

Regional Emergency Services Task Force

Meeting Minutes

9/17/2009

Highville Fire Company Building

I. Call to order

The special meeting to consider West Lancaster Fire Company's plan to purchase a new rescue/pumper was called to order by Chairman Guthrie at 7:02 p.m.

II. Recognize Present Members and Visitors

Chairman Guthrie recognized members present and welcomed others.

Roll call

The following task force members were present:

Glenn Hess – Highville Fire Co.
Carl Harnish – Highville Fire Co. – Citizen
Jay Breneman – Manor Twp.
Russell Guthrie – Manor Twp. – Citizen
Phil Lastowski – Millersville Boro Council
Robert Thompson – Millersville Boro. – Citizen
Jim Eshleman – Millersville Fire Co.
Don McCann – Millersville Fire Co. – Citizen
Ron Goe – Washington Boro Fire Co.
Scott Haverstick – Washington Boro Fire Co. – Citizen

Unable to attend:

Craig Hohman – West Lancaster Fire Co.
Mark Lauriello – West Lancaster Fire Co. – Citizen
Gregory G. Noll – Community-at-large – Citizen

Others attending:

Carolyn Ranck – Citizen
Mike Ditzler – Highville Fire Co.
Brett Graham – Washington Boro Fire Co.
John Broome – Washington Boro Fire Co.
Ted Gingrich – West Lancaster Fire Co.
Joan Matterness – West Lancaster Fire Co.

Rob Muschlitz – West Lancaster Fire Co.
Dave Zeigler – West Lancaster Fire Co.

III. Rob Muschlitz – Chief West Lancaster Fire Co.

Rob Muschlitz, West Lancaster Fire Co. Chief, handed out and discussed a Vehicle Assessment Form for their Engine 6-8-1, 1991 Beck Pumper which they plan on replacing. The form indicated that overall the condition is not too bad, but there are serious electrical problems, the chassis needs repair, and some valves need to be replaced in the pump. The engine is serviced twice a year. The alternator has been replaced twice, but the electrical system is still weak.

The tank is in good shape. The steering has been repaired, but steering the truck is still difficult due to “play” in the steering mechanism.

The most serious concern is that parts are not available for future repairs.

Chief Muschlitz entertained and answered questions.

Joan Matterness asked if a request has been made to the Manor Township Supervisors. Chief Muschlitz said he did attend the Supervisor’s meeting and advised them of the fire company’s need to replace the truck this year. No commitment was made.

Phil Lastowski asked about excess engines among the four fire companies. Chief Muschlitz advised that Dr. Jenaway’s report indicates there are more engines in the township than what is typical for a township of our size. However, the engines are closer to the end of their useful life than the beginning, and the process of reducing by the recommended five engines may take several years and may be complicated. Don McCann asked if there is a “normal” strategy for replacing engines. Washington Borough said they have been on a typical 20-year replacement cycle, but there is no plan for reducing. They have two more pieces close to 20 years. Jim Eshleman said they have two “relicts” in different condition. In the past they took advantage of a unique purchase of a used engine that was essentially a twin of one they had.

Jim Eshleman asked if Manor Township had set aside money in past years knowing of WLFC request and need for a replacement rescue/pumper. Jay Breneman said there was not a line item for such a purchase. Although he said he hopes such would be the case in the future as a result of the Task Force effort.

The meeting was briefly suspended while those attending went outside to view the old truck while Chief Muschlitz went over the shortcomings.

When the meeting was resumed Chief Muschlitz asked for the support of the Task Force for the decision to purchase a new rescue/pumper.

Motion by Russell Guthrie: The Task Force acknowledges the need and supports the replacement of West Lancaster Fire Company's current pumper with a new rescue/pumper, and that all four companies cooperate in developing the specifications for the rescue/pumper.

Second by Ron Goe.

Discussion. Russell Guthrie said whether the new engine is purchased by WLFC or a new consolidated company the planning needs to begin now.

Jim Eshleman question whether the role of the task force should be recommending whether or not to consolidate the companies, not recommending purchase of specific equipment? Russell said he felt we are not recommending a purchase, just the need for it to be replaced and to begin the process.

Ron Goe asked if perhaps we should be looking at replacing two as there will be other replacements needed shortly.

Don McCann asked if we were a consolidated company now, would this piece of equipment be the first to be replaced. Ron Goe offered that he thought it would be considering the maintenance issues. He further stated, that if it were eliminated and perhaps Washington Boro were to transfer an engine, there would be significant problems outfitting it and integrating with WLFC equipment and the absence of the engine at Washington Boro would also present problems.

Scott Haverstick said he felt our role is to acknowledge the need, but not define how the funding would be accomplished.

Jay Breneman said he felt a letter to the Township expressing the result of this meeting should be sent directly to the Township and possible a copy to the Borough.

It was also noted that the four companies do want to work together on the new rescue/pumper and that they do not feel that they are being coerced to do so.

Motion Passed. Robert Thompson voted "no."

IV. Draft of Task Force Findings and Recommendations (Russ Guthrie)

Russell Guthrie provided a draft of a Task Force Recommendation for consolidation. He also distributed the draft via email to participants.

Russell reviewed the contents, and asked that members read and study it in preparation for our next meeting.

At the next meeting Robert D. Brady, II, of the Department of Community & Economic Development will discuss legislation for the coming year and how it will affect our effort. He will also comment on the structure of fire service, 501(c) 3 vs. interagency agreements. Russell Guthrie will be out of the country so the meeting will be chaired by Scott Haverstick.

V. “Wrap Up” Comments Roundtable for the Good of the Order

Glenn Hess advised the group that the Highville Ladies Auxiliary will probably continue to function, but not in its current form.

Jim Eshleman said Dr. Jenaway’s report and the draft recommendations presented today do not address the land in Manor Township that Millersville Fire Company owns. He said this needs to be address.

Don McCann said we should consider including in a Vision/Mission Statement that the Fire Company, although they welcome funding from all sources, they are not in the business of fund raising.

VI. Adjournment

Chairman Guthrie adjourned the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

VII. Next Meeting

Time – 7:00 p.m.
Date – October 1, 2009
Place – Manor Township Maintenance Building
Route 999 and Supervisor Road

Minutes submitted by: Don McCann, Recording Secretary