

Waterloo Town Fire Presentation Planning Meeting
November 27, 2023

A meeting of the Waterloo Town Council was held November 27, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at the Waterloo Fire Department present were:

Greg Iddings	Jess Jessup
Josh Caudill	Katherine Hobbs
Ken Surber	Pam Howard / Town Manager
Andrew Kruse / Town Attorney	Renee Duszynski / Clerk Treasurer

The following business was discussed, and action was taken: Unless specified all votes were unanimous.

Jessup did roll call and the pledge was recited.

Jessup opened the meeting; This meeting is to bring the council up to date on where we are and inform the Town of potential changes in the Fire department.

Kirby Hobbs presents the Waterloo Fire Department's history. In 2019, they celebrated 150 years and were DeKalb County's first fire department. Hobbs talked about the struggle of staffing. They currently have 17 out of 30 positions filled. This has caused an issue with answering calls. They currently have been using the auto-aid feature during times when they know there is no one able to take calls. This has been an issue for the last two years. This puts stress on other fire departments who have to respond to the calls. Recently, two of the volunteers have been able to work stand-by hours during the day, which has helped with this issue.

Katherine Hobbs presented information on Fire Territories, how they work and the current timeline. In 2021 there was a meeting with Grant Township to discuss the financial budget of the fire department. In 2022, Waterloo had a meeting with Baker Tilley to learn more about fire territories. Waterloo shared the information they had learned with Grant Township at which point Grant Township's attorney sent a letter ordering Waterloo to stop any further action.

In 2023 Grant Township and Auburn talked and proceeded with a comprehensive study to form a fire territory. Jay Kern informed Jess Jessup of their study and Jessup asked that Waterloo be involved. Jessup stated Waterloo would pay for their portion of the study. Baker Tilley is currently working on studies for three different territories: Waterloo, Auburn, and Grant Township; Waterloo and Grant Township; and Grant Township and Auburn. Currently, were waiting for the results of this study.

Kirby Hobbs presented different solutions that will help with staffing including, a Fire Territory, a fee per call and gaining additional volunteers. He stated that the current average response time is 1 minute if there is someone onsite to answer a call, and 4-5 minutes if there is no one onsite. Since they have started having someone onsite the overall average response time, which includes when there is someone onsite and when there is not, has lowered to 1 min 20 seconds.

Jessup stated that volunteers are hard to come by; the federal training requirements have gotten very strict and are the same for volunteers as full-time firefighters. Often times the men and women who serve are making a lifelong commitment.

Questions/Comments

Erik Weber regrets the comments about Grant Township. Their number 1 concern is the people of Grant Township, and they are simply exploring the options and doing a thorough study. He feels that as the elected official, Mary Dangler, Grant Township Trustee, should have been invited to the initial meeting with the Town of Waterloo and Baker Tilley in 2021.

Bill Akey asked if Grant Township has an agreement with Auburn currently. No Grant Township doesn't have an agreement with Auburn. They will continue to contract with Waterloo for 2024.

The current budget for the Fire Department for the Town of Waterloo for 2024 is \$240,000.00 and Grant Township is \$90,000.00.

Shawn Montgomery inquired what the recruitment strategy was currently to gain volunteers.

Katy Hobbs discussed the former fire auxiliary; they were a group that helped with functions and recruitment. Anyone can assist with that; they do not need firefighting credentials.

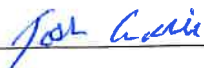
Mark Henderson expressed concern that the Town and the Township were not working well together. He stated that both parties need to come together and work together for a solution to the problem. Mr. Weber explained that the analysis is doing due diligence by both parties in order to ensure the best possible scenario for the taxpayers.

Smithfield Township trustee expressed regret that they were not included in any of these scenarios. Jessup assured the Smithfield Township trustee they were included but that they hadn't been mentioned by name.

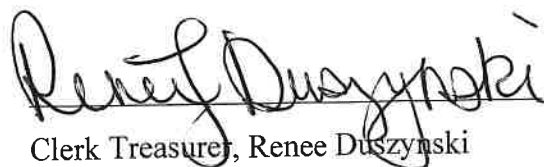
Other: NONE.

I, Renee Duszynski, the duly qualified Clerk Treasurer, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and exact excerpt of minutes of the meeting of the Waterloo Town Fire Presentation Planning Meeting, Waterloo, Indiana, at which a quorum was in attendance and acting throughout, and held November 27th 2023, and, as such appears in the official minutes of said Waterloo Town Council, in my custody.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:21 p.m.



President, Josh Caudill



Clerk Treasurer, Renee Duszynski