

Clinton Township

Workshop / Special Meeting

March 31, 2021

At 6:30 PM the Workshop / Special Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Jeff Skaudis in the squad room of the Clinton Fire Hall. Supervisors Jeff Skaudis, Cal Warwas, Bob Butler, Clerk Brian Mayry, Fire Chief Jim Theodore and township resident Leah Warwas were in attendance. This meeting agenda is to discuss fire department recruitment, retention, clarify officer training needs, review department job descriptions, personal policy and other administrative needs. These items were being worked on through January 2020 then were disrupted by the health pandemic and the departure from using a third-party contractor that was to guide this process. It was discussed that this meeting is one of several that will be needed to work through the fire department and township needs.

To begin the Clerk explained that the townships workers compensation wage-earning employees, volunteer firefighters and emergency medical responder of the township. If a volunteer is injured in the line of duty, workers compensation will pay for the medical expenses and lost wages from the volunteer's primary job at the normal workers compensation rate.

The next topic discussed was fire department relief association (firefighter pension). It was noted that that is only firefighters (not emergency medical responders) receive a pension after becoming vested after five years. A fully vested firefighter is currently eligible to receive \$1,200 per year of service after serving at least 20 years. For service less than 20 years the amount per year is determined by a vesting schedule. This amount is on the lower end of similar fire department in our area. To receive a years' service credit towards a pension a firefighter needs to in good standing. The current policy defining good standing is the firefight is to complete all training. If a training session is missed it can be made up by attending the months second training session, make it up with an officer or online. In addition, the firefighter must attend 25% of the fire department calls. If the firefighter can not meet the call requirement, they can perform fire hall duties in lieu of the calls to obtain service credit. Any make up training or fire hall service credit must be approved by the fire chief.

The relief association is funded by state fire aid, the township has not and currently does not contribute to the relief association. Supervisor Butler recommended that the current retirement rate per year, currently \$1,200, be reviewed and consider it to be raised.

Chief Theodore surveyed the firefighters to determine what is important to the membership. He stated that the members are open to being compensated in some manner for their service in the fire department. An annual stipend or hourly pay of some sort is thought to be reasonable as well as an upward pension adjustment. Chief Theodore stated that this fire department is on of few in our region that the membership is uncompensated by the town or city.

Supervisor Warwas brought up the topic of community engagement where the fire department participates in community functions increasing the visibility of the department which would in turn hopefully promote recruitment. In addition, he discussed the possibility of holding activities that not only increased department visibility but to potentially turn them to fund raising activities.

Now with the group understanding the issues Chief Theodore would like to resolve, Supervisor Warwas motioned to adjourn the meeting and to tentatively schedule the next meeting of its kind for April 28 to be at 6:30 PM again at the Clinton Fire Hall. Supervisor Butler second this motion and it was unanimously agreed to adjourn at 8:58.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Mayry

Clerk, Clinton Township