

**VILLAGE OF NORTH PRAIRIE
SPECIAL VILLAGE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JOINT MEETING WITH TOWN AND VILLAGE OF EAGLE
MAY 28, 2015**

The Joint Board Meeting was called to order by President G. Nickerson at 7:00 p.m. in the Town/Village of Eagle Board Room located at 820 E. Main St. Eagle, WI. Roll call was taken with the following members present:

President G. Nickerson

Trustees: D. Stellpflug, D. Samuels and C. Pasierb.

Clerk: R. Bagley

Fire Chief B. Taylor

Absent: Trustees B. Peters, J. Moravec and A. Pellegrino

Others present: Town of Eagle Chairman B. Kwiatkowski and quorum of Board members, Village of Eagle President R. Spurrell and quorum of Board members and approximately 15 residents and members of the Fire Departments.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Discussion/Action relating to possible consolidation of the Eagle Fire Dept. and North Prairie Fire Dept.

Village of Eagle President R. Spurrell described the financial considerations which the committee of three (R. Spurrell, J. Davis and D. Samuels) have been discussing and presented a report on the preliminary considerations regarding finances for all three municipalities. The recommendation to fund a consolidated department would be to equally divide expenses based on percentage of total equalized values. The actual 2014 equalized values were utilized to demonstrate the municipal values and the percentage of expenses for each municipality for the joint Fire Dept. budget.

A total ESTIMATED joint operations budget of \$323,000 was used to compare the municipal share of expenses, with the Town of Eagle at 54.81%, Village of Eagle at 18.07% and Village of North Prairie at 27.12%. The ESTIMATED operations budget was compared to the current (2015) operations budget for each municipality with savings indicated for each. The Village of North Prairie is operating as a stand-alone Fire Dept. beginning in 2015 without service contracts, so current budgeted numbers are being used.

R. Spurrell continued with Fire Station funding recommendations, and discussed complications regarding current vehicle and apparatus ages from both departments, maintenance, duplication of vehicles and values of vehicle. Recommendations were also provided regarding how to deal with existing vehicles, maintenance of existing vehicles as well as the purchase of new vehicles. Another issue discussed was how to equalize the Eagle Fire Department's reserves as North Prairie currently does not have a designated reserve for the fire department.

In summary, based upon the early financial research and numerous meetings, the Committee of three believes that the consolidation of the two departments is not only feasible in concept, but would appear to be financially worthwhile over the long-term. Many other issues need to be researched before a final determination can be made. A recommendation has been made to obtain a definitive vote of both department memberships to confirm that both departments support a potential consolidation. In conjunction with the memberships, all three Boards would also have to approve the possible consolidation in order to move forward.

Town of Eagle Chair B. Kwiatkowski presented information and recommendations from Lake Country who underestimated the joint venture. He is skeptical and needs to know the accurate costs to

operate a joint department. (The Village of NP Clerk did not receive a copy.) Eagle Fire Dept. Captain Scott Kugel also presented an ESTIMATED consolidation proposal using a 5-year average based on call volume from the Eagle Fire Dept. and the North Prairie Fire Dept. (The Village of NP Clerk received a copy.)

Village of NP Trustee D. Samuels mentioned that after comparing three different ESTIMATED consolidation proposals, the differences are within \$19,000. She feels the proposals are reasonably estimated with all revenue from fire and ambulance services going towards the Fire Dept. operations.

Town Chair B. Kwiatkowski suggested the revenues may decrease based on state dues and that payroll will increase due to members being paid-on-call as opposed to paid-per-call. A possible independent analysis may be an option as he does not see the savings potential.

Village President R. Spurrell suggested that some services can be combined and some positions can be eliminated to save on operating costs for a consolidated dept. Duplicate equipment can be sold which will save on equipment maintenance costs. The savings come into play on large vehicle and equipment purchases over the long-term. A new replacement program schedule for vehicles and equipment would have to be created. A new consolidated fire dept. will need to be beneficial to all constituents.

Eagle Fire Dept. Deputy Chief S. Wilton mentioned that start-up costs are not included in any of the early projections.

The consensus of the Board members is that the early projections show savings for each community over the long term and most Board members feel that it is worth proceeding forward with the potential merger and get the committees working again, even with numerous unknowns. Both Fire Dept. memberships need to be on-board with the consolidation.

North Prairie FD has 29 members and Eagle FD has 31 members. Eagle has one full-time fire chief. Staffing within each station will need to be worked out.

Open to Public Comments:

D. Salter, North Prairie, asked how a full-time chief with a full schedule can take on another municipality with additional responsibility. Other personnel will be reassigned to the additional duties.

D. Rockteacher, V. Eagle, is curious how the V of Eagle tax bill will be affected by a consolidation. Also, FD memberships change constantly due to job changes and have no ties to communities. Mr. Rockteacher would like a long-term (5 to 10 year) contract commitment if merger happens.

There would be no expected change to the anticipated tax bills based on the early ESTIMATES.

Motion by G. Nickerson, seconded by D. Samuels, to have R. Spurrell, J. Davis and D. Samuels present the proposed consolidation plan to the Fire Dept. members from both departments, and if they are in agreement, to move forward with the consolidation/merger of the Eagle Fire Dept. and the North Prairie Fire Dept. Motion carried.

Motion by D. Samuels, seconded by G. Nickerson, to adjourn at 8:50 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhoda Bagley
Village Clerk/Treasurer