussions with Thomson about this agreement when budgets were tight. Thomson had agreed to contribute for ambulance service, but no formal written agreement was ever established. Then, finally, an agreement was drafted and sent to Yetka and Pritchett for review.

Jason Hill reported that the Thomson Town Board has approved the request, requesting only that the first payment be moved from April to October. Fritsinger asked the Board to approve the agreement for \$22,000 per year.

**MOTION (Johnson/Harms): To approve the Thomson/CAFD EMS agreement for \$22,000 per year. Motion carried.**

D. Fire District Legislation Certification Resolution

Fritsinger presented the first resolution for approval by the Board.

Resolution 09-100 (Approving Laws Related to the District)

Minnesota state law requires approval by resolution and certification of this resolution to the state prior to July 1, 2009.

**MOTION (DeMenge/Harms): To approve Resolution 09-100 as stated below. Motion carried.**

Resolution 09-100

Approving Laws Related to the Cloquet Area Fire and Ambulance Special Taxing District

Whereas, In 2009, the State of Minnesota enacted HF 1298 which included Sec. 46 Cloquet Area Fire and Ambulance Special Taxing District; and

Whereas, Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 645.02 and 645.021, the City of Cloquet and Perch Lake Township are required to approve the said law before it

can take affect; and

Whereas, The City and Township have previously entered into a Joint Powers Agreement in order to create the Cloquet Area Fire District; and

Whereas, The District Board consisting of representatives of both the City and Township believe that this approach to delivery will benefit the citizens of the District.

Now, therefore, be it resolved, by the Board of the Cloquet Area Fire District, Cloquet, Minnesota, that as of this date, it hereby approves Session Laws 2009, Session Law Chapter 88, Section 46 which establishes the Cloquet Area Fire and Ambulance Special Taxing District.

E. Fire District Taxing Authority Resolution

Fritsinger presented the second resolution for approval by the Board.

Resolution 09-101 Dealing with Taxes

This resolution notifies the County Auditor that the CAFD intends to levy property taxes in 2010.

**MOTION (Harms/Johnson): To approve Resolution 09-101 as stated below.  
Motion carried**

Resolution 09-101

Supporting the Creation of the Cloquet Area Fire and Ambulance Special Taxing District

Whereas, Minnesota Statutes 471.59 grant authority to government units to exercise joint powers, and;

Whereas, in September, 2008, the City of Cloquet and Perch Lake Township entered into a Joint Powers Agreement for the purpose of establishing a joint power fire/EMS district; and

Whereas, in May 2009, the State of Minnesota enacted HF 1298 which included Sec. 46. Cloquet Area Fire and Ambulance Special Taxing District; and

Whereas, this Law allows for the formation of the Cloquet Area Fire and Ambulance Taxing District which allows the District to impose a property tax on taxable property in the District.

Now, therefore, be it resolved, by the Board of the Cloquet Area Fire District, Cloquet, Minnesota, that it authorizes its representatives in the establishment of the Cloquet Area Fire and Ambulance Taxing District for the benefit of its citizens, and;

Be it further resolved, that the Board supports the efforts of its representatives to work with the County Auditor on the creation of a formal taxing district as authorized under State law and agrees to abide by the terms and conditions determined necessary to accomplish such undertaking.

F. Kevin Toboleski Resignation/Retirement

**MOTION (DeMenge/Harms): To accept Kevin Toboleski's letter of retirement as of August 1, 2009. Motion carried.**

Langenbrunner stated that Toboleski has been a true asset to the department. He will send a letter of appreciation to Toboleski for his 23 years of service.

G. 2010 Budget Development

Fritsinger reported that he had nothing at this time.

H. Approval of Payment of Bills

**MOTION (Harms/Johnson): To approve the payment of invoices listed on the Summary Report, dated June 11, 2009, with a total amount of \$23,649.57. Motion carried.**

7. Other/Next Agenda

A. Future agenda items

- (1) Langenbrunner: Formation of bylaws
- (2) Langenbrunner: Discussion about time commitment for CAFD administrative workload duties (not necessarily a position).
- (3) Notice from Local 880 for Intent to Negotiate. Fritsinger noted that it is best for the Board to start a discussion with the Local. This can happen anytime. Nemmers and DeMenge are part of the negotiation team.

B. Confirm Next Meeting Date

DeCaigny announced that he will not be here for the July 8, 2009, meeting. He asked DeMenge to act as chair.

Date	Time	Place
July 8 (Wednesday)	3:00 p.m.	Station 1 Cloquet Fire Hall
August 13 (Thursday)	6:00 p.m.	Station 2 Perch Lake Town Hall

September 9 (Wednesday)	3:00 p.m.	Station 1 Cloquet Fire Hall
October 8 (Thursday)	6:00 p.m.	Station 2 Perch Lake Town Hall
November 1 (Wednesday)	3:00 p.m.	Station 1 Cloquet Fire Hall
December 10 (Thursday)	6:00 p.m.	Station 2 Perch Lake Town Hall

C. Action Items List Review

See updated chart reviewed at meeting.

8. Adjourn

**MOTION (DeMenge/Johanson): To adjourn at 7:30 p.m. Motion carried.**