

**YORK AREA UNITED FIRE AND RESCUE COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING**

**DECEMBER 20, 2022
APPROVED**

The York Area United Fire and Rescue Commission held a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, December 20, 2022 at 7:15 p.m. at YAUFR Headquarters, 50 Commons Drive, York PA

MEMBERS IN

ATTENDANCE: Dan Rooney, Chairman, Spring Garden Township
Austin Hunt, Vice Chairman
Deb McCune, Manchester Township (via Zoom)
George Dvoryak, Springettsbury Township
Charles Wurster, Secretary, Springettsbury Township
Thomas Gwilt, Spring Garden Township

NOT PRESENT: John Inch, Manchester Township

ALSO IN

ATTENDANCE: Daniel Hoff, YAUFR Chief
Don Bishop, Springettsbury Township (via Zoom)
Sarah Doyle, Solicitor
Paul Grubs
Julie Schrum
Kris Shearer
Sue Sipe, Stenographer

CALL TO ORDER

A. Opening Ceremony

1. Pledge of Allegiance

ROONEY Chairman Rooney called the meeting to order. He led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ANNOUNCEMENT OF EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

ROONEY Chairman Rooney announced there would not be an Executive Session following the meeting.

3. COMMUNICATION FROM CITIZENS

There was none.

4. MANAGEMENT/ATTORNEY REPORTS

A. Solicitor Sarah Doyle

DOYLE Solicitor Doyle had no report.

B. Daniel Hoff, Fire Chief

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HOFF Chief Hoff indicated since his report they received a turn down on both federal grants for the rescue equipment and fire prevention and the safety grant to renew the smoke alarm programs.

Chief Hoff commented on the Facebook page which displayed photos and a story from their Santa Run this past weekend. He noted it was very well received with positive feedback.

Chief Hoff reported this morning there was a house fire in Springettsbury Township. Although the family made it out safely, several family dogs perished. The fire was caused by a space heater.

Chief Hoff will be interviewed by Fox 43 on fire safety.

Chief Hoff stated an eligibility list has been established for the replacement of Battalion Chief Brett Graham. A candidate has been selected, Captain Todd Heilman from the Manchester station, who will begin in mid-January.

5. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

A. Payable Listing as of November 30, 2022

MR. DVORYAK MOVED TO APPROVE THE PAYABLE LISTING AS OF NOVEMBER 30, 2022. MR. HUNT WAS SECOND. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

6. BIDS, PROPOSALS & CONTRACTS

There were none.

7. COMMUNICATION FROM COMMISSIONERS

ROONEY Chairman Rooney commented on the convoy coming through Elmwood which was a great PR piece. He noted it was a combined effort of volunteer firefighters and fire police.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Volunteer Committee

GRUBBS Mr. Grubbs stated the next committee meeting will be in January.

9. RESOLUTIONS AND AGREEMENTS

There were none.

10. ACTION ON MINUTES

A. Approval of Minutes – November 15, 2022 - Fire Commission Meeting

MR. HUNT MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 15, 2022 FOR THE FIRE COMMISSION MEETING AS SUBMITTED. MR. WURSTER WAS SECOND. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.

11. OLD BUSINESS

A. Discussion – YAUFR 2023 Budget

HOFF Chief Hoff reported the Springettsbury Township did not approve the 2023 budget. At issue is the proposed budgeted amount for the increase in the retirement plan for the command staff and administrative staff.

WURSTER Mr. Wurster stated forming a Personnel Committee would provide an opportunity for budgeted options to be determined with a recommended plan to the Commission.

HOFF In considering the increase for the retirement plan, discussion was held regarding the cash balance plan as a defined benefit contribution. Chief Hoff stated he received from PMRS an email providing a definition, which he will forward the information to the Commission.

It was noted at the last meeting, an agreement by the Commission indicated the SAFER Grant funds would be removed from the budget while the pension plan retirement changes would remain. It was determined it was not clear as to why the position of the Springettsbury Board of Supervisors was to not approve the budget as modified.

WURSTER Mr. Wurster commented it was the position of the Springettsbury Board of Supervisors they were supportive of extending it to the Command Staff but were apprehensive including the administrative staff into the cash balance plan.

HUNT Mr. Hunt commented two of the townships have assessed the situation and approved the budget. He was under the impression at the end of last month's meeting, that Springettsbury understood and thought they had a compromise. He was concerned this is the second year that at the 11th hour there is still negotiation on approving the budget. He questioned Springettsbury Township's commitment to YAUFR in regards to working out the budget process.

WURSTER Mr. Wurster noted line item 511- Salaries on the 2023 budget was in question, indicating the budget proposes \$26,082 increase on the line item from 2022-2023. He asked if that is reflective of the extra increase in the package for the command staff and administrative staff pension plan.

HOFF Chief Hoff indicated affirmatively noting taking those out and the SAFER Grant out changes the total budget by \$36,102.47 for a \$9,011,000 budget. He stated he agreed

with Mr. Wurster to take both out of the budget in order to move forward with budget approval.

HUNT Mr. Hunt voiced concerns about Spring Garden and Manchester having the opportunity to voice their concerns about potential changes to the budget on issues they may feel strongly about. He pointed out the Commissioners asked for the three townships opinion on YAUFR's path for 2023. Spring Garden and Manchester were in agreement. In conversation with Springettsbury Township they had some concerns. At last month's meeting the Commission directed the Chief to submit the agreed upon plan unanimously and a week later the Springettsbury Board disagreed.

WURSTER Mr. Wurster commented he personally was not opposed to the ideas that are put into the budget in terms of extending the cash balance plan to the various employees. He pointed out it becomes a question of what rate is equitable throughout the payroll and region and making sure it is a hybrid plan. His suggestion was to move to approve the budget subject to an adjustment to not fund any cash plans for the command staff or administrative staff and also form the Personnel Committee of the Commission to undertake studying those issues and expand its role throughout 2023.

MR. WURSTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE BUDGET 2023 SUBJECT TO ADJUSTING LINE ITEM 511 TO NOT FUND THE CASH BALANCE PLANS FOR THE COMMAND STAFF OR ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF AT THIS TIME, AS WELL AS NOT TO INCLUDE THE FUNDS FOR THE SAFER GRANT, PENDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PERSONNEL COMMITTEE.

McCUNE Ms. McCune commented one of the differences between Spring Garden and Manchester vs. Springettsbury Township is that all townships have the experience of working with not only a regional fire department but also a regional police department and so they are used to having them guiding those decisions. She noted although they do have a say in those decisions, it is not up to the Township to halt actions but depend on their expertise and not micromanaging.

MR. DVORYAK WAS SECOND ON THE MOTION. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.

HOFF Chief Hoff recommended discussion on the formulation of the Personnel Committee to occur at the January meeting.

In regards to Spring Garden Township and Manchester Township, it was noted since both Townships have already approved the budget which is in an amount in excess of the revision, so resources have already been guaranteed.

B. Discussion – YAUFR Staffing Study

HOFF Chief Hoff indicated due to the size of the Staffing Study, more time was allotted to allow thorough review.

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- ROONEY** Chairman Rooney stated a process is needed for all the Townships to determine when additional staffing should be hired.
- DVORYAK** Mr. Dvoryak asked a question about how many have read the entire staffing study and what did they determine was the No. 1 argument made for increasing staffing.
- ROONEY** Chairman Rooney stated the Commission needs to come up with the metrics to determine what triggers a potential staffing increase, i.e., percent of response time, turnout for structure fire, etc. to meet a level of performance.
- DVORYAK** Mr. Dvoryak stated he was looking to find what the staffing study included in terms of how many staff do we need and what is the No. 1 argument for increasing staff.
- HUNT** Mr. Hunt stated the study pointed out based on covered population YAUFR is understaffed, being below average on firefighter coverage. He noted this is a non-governmental rule of thumb, compared to similarly sized geographic population areas.
- GWILT** Mr. Gwilt commented on the fire service in the news relating to a fire incident in Chicago where two firefighters perished, as well as another incident in Lancaster. He pointed out those fire companies were better staffed than YAUFR. He related the staffing study team realized in five days YAUFR is understaffed, which he pointed out reinforces the need for more paid firefighters. He emphatically stressed the need for more firefighters and indicated his support in hiring additional firefighters.
- ROONEY** Chairman Rooney stated in determining the number additional data and metrics is needed.
- HUNT** Mr. Hunt stated the three points that were evident to him is the statistics for firefighters per population which reveal that YAUFR is below average. He noted in substantiating the ISO rating which scores 50 different categories, YAUFR apparatus scores very well, hydrant placement scores very well and training scores very well, however staffing is extremely low. The third point shows the population growth in the covered area has grown 15%+ with no change in our overall head count since the inception.
- HOFF** Chief Hoff stated when YAUFR was formulated there were 32 suppression personnel between Spring Garden and Springettsbury. In the same geographic area, YAUFR is down to 30 suppression personnel.
- DVORYAK** Mr. Dvoryak pointed out firefighter safety is the priority. He asked to confirm that YAUFR can go out to fires safely and have the best trained fire service in York County.
- HOFF** Chief Hoff confirmed that is true and stated one thing missing is not only population increase but looking at the residential and commercial development in all three townships, which increases the demand for service but they have not increased the number of people that provide that service. Secondly, he pointed out they can do things safely but understand if he does not have enough firefighters to make an interior

attack to effect a rescue safely means a defensive approach to what should be an offensive operation because of the lack of personnel.

DVORYAK Mr. Dvoryak challenged Chief Hoff to consider if there are ways to restructure operations now to achieve that, given the staff we have and possibly incorporating a volunteer force to make that better, as well as EMS services.

HOFF Chief Hoff related that the EMS system nationwide is in crisis since there are not enough units to handle it. He noted in York County citizens can wait 20-30 minutes for an ambulance. YAUFR is not transporting or billing, but they are providing as they always have, first response to their citizens when an ambulance is not readily available.

Discussion was held regarding overlapping calls. Chief Hoff explained an overlapping call is when the firefighters are attending to an EMS call and a call comes in for a fire in the area they are assigned. In that situation, they will stabilize the patient and when the ambulance arrives, they will leave the property to attend to the fire call.

WURSTER Mr. Wurster commented he took from the study that according to population trends YAUFR is understaffed. He noted in the study that the rate of population growth is significantly decelerating in looking at the demographic data. He also observed that they do need to hire additional firefighters, but consideration needs to be given on how to pay for it and balance the growth of payroll with trying to preserve the level of taxes, etc. He alluded to other solutions, i.e., the SAFER Grant. He did not think there was anything new in the study that helps fund the additional firefighters, and was looking for something new that can help address how to hire, i.e., are there different models, how to engage volunteers and secure additional funding beyond the SAFER Grant.

HUNT Mr. Hunt commented on how neighboring York Township handles their fire service, noting their fire budget per resident is about one third of YAUFR. He agreed that Mr. Cramer was not able to say what the right answer is but the right answer is not to do nothing.

Discussion was held concerning what can happen when there are not enough firefighters on the scene which can potentially cause a life-threatening incident or prevent the suppression of a fire.

C. Discussion – YAUFR Governance

ROONEY Chairman Rooney stated in reviewing the Governance presentation and discussion at the last meeting, in the central theme of the ideas presented he did not see a mention of how professional firefighters' expertise would interact with finance and HR. He felt an integral team which can include finance and HR also needs a fire professional. He was of the opinion changing the governance structure would not help to create a process whereby the three governing bodies reach a consensus on a common set of policies, staffing goals and metrics which translate into a financial to be incorporated into a budget. He determined each municipality has to buy in to whatever process is agreed upon as a commission. A governance is obtained by professionals in combination to counsel with Chief, looking at the budget and working towards a compromise. It is fair

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that the other two municipalities agree to additional management or financial or other membership on the Commission, to arrive at a fair and balanced process of the charter.

12. NEW BUSINESS

- A.** Approval – 2023 Non-Union Holiday Schedule
- B.** Approval – Advertisement of 2023 Fire Commission Meeting Schedule
- C.** Approval – Advertisement of 2023 Fire Pension Meeting Schedule

MR. HUNT MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2023 NON-UNION HOLIDAY SCHEDULE, AS WELL AS APPROVAL FOR THE ADVERTISEMENT OF THE 2023 FIRE COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE AND THE 2023 FIRE PENSION MEETING SCHEDULE. MS. McCUNE WAS SECOND. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

D. Acknowledgement of Austin Hunt Term of Service

ROONEY Chairman Rooney recognized Mr. Hunt's dedicated service to the YAUFR Commission during the past 25+ years.

HOFF Chief Hoff stated he has invited Mr. Hunt to the February meeting to be officially recognized for his years of service.

MR. WURSTER MOVED TO RECOGNIZE AUSTIN HUNT FOR ALL HIS YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE YORK AREA FIRE AND RESCUE AS ONE OF THE FOUNDERS OF THE YAUFR ORGANIZATION SERVING SPRING GARDEN TOWNSHIP AND SERVING AS AN OFFICER OF THE BOARD AS WELL AS HIS CONTINUED SERVICE AS A CITIZEN-AT-LARGE WITH HIS THOROUGH ENGAGEMENT, UNDERSTANDING OF THE ISSUES, PROBING QUESTIONS, AND ALL OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS TO YAUFR. MR. GWILT WAS SECOND. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

13. ADJOURNMENT

ROONEY Chairman Rooney adjourned the meeting at 8:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file at YAUFR Headquarters

Charles Wurster
Secretary/ses