

**SANDSTONE CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING – SANDSTONE FIRE HALL
February 1, 2021, 7:00 p.m.**

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Council Members present: Pete Spartz, Val Palmer, Cassie Gaede

Fire Department Members present: Andy Spartz, Chaz Mann, Andrew Wilkening

Staff present: Administrator Kathy George

Township Representatives present: Jeff Schute (Danforth); Ailene Croup, Jon Dorau and Gary Hinsch (Sandstone); Cory Colsrud (Finlayson); Dan O’Flanagan (Dell Grove); Bill Erickson (Kroschel)

SPECIAL ITEMS OF BUSINESS:

2020 Review

Fire Chief Spartz provided information regarding 2020 fire calls, stating that the number of calls was lower than in previous years. The Fire Department applied for a FEMA grant; however, they were not awarded funding. There was a glitch in the application process wherein metro-area departments received more weight in the scoring process. He stated that another application will be submitted this year. Otherwise, Chief Spartz reported that the Department has been working on fixing up the Fire Hall; cleaning, painting the walls and replacing the ceiling tiles.

Manhours

The City presented options regarding the use of manhours in the Fire Formula calculation for Township officials to consider. A spreadsheet was provided showing four options; using 5-years of manhours (as is currently the practice), using 3-years of manhours, not using manhours at all, or not using manhours but adding back in the 30% reduction by the City. Discussion veered in and out of this topic, with some raising concerns with specific calls (i.e., rescue calls). A suggestion was made that depreciation and the building fund be eliminated from the budget so that only operation expenses are used. The City responded that the Fire Department budget is comprehensive and includes all of the expenses related to operating and maintaining the Fire Department. Any unspent funds at the end of the year stay in the Fire Fund. These funds can be used to off-set the costs of future purchases. After much discussion, consensus of the Township representatives was to go with the Fire Formula that eliminates the manhours and adds back in the 30% reduction by the City. It was also mentioned that the Townships would like to have a current contract. Administrator George will send them out with the final 2022 Budget/Formula mailing.

2022 Fire Formula

The 2022 Fire Formula documents were reviewed. The budget includes decreases in Professional Services (\$3,000) because the Firefighters are no longer paying for cleaning services and in Telephone (\$750) as the “house phone” has been eliminated; increases in Equipment Repairs & Maintenance (\$5,000), in depreciation (\$5,750) per the schedule, and in the Fire Hall Building Project bond payment (\$15,062). Overall, the budget reflects an increase of \$16,397 in operating costs.

Township officials stated concern with their contribution amounts increasing over the past few years. Part of this is due to the City phasing out the 30% reduction. By eliminating manhours in

the formula, Township officials should see their contribution amounts stabilizing which will help with their budgets from year to year.

ADJOURN

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. Township representatives were invited to stick around for dinner hosted by the Fire Department.

Peter Spartz, Mayor

Kathy George, Administrator