



Fire Advisory Board Meeting Meeting Minutes August 13, 2025

Roll Call of Attendees

The meeting was called by Fire Chief Mike Heiland. Please note that members in attendance:

Long Lake

Scott Weske
Mike Heiland
Todd Newcomer
Jahn Dyvik

Orono

Adam Edwards
Shea Chwialkowski
Bob Tunheim

Medina

Todd Albers
Jason Nelson
Erin Reinhart

Minnetonka Beach

Jennifer Halverson

1. Welcome & Introductions

2. Topics

a. Receive Minutes of July 9, 2025, Fire Advisory Board Meeting

A question was asked about the July call numbers.

Chief Heiland noted that as of today, there were 355 calls in comparison to 288 calls in 2024, but noted that this did not count the other 2 CAD zones.

b. Review Operating Expenses as of July 31, 2025

Chief Heiland stated the operating expenses were on pace and noted that the few areas that were a bit high were basically for small truck maintenance and equipment. He stated that they were below budget with the large truck maintenance, which was rare. He stated that something they would discuss later on the agenda was building maintenance and repairs because there were 5 rooftop units that had been limping along. He noted that only 2 of the units still have both heat and air conditioning and noted that the bid estimate for replacement of just one unit was \$23,000. He stated that part of that expense was \$3,000 just to have a crane come out, and asked the FAB to have a conversation about a replacement plan for these units.

Dyvik asked about an expense on page 2 and noted that the duty crew pay and call pay were below budget, but Chief Heiland just reported that the calls have been higher.

Chief Heiland explained that a lot of this was due to their numbers being down and noted that at their highest, they had about 45 members and were now down to about 36. He stated that there are 4 guys ready to come off probation and just received 3 other applications that were in the process of having their backgrounds checked.

Weske noted that the numbers would change in August and outlined some of the reasons, including the reimbursement schedule.

Dyvik asked if the new utility truck had come in.

Chief Heiland explained that the truck was in Ham Lake, Minnesota, getting a backup camera as well as a few other items. He noted that once it gets to the City, there will still be a few weeks before they can put it into service.

Newcomer asked about the acronym WAFTA.

Chief Heiland stated that in Watertown, there is a former missile base that, years ago, was donated to 14 fire departments in the area, so all the fire departments pay \$2,000/year. He explained that the parcel ended up being an environmental disaster, and the money goes towards cleaning up the land. He noted that they have talked about eventually selling the land to help recoup some of the costs.

Newcomer asked if all of the other 13 fire departments were also paying \$2,000/year.

Chief Heiland confirmed that all 14 fire departments paid \$2,000/year.

Dyvik clarified that when he was looking at the duty crew and paid on-call pay numbers, he had misinterpreted what he saw and noted that the numbers were not as off track as he had originally thought.

c. Receive Call Numbers to Date

Chief Heiland stated that there were 65 calls for Long Lake, 20 for Medina, 24 for Minnetonka Beach, 203 for Orono, and 17 mutual aid calls.

d. Discuss Draft 2026 Fire Department Budget

Edwards gave a high-level overview of the proposed 2026 Fire Department budget and answered Board questions. He reminded the Board that they were still going through things during the negotiations and transition period between the Long Lake Fire Department and the Orono Fire Department, which meant everything was a draft until they had a JPA and a board in place for the new organization.

e. Discuss SCBAs and Other Fire Department Items

Chief Heiland explained that the air packs and air bottles they have are both the same, but the regulators and face pieces are different. He noted that to make all of their equipment compatible, they have to replace the regulators and the face pieces. He stated that the total cost for ordering 40 regulators and 40 face pieces would be around \$96,000, but they were willing to buy back the old ones for resale, which would be around \$30,000. He noted that there is some other equipment that the Long Lake and Orono Fire Departments were doubling up on, so when they officially merge, they would be able to sell some of the unnecessary equipment. He explained that this was a time-sensitive item because there was a current JPA for purchasing that would be expiring, so if they don't purchase them by September 15, 2025, the cost will rise by around \$20,000, and reminded the Board that this was something that had to be done. He stated that this was something that would be a change to the 2025 budget, which they had not included in the budget.

The Board discussed various ways to cover this unexpected budget item for the SCBA equipment through the existing contract cities before the deadline for price increases, how past capital purchases had been handled, and the CIP planning.

Following the discussion, there was consensus to purchase the necessary equipment before the current pricing structure changes as of September 15, 2025.

f. Transition update

g. Joint Duty Crew Update

Chief Heiland stated that they have been working together for over a month, and it felt like it was just continuing to get better. He noted that they were both focused on the same common goal, shifts are getting filled, and things were going well.

Dyvik asked about response time information for duty crews versus non-duty crews.

Chief Heiland stated that he did not have the information with him, but could put it together for a future meeting and noted that it would show a huge difference.

Orono Fire Chief Chwialkowski stated that he had put together some information for Orono and shared some of their in-service response times, and noted that they have been able to shave some time off since they have been able to move to this station.

Dyvik suggested that both Chief Heiland and Orono Chief Chwialkowski share this information with the Board.

h. JPA Update

Weske stated that Long Lake has sent the most recent version of the JPA to Orono and is waiting for their response.

i. Establish Next Meeting Date

Chief Heiland stated that he didn't want to forget about the rooftop units and stated that the 2 units that were working were doing the work of 5 units, so they were being overworked.

The Board discussed what elements of the units were still working; the estimated lifespan of the units that were still fully active; the suggestion to replace all 5 units at the same time to save money for bringing in the crane to move equipment; whether the new units would be in line with new OSHA rules; the possibility of splitting replacement of all 5 units into 2 steps, rather than replacing them individually and having to pay crane costs each time; possible bill for usage reducing when they get the new units in place; and the importance of replacing at least some of the units before winter.

A few Board members indicated that they had other commitments and needed to leave the meeting.

Weske suggested that they just continue the discussion on this topic because he thinks it will be part of the lease terms.

Chief Heiland suggested that the Board may want to consider having an audit done on the building's mechanical systems and equipment, so they know the status of everything.

There was a consensus of the Board to schedule the next meeting for September 10, 2025.

3. Other Topics

Wrap-Up / Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by general consent at 4:54 p.m.