

Minutes of January 14, 2019 WESC Meeting, held at Lititz Fire Station.

In Attendance: Scott Barr, Sonny Ebersole, Jeff Garner, Andy Greiner, Aaron Hoover, Don Hoover, Jim Hoover, Rodney May, Lynn Mearig, Duane Ober, Ron Oettel, Keith Rothermel, Mike Smith, Dennis Strauss, Chris Strayer, Brian Wiker, Greg Young, and Dan Zimmerman.

Meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairman Brian Wiker at 6:33pm.

Reorganization of 2019 WESC Board: Ron Oettel made a motion to appoint Brian Wiker as Chairman, Andy Greiner as Vice-Chairman, Herb Flosdorf as Treasurer and Duane Ober as Secretary; seconded by Greg Young and passed.

Appointed Representatives and alternates were announced: Brickerville Fire Company (Dennis Strauss / Keith Rothermel); Brunnerville Fire Company (Jeff Garner / Lynn Mearig); Lititz Fire Company (Ron Oettel / Mike Smith); Rothsville Fire Company (Greg Young / Aaron Hoover); Warwick Ambulance (Frank Kenavan / Brian Donmoyer); Rothsville Ambulance (Jim Hoover / Scott Barr); Northwest EMS (Scott Kingsboro / Edna Kline); Elizabeth Township resident (Eli Ebersole); Lititz Borough resident (Chris Strayer); and Warwick Township resident (Don Hoover).

Treasurer's Report: Andy Greiner reviewed the 2019 budget, as of January 11, 2019 and the final 2018 budget. Greg Young made a motion to accept the budget as presented, seconded by Ron Oettel and passed.

Previous Minutes: The October 2018 Minutes were approved as presented.

Unfinished Business

Earned Income Tax / Property Tax Relief – Duane reviewed the final tax credit documents, using Warwick Township's samples for reference. The Fire Chiefs and Ambulance Presidents must provide the municipality with a list of volunteers who meet the criteria prior to the end of February. The volunteers have between March 1st and April 30th to submit a tax credit application to the municipality. The municipality will administer the tax refund by June 14th. Warwick Township has approved the tax credit for volunteers to apply for this year, to get the credit from 2018 earned income taxes paid. It is a \$100 credit. Elizabeth Township will also adopt the same tax credit, while Lititz Borough will credit the earned income tax credit, as well as crediting 20% of the municipal real estate tax paid to Lititz Borough.

Fire Services Feasibility Study – The balance of the meeting was spent discussing the results of the fire service study, with Rob Brady in attendance to provide clarification or more information, when needed.

Some highlights of the open discussion;

Greg Young stated that he would like to hear from other regional entities and how they are operated, whether they are led by administrative staff, operational staff or both. Mr. Brady offered names of three regional organizations that we might consider meeting with: Blue Rock Fire District (Millersville Borough and Manor Township), Centre Region Council of Governments (State College), or Garden Spot Fire Rescue (New Holland and Blue Ball). Mr. Brady recommended that we do not use York Area United Fire and Rescue for reference.

Some of the topics of discussion included: the recommended make-up of the Board of Directors (not a favorable response to the suggested number of members); the reason for multiple committees to be formed (to get more members from each company engaged); the uniform work-release policy (it was recommended to have a suggested policy for businesses seeking guidance, not to change anything agreements that are in place now between employers and volunteers), whether the direction should include both fire and EMS or just fire (focus on fire, but bringing EMS along as partners); and how the existing funds of the fire companies get factored into all of this.

Don Hoover compared the plight of the volunteer service to that of the farm equipment dealerships nationwide. He said many dealerships are going out of business, are forming partnerships, or being bought by larger businesses. They know there is a problem, it's just a question of which generation will finally do something about it.

Andy Greiner spoke that he is really pleased with the conversations on the topic. He also has concern of the staffing as we move forward. He would like to hear from municipal leaders from the other areas mentioned earlier, in addition to the emergency services leaders.

Chris Strayer suggested that we publicly thank the businesses that allow their employees to leave to go to fire calls. Chris also had questions if the fire companies are being marketed well enough to the communities for everyone to know the members are all volunteers? He offered suggestions for the fire companies to consider to give back to their members, such as food at meetings or special company events, while also cautioning the fire companies to be mindful of their spending and to be accountable to their communities.

Duane was asked to schedule meetings with the agencies listed above at future WESC meetings so we can hear more about their operations.

With no further business, Lynn Mearig made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:25pm, seconded by Andy Greiner and passed. The next WESC meeting will be Thursday, March 7th at Brunnerville Fire Station, beginning at 6:30pm.

Minutes submitted by Duane Ober, February 11, 2019.