

A regular meeting of the Alma District Fire Board was held at the Alma Municipal Building. The meeting was called to order at 7:01 a.m. by Alma City Manager Aeric Ripley. A quorum of the Board was present.

Roll Call

Board members present: Kevin Beeson, Ron Hunt, Tish Mallory, Greg Mapes, Doug Merchant, Michelle Pitts, and Aeric Ripley.
Board members absent: none.
Others present: Curtis Dancer, Harold House, Mark Williams, and Jack Snyder.

Motion by Beeson, seconded by Mapes, to approve minutes of the January 23, 2023, meeting, as presented.

Motion carried.

Voting yes: Beeson, Hunt, Mallory, Mapes, Merchant, Pitts, and Ripley.

Voting no: none.

Monthly Reports

City Manager Aeric Ripley reviewed reports. Finance Director Curtis Dancer noted both Fire and Rescue are expected to come in under budget, and interest revenue is up from the previous year. He also explained what would appear to be a surplus in the Fire budget is reserved for the purchase of Air-Paks expected to be delivered soon.

Motion by Mallory, seconded by Hunt, to receive the following reports: Fire Budget Actual Ending May 2023, Rescue Budget Actual Ending May 2023, Fire Board Check Disbursement Report May 2023, and Rescue Check Disbursement Report May 2023. Motion carried.

Voting yes: Beeson, Hunt, Mallory, Mapes, Merchant, Pitts, and Ripley.

Voting no: none.

New Business – Year End Budget Amendment for Air-Paks

Motion by Beeson, seconded by Merchant, to approve the following FY 2023 budget amendments:

- a. **To increase the Alma Fire District Authority Revenue Budget by \$76,641 and the Alma Fire District Authority Expenditure budget by \$76,641 for Air-Paks purchased through ARPA funding awarded by the Gratiot County Board of Commissioners.**

Voting yes: Beeson, Hunt, Mallory, Mapes, Merchant, Pitts, and Ripley.

Voting no: none.

Old Business-Recommendation on Bids

Ripley explained that Fire Department and Public Safety staff members had worked with vendors to develop a more generic bid with specs for a truck that would meet their needs. A bid request had been sent out and bid time had been extended. Four bids were received. Ripley noted one of the bidders, Spencer, had indicated they could get an L9 engine and reduce their bid by \$55,000, but he added, even if they did, their bid was still \$45,000 over the lowest bid. Staff reviewed all bids, determined they were comparable, and recommended acceptance of the lowest bid.

Discussion followed regarding timelines, options for savings on payment plans, and financing and interest options. Dancer agreed to look into additional financing options.

Beeson asked if the proposed truck would meet the department's needs. Fire Chief Harold House indicated the specs had been based on Engine 3 and updated to meet current and future needs. Firefighter Jack Snyder noted two trips had been made to Indianapolis to check out trucks. He said there were many options available,

but he believed this truck would fit their needs. Additional discussion followed regarding the features of the new truck versus Engine 4.

Motion by Mapes, seconded by Pitts, to accept staff's recommendation and proceed with purchase of a fire truck and related equipment from Front Line Services in the amount of \$943,933.00, also to authorize the Alma Finance Director to determine best options for financing.

Merchant said he thought the truck was overboard, and believed the department could get by with less. Mapes asked why Merchant didn't voice his concerns earlier, and Merchant said he didn't believe it would make any difference. Additional discussion followed between Mapes and Merchant regarding chrome options.

Following a call for vote, the motion to proceed with purchase carried.

Voting yes: Beeson, Hunt, Mallory, Mapes, Pitts, and Ripley.

Voting no: Merchant.

Public Comment

Fire Chief House thanked the Board and said the new truck would be a work truck at the end of the day.

Hunt asked if there was a winch on the new truck and House said no. Beeson asked if the new contract would lock in the price. Ripley answered yes. Discussion followed regarding inflation. Mallory thanked staff for their work on the project.

Fire Board Meeting Schedule

Ripley asked about the next meeting. Discussion followed. The group agreed to follow the schedule set in the interlocal agreement and determined that meeting dates would be the fourth Wednesday in the specified month at 7:00 a.m. At a request from Beeson, Ripley agreed to send out meeting invitations for the next four meetings.

Public Safety Director Mark Williams spoke briefly regarding the order for Air-Paks and thanked members for letters in support of a grant application. Additional discussion followed regarding the grants.

Mapes said if having too much cash on hand was a detriment to receiving grants, it may be helpful for townships to keep funds at their level, until it was needed by the Fire Board, and asked if there was any interest. Beeson agreed and suggested there may be options to open up other opportunities. Mapes suggested seeking advice from someone with grant expertise. Additional discussion followed regarding millage funds and dedicated funds.

Beeson said the Board may need to consider developing a financial spreadsheet for future planning. Mapes agreed a twenty-five year capital plan would make sense.

Discussion followed regarding length of service on current vehicles, ISO ratings, and NFPA standards. Mapes asked for information on NFPA requirements. Beeson agreed having standards would help with development of a long term plan. Additional discussion followed.

Dancer agreed to seek a quote for separate financial statements.

Discussion followed regarding options for additional education and standards.

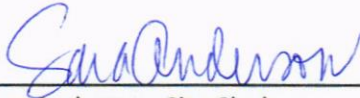
Pitts left the meeting at 8:06 a.m.

Discussion continued regarding standards and reaching out to legislators.

Motion by Beeson, seconded by Mallory, to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 a.m. Motion carried.

Voting yes: Beeson, Hunt, Mallory, Mapes, Merchant, Pitts, and Ripley.

Voting no: none.



Sara Anderson, City Clerk

Date of Approval: July 26, 2023