

APPROVED

Approved at the July 1st Board meeting
With the Attorney to make Corrections noted
in Red.

Liberty Volunteer Fire Department

June 3, 2024

Minutes

The meeting was held at 3278 US Hwy 90 in DeFuniak Springs. Commissioner Canterbury and Commissioner Bottom were not present.

Minutes from the last meeting were tabled to the next meeting so everyone can have an opportunity to review them. Motion was made by Commissioner Randi Lightner and seconded by Chairman Mike Engel. Motion passed.

Volunteer Staff Member James Odom read the **Treasury report**. All the bills were paid last month, and we received another \$19,445 from FEMA Direct Money Reimbursement. We received about \$5000 from tax money so the rest of the tax money is dwindling down, and we'll receive the rest of the tax money of about \$3000 or \$4000 between now and September each month. We are still waiting on the other \$125k from the County. He said he sent an email to the CFO's office and was advised that they had paid it and gave him a date and time, but we haven't received it. After he reviewed the accounts he sent her an email back saying that he hadn't received it. Commissioner Lightner asked if it was possible that it was sent to the old account. Chairman Engel said he thought they just looked at the date that the \$93k was sent and assumed it was also sent on that date. Odom said he'd call back in the next day or two.

Volunteer Staff Member James Odom continued that we are on track for the average budget if you look at the year-to-date budget totals. Chairman Engel asked who's the one that has **not deposited the** the depositors checks? Odom replied that Amber has it and Volunteer Coordinator Donna Dunham replied **(?) she cannot submit the grant reimbursement until it has been cashed.** ~~does and~~ Engel said you need to let her know that we can't send in for the next quarter on the SAFER until she does. ~~Dunham responded (?).~~ Odom said that check #1100 was lost in the Tuesday night training and has been voided. Chief Dunham said that the reason the O'Reilly bill was so high was because of Tony's truck, he had brake problems. Chairman Engel said the check to O'Reilly's should be voided because he already had paid that. Chief Dunham said that when they took the boat to Lakefest a part was broken that had to be replaced. Odom said there also is an annual service on the motor as well. Chairman Engel said that all 3 Chelco bills will be combined.

Commissioner Canterbury arrived at 6:20. He requested that if we have a vehicle serviced, we should put the name of the vehicle in there. Commissioner Canterbury made the motion to approve the voided check and the treasurers report. Commissioner Lightner seconded the motion and the board approved.

Grant Closeouts: Volunteer Coordinator Donna Dunham said all were closed except for 2 which are the Covid and FEMA grants.

Procurement Policy revision/approval: Board Attorney Rene Youell said she was working on the procurement grant when she had her medical issue. The item was tabled until next meeting. She said she would send it to Chairman Engel who would send it as a group email to the rest of the board. She cautioned us not to reply to group emails, however. The same situation with the **Asset Disposal Policy development/approval.**

New Business:

23/24 Audit: Auditor Mr. Chapman has begun the process and requested a lot of information to be uploaded to their online portal including impact fees. He's looking to have the audit completed by the end of June or the first of July.

Recruitment and Retention Plan: Volunteer Coordinator Donna Dunham said the April reports she received have arrival times but not **departure times. leave times (?)**. Commissioner Lightner asked if there was anything we are actively doing right now for recruitment? Commissioner Campbell asked how many volunteers do we have? Dunham replied 13. Lightner asked if there was anything they would like to do to try to bring in volunteers? Youell suggested asking various churches if they were able to have volunteers. She also suggested someone come up with a banner that could be shared on Facebook. Commissioner Campbell asked if there were any perks or benefits given to potential volunteers as incentives? Youell said doesn't the training they've done as a volunteer count towards the training needed for a fire district? Odom said it does, depending on what school they go to. She also said high school guidance counselors are also a great source. If there are any kids that may want to become a fire fighter this would be a great way to get started. Odom said there is grant money that's funding stipends for volunteer firemen. He also said that some of the money that is outstanding in the grants, we need to ask for a modification to buy recruitment materials. Youell recommended having an open house celebration and allow Chief Dunham and Odom to coordinate with Caring and Sharing to set a date, and work with them because we will borrow some of their stuff. Commissioner Canterbury made the motion (modified to include \$1000 to purchase hats and other memorabilia), seconded by Commissioner Lightner. Motion passed unanimously.

SAFER Grant Modification: Chairman Engel said that we have money to put a sign at the North Station and Commissioner Canterbury would like to modify it to put it at the Central Station and make it portable.

FY 24/25 Budget Workshop: Board Attorney Youell said the School Board has priority over setting the dates for the workshops. First the School Board, next the County Commission, then the Fire Departments. They also need to be scheduled with the newspaper to advertise. Commissioner Canterbury made the motion to have Attorney Youell take care of the dates and Commissioner Lightner seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Fire Chief: Fire Chief Dunham reported 597 runs last month. There were 6 fire calls, 74 medical, 4 service calls, 4 MVA's, 3 cancelled, 18 mutual aids which Liberty provided the mutual aid all 18 times. He said that one of the trucks needed a new mirror and handle on the passenger side of the vehicle and there were recalls on 3 of the trucks. Chairman Engel asked if they could send him the year and model of the truck needing a new mirror, that he may be able to find them. One was a 2018 Ford F550 needing a right mirror, and a 2016 Ford F550 needing a grab handle.

Board Attorney: Attorney Youell presented Chairman Engel a bill back in December when it wasn't known whether the board would be able to continue. If the County took over the bill would have been their liability. The bill at that time was \$4657.50. This was for 20.7 hours at \$225 per hour. She said the other bills are nowhere near that. Commissioner Canterbury made a motion to pay the bill and Commissioner Campbell seconded it. Motion wasn't voted on. There was a discussion about having a flea market type event at the station on Hwy 90.

Board Comments: Commissioner Campbell commented about the Florida Power and Light Solar Farm that the owner, FP&L, should put in their own well to provide water. Unfortunately, no one caught it, and it passed without consideration at the planning stage. Commissioner Canterbury suggested we should have a volunteer recognition party. Either the first Saturday after the fourth of July or the first Saturday in August. This would make up for the lack of one in December.

Chairman Engel said qualifying for the election was coming up soon, and 4 of the seats are up this time. He said he hoped others would run and that he really didn't want to run. Commissioner Lightner said she had some big interests in some things outside of this that she didn't think it was a good look for Liberty right now. **The commissioners and public were advised to go to the SOE office for information to Qualify for the open board seats.**

Meeting Adjourned 7:45pm