

# **Board of Fire Commissioners**

Greenfield Fire District  
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The Future Plan Committee Meeting of the Greenfield Fire District was called to order at Company #3 by Committee Chairman Richard Spackmann at 7:03 PM on October 18, 2010. The flag salute and a moment of silence were recognized for fallen brethren and our troops overseas.

## **Present were:**

Commissioners: B. Chouinard, Kugler, Robarge, Spackmann, Waite; Secretary J. Petkus.  
Chief Officers: Chief J. Lant, D/C's G. Gibbins, Ellsworth, J. King, A/C's D. Middlebrook, E. Petkus, D. Bogardus. Absent: D/C J. Davis.  
Please see sign in sheet for others in attendance.

## **RESOLUTION #292 TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 16, 2010 FUTURE PLAN COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES AS WRITTEN.**

MOTION: A/C Ed Petkus

SECOND: D/C John King

RESOLVED to approve the September 16, 2010 Future Plan Committee Meeting Minutes as written.

VOTE: All in favor, motion carried.

Chairman Spackmann introduced Captain Gary Bullard as the special guest for the evening; he would like to address the committee. Captain Bullard noted he had previously submitted a letter to the Board (attached) and went on to explain in detail the financial plan he laid out in order to replace the recently sold ETA292 and the pending sale of ETA262 and purchase two apparatus, one in late 2011 and the next one in early 2012. Chief Lant noted he felt they should order the 2 trucks, stagger them a few months apart and get it over with. D/C Ellsworth noted that if we are going to standardize, how are we going to determine who to standardize with? He has been hearing through the grapevine that we are going with KME. Chief Lant noted that is a lot of the feeling. Commissioner Spackmann noted that there has been a lot of positive experience with KME, but even if they do standardize, they still have to go out to bid. D/C Ellsworth noted he understands, and agrees, but the truck committee has not talked about standardization, and they have not had any other manufacturers come to talk to us. A/C E. Petkus commented that he agrees they have had a great experience with KME, but it would behoove us to branch out and see what other companies have to offer; he would hate to go with one company without looking at other options as this is a big decision for the future of the District. A question arose from which manufacturer do we have the most apparatus from; it was noted Luverne and Crimson. D/C Ellsworth also noted that when the consultant was here, one of the things he had said is that we should standardize. Captain Bullard pointed out that the KME factory shop is in Latham and the plant is only 5 hours away. A/C E. Petkus suggested having various vendors each come up and give a presentation. Commissioner Spackmann, noting he was playing devil's advocate, is that change isn't always good, and to go with somebody else just because they may be able to provide something a little bit cheaper, and is that small advantage going to pay dividends down the road? D/C Ellsworth noted that vendors may be more likely to bend over backwards if you

are a repeat customer. A/C E. Petkus noted that in looking at the report, since 1994 they have purchased 9 different apparatus manufacturers, 6 different chassis, and 3 different pumps. FF B. Bishop noted there is the concern in going to different vendors that it drags out the process, although he felt the District could manage with the fleet they currently have even with what's gone at this point. He suggested setting a time limit where these vendors could meet, and if they cannot accommodate us in that time frame, then they doesn't want our business. Setting up a specific time frame avoids dragging the process out unnecessarily.

Commissioner Robarge questioned the officers if they have a pump preference; D/C Ellsworth noted that they have all three and they pay a lot of money to repair all of them.

Captain Bullard noted that one of the things with KME is that there is no divided responsibility, so as far as repairs go, there is no finger pointing issue. D/C G. Gibbins noted one good thing about their truck committee since A/C J. Gibbins works in Latham and Rensselaer is that he has a variety of apparatus he drives all the time and most are KME. The committee has been meeting with KME and A/C J. Gibbins has been able to give the answers rather than having the salesman blow smoke. By Wednesday they should have their final draft from KME. Brief discussion continued as to what the committee wanted to do regarding vendors. Decision made to invite the following vendors: KME, Ferrara, Sutphen and HME. Commissioner Spackmann to make arrangements as soon as possible.

Discussion turned to carry over apparatus discussion from previous September meeting; Commissioner Spackmann noted that one of the goals he has is trying to figure out where they want to go for the next 10-15 years. The problem is that usually you have these meetings, you agree and then a year later everyone forgets what was agreed on. Previously sent out emails to the committee members which were just a whole bunch of discussion that people have been talking about, not necessarily his thoughts but everyone that he has talked to. What was brought up last meeting was the need for standardization, which was just covered, and the need to downsize the fleet. A lot of discussion has been focused on combining two trucks for one, and if they so choose to go in that direction, it would decrease the district fleet by three. D/C Ellsworth noted they have never discussed combining 261 and 263; Commissioner Spackmann noted it was just discussion from various people, as well as various other discussions. D/C G. Gibbins noted that the District truck committee never discussed combining 261 and 263, the cascade system is on the rescue truck. Chief Lant noted it is important to have a command post, as well as that 294 is paid for and you don't have to keep buying new for vehicles like that. D/C Ellsworth noted that the current Chief's vehicle is really a utility truck, and a real Chief's vehicle should be purchased, like a Tahoe or Suburban. He also noted they have talked about this before; the district is getting way too big and busy not to have a good Chief's vehicle, and also noted that each Deputy Chief should have a vehicle as well. Commissioner Spackmann also noted that some people have argued is it necessary to have a brush truck at Maple Avenue, and he agrees that they probably don't. Chief Lant noted that you can take the skid unit off and have a utility vehicle 6 months a year.

Commissioner Spackmann noted he would like to get into more discussion regarding the Chief and Deputy Chief vehicles, with the following points made:

- Chief and Deputy Chief's do not put in for all their mileage
- Providing an added perk for someone who does a lot of additional work and attends a lot more meetings
- Possibly upgrading the MED vehicles, and giving the existing ones to the D/C's.
- FF B. Bishop noted that there should be a certain expectation that the Chief receives a lot more support from the Deputy Chiefs, there should be more district responsibility delegated to the Deputy Chiefs, possibly a whole new hierarchy because the Chief's

- office is a lot more administrative than it's ever been since it is now being done right.
- Chief Lant noted the idea is to downsize, yet we are talking about buying all these trucks. What we really should do is spend the money on a certified mechanic.
  - Cannot necessarily put a Tahoe in the same category as a 3000 gallon tanker.
  - D/C Ellsworth noted that there is a reason why Deputy Chief's have vehicles, including keeping mileage off personal vehicles and having everything in one vehicle.
  - A/C Middlebrook agreed with D/C Ellsworth. The Chief should have something better; Jay has a good setup with the Tahoe.
  - Commissioner Kugler commented that the priority should be to get the big trucks taken care of first. Down the road look at Deputy Chief's vehicles.
  - Commissioner B. Chouinard agreed with Commissioner Kugler; the Chief should have a Suburban or Tahoe, and the MED's should go to the Deputy Chief's, they do put a lot of mileage on their own personal vehicles, but it is not a high priority. He also agrees with the Chief that maybe we need to look for a mechanic, not saying Dave is a bad mechanic. FF B. Bishop noted that you if you hire someone, they could be doing all the PM work, now all you are doing is paying for repairs. You may find that you end up saving money.
  - Commissioner Waite agreed with Commissioner B. Chouinard, but we are missing the boat with regard to manpower, we should be concentrating on manpower, not only trucks. Commissioner Spackmann noted that by focusing on downsizing the fleet you are focusing on the manpower issue because if you don't have the manpower to roll the trucks, what good are the trucks that sit there and cost us money? How we turn it around and gain more membership is a separate issue.

Commissioner Spackmann noted that from all this discussion what he is hearing is the following:

- Critical
  - Downsizing the fleet
    - Combining 292 and 295 and purchasing ER292
    - Replace ETA262 with 3000 gallon ETA
    - Combining 282 and 283 and purchasing new ETA282
- High Priority
  - Replacing the Chief's vehicle
- Medium to Low Priority
  - Deputy Chief's vehicles
  - MED's

D/C Ellsworth noted a utility vehicle is necessary. Commissioner Kugler commented that all this is going to cost money up front and it will need to be spread out over time. FF B. Bishop commented that going forward it may behoove the District to keep track of the utilization of vehicles; empirical data is necessary, like mileage, hours used, etc.

It was also noted that not just the truck manufacturer be standardized, but the components as well, including pumps, chassis, attack lines, compartments, etc., and try to make things more uniform overall. FF B. Bishop also noted that maybe it is time to get away from truck rotations and look at the District as a whole. Lt. Abraham suggested a simple log in each truck. D/C Ellsworth noted that when we purchase a new truck, let's do it right, including mounting, and the foam on trucks should be class A. Chief Lant added that the trucks need to be user friendly. Commissioner B. Chouinard noted that stuff like hose and SCBA should come out of those respective accounts, not out of the Equipment Reserve fund.

Discussion continued regarding starting up the truck committee again to begin to standardize. Commissioner Spackmann noted that the truck committee is supposed to have two Commissioners on it; Commissioner Waite noted he has been to every one of their meetings. A/C E. Petkus noted he was under the impression that the Future Plan committee was going to meet, talk about the basic steps and then hand everything over to the truck committee;

Commissioner Spackmann noted that is what he is suggesting, this should go back to the truck committee to iron out all the details. Commissioner Robarge noted that regarding the District truck committee and the Company truck committee, as long as you have both committees there will be problems. If you want a District truck committee, then have that committee spec each truck no matter where it goes. Commissioner Spackmann noted that was an excellent point. Chief Lant noted that each company should be able to buy what they want, gives them pride and keeps their morale up. Commissioner Spackmann noted the points made are absolutely correct; the taxpayers provide this equipment for firemen to use to serve them, but they take ownership of it, protect it, maintain it, use and equip it, it is their truck. But you can still accomplish that and have a bigger game plan to fit into the bigger puzzle of the Greenfield Fire District. You need to have a game plan of what's important for the overall goal of the District and then you can give individual pieces to people to take care of it. Commissioner Robarge noted that it is a big step for this District to standardize, but it is step he feels need to be taken. FF B. Bishop suggested the District truck committee come up with a list of items that are going to be standardized, they will have to make some tough decisions, and then once the district truck committee sets their standards, then the company truck committees have to create a truck that fits into that mold. A/C E. Petkus agreed. Commissioner B. Chouinard on truck committee with Commissioner Waite. District truck committee to meet on October 21<sup>st</sup> at Co #3 at 7 PM and standardize on basic components.

Discussion then turned to District facilities. Commissioner Spackmann noted he put a variety of different topics on the agenda that people have suggested. They are in no particular order, so he will just start with the first one:

1. District office/storage facility: there have been many people who have suggested that since we are adding a second paid person and potentially adding a maintenance person, that we need more space. Commissioner Spackmann noted that previously a lot of stuff was delivered to the Purchasing Agent's house, then that changed and now deliveries are made to the Secretary's office, which is clearly not equipped to maintain that. There is not a meeting room large enough to hold the membership for district training. A/C E. Petkus noted that with the ever changing dynamic of the fire service, the Board of Fire Commissioners needs more office space, more storage space for gear, records, and inventory, and space for the District Chief and Deputy Chiefs and their changing roles. Suggested one storage location to house gear and inventory, and if something is needed you go to the District building to get it. Possibly need room for a district mechanic or firehouseman, the purchasing agent is going to need storage, if you stop in at the District office at any given time, there are boxes piled against the walls and on the conference table. Chief Lant questioned the amount of property behind Co #1 to build a District facility; there is approximately 5 acres. D/C G. Gibbins noted you do not want to build back there, get involved with that, the firehouse moves enough as it is. Another option briefly discussed was putting a building behind Co #3. Commissioner Robarge suggested possibly putting up a modular structure. FF Abraham agreed there is no room to hold the entire membership for training. Commissioner Spackmann noted the issue of having to add fire sprinklers to rooms that house a certain amount of people and when that happens, it may be easier to add a large meeting room to the new facility rather than retrofit Co #1. FF B. Bishop noted how often do you really need such a large facility, maybe 4-5 times per year, and at that point you just use one of the bays or even rent something like the Elk's Club, or borrow a school auditorium. Chief Lant thought that might be a better idea. Discussion turned to basement storage; Commissioner B. Chouinard noted his concern with cellar storage and dampness. Brief discussion continued; Commissioner Spackmann noted it sounds like a storage facility is something we need to focus on.
2. Heating/cooling systems at Co #1: Commissioner Spackmann noted this is something that is currently being addressed.

3. Co #2 construction project: Commissioner Spackmann explained that we are obviously going to see this through to the end, we are currently entering the second phase on that.
4. Co #3 floor repair: Commissioner Spackmann noted through some previous conversations that the floor at Middle Grove bounces or flexes when trucks drive out, it is starting to crack and eventually the floor is going to need to be replaced, and why not add radiant floor heat at that time. Questioned if this is something we should mark down as capital improvements over the next 10 years, or is this crazy. Brief discussion; the general consensus is that this is a non-issue. Discussion turned to sealing the floors (epoxy) periodically, but that it is expensive and is it really worth it. D/C Ellsworth noted it should have been done when the firehouses were originally built. Commissioner Spackmann confirmed that this is something the committee thinks we should be focusing on, and spread it out over the course of several years.
5. Co #4 window replacement and exterior painting: Commissioner Spackmann noted it was not included in this budget cycle, because you just can't include everything, but all the windows at Co #4 need to be replaced. Commissioner Robarge noted to include Co #1 as well. Commissioner Spackmann felt that this was something we are going to need to focus on over the next 10 years, and do one firehouse every 2 years or so. FF B. Bishop also noted that is it the District's view that we are going to keep these buildings and just refurbish them when the time comes. Discussion continued refurbishing versus building a new firehouse. Bill Reed replaced the screws on the roof of Co #3 just last year, and there are still leaks; he had noted at that time that they were going to need to replace the roof within in the next five years. Chief Lant suggested possibly looking into grant money.

Commissioner Spackmann questioned if there was any other discussion about district facilities at all; as there were none, he briefly gave an overview of tonight's discussion, including:

- District office/storage facility: outlined, not quite sure what that will be, modular or stick, something we should look into over the next 5-10 years.
- Heating and cooling systems at GFC: focusing on this year.
- Porter Corners construction project: being taken care of.
- Middle Grove floor repair: non-issue.
- Co #4 window replacement and exterior painting: will obviously need to do general windows and exterior painting, added an area for Co #3 roof. A/C Middlebrook noted that Co #2 will probably need to have a new roof as well. Each roof will need to be looked at.

Chief Lant explained that the bus went to KME and was looked at and the estimate was about \$7500.00. Felt that Dave Kenyon could do it cheaper. Brief discussion.

## **RESOLUTION #293 GIVING THE CHIEF PERMISSION TO HAVE DAVE KENYON WORK ON THE REHAB BUS.**

MOTION: Kugler

SECOND: Robarge

RESOLVED to give the Chief permission to have Dave Kenyon work on the rehab bus.

VOTE: All in favor, motion carried.

## **RESOLUTION #294 DECLARE 262 SURPLUS AND TO ADVERTISE A PERMISSIVE REFERENDUM TO SELL IT FOR \$31,000.00.**

MOTION: Robarge

SECOND: B. Chouinard

RESOLVED to declare 262 surplus and to advertise a permissive referendum to sell it for \$31,000.00.

VOTE: All in favor, motion carried.

Commissioner Spackmann noted the next Future Plan Committee meeting will be held on Thursday November 18<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM at the Maple Avenue firehouse.

Motion made by Commissioner Kugler with a second from Commissioner Robarge to dispense with the reading of the minutes. All in favor.

Motion made by Commissioner Robarge with a second from Commissioner B. Chouinard to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 PM. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce A. Petkus  
District Secretary