Excelsior Fire District Board
EXFD Governing Board Meeting
Wednesday, September 24, 2025

24100 Smithtown Road
Shorewood, Minnesota
6:00 P.M.

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Maddy called the meeting to order at 6:06 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Present: Excelsior Fire District (EXFD) Boardmembers: Maddy, Gallagher, Caron, and Jewett (arrived at 6:30 P.M.)

Also present: Excelsior Fire District (EXFD) Chief Mackey; Excelsior Fire District Assistant Chief Basinger; Deephaven Administrator Madsen; Shorewood City Administrator Nevinski; Tonka Bay City Administrator Nolan; Excelsior City Manager Luger.

Absent: Boardmember Eckland

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Gallagher moved, Caron seconded, approving the EXFD Governing Board meeting agenda as presented. Motion passed 3/0.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. July – August 2025, EXFD Board Minutes

The Board noted a typographical error.

Gallagher moved, Caron seconded, approving the EXFD Board Minutes of July - August, 2025, as amended. Motion passed 3/0.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Monthly Fire District Administrative Reports – July - August, 2025

B. Report of the Operating Committee Minutes – July - August, 2025

C. Treasurer's Report (Year to Date)

Caron moved, Gallagher seconded, approving the Consent Agenda, as presented. Motion passed 3/0.

5. MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR

There were no matters from the floor presented this evening.

6. REPORT AGENDA

A. Fire Chief / Fire District Report/ Major All Calls/Staffing Update

Chief Mackey stated that as of August, they were up to 890 calls, which is an increase of about 100 calls from 2024. He reviewed the in-service, en route, on-scene times and overall firefighters per call data. He noted that there were no major All Calls since the last Board meeting. He stated that one retirement letter had been submitted, but noted that he was thinking about waiting to do another hiring process until they get to 45, and explained that they have 4 trained firefighters on their wait list.

Chair Maddy referenced response times and noted that most of it was duty crews showing, and asked if they track response times separately for things like All Calls or water trucks.

Chief Mackey stated that they just onboarded a new data software company a few weeks ago, so they were starting to build that sort of thing in.

B. Communications

Chair Maddy noted that all the communications materials had been included in the back of the packet.

7. Unfinished Business

A. Chiller Replacement at Station 1- Update

Chief Mackey noted that they had started work last week in pulling ceiling tiles and looking at the VAVs to see what they will be up against. He noted that the chiller will arrive in December, but explained that they were planning to do a lot of the pre-work before it arrives, with the goal of having it done by the end of the year.

B. Fire Chief Review - Update

Shorewood City Administrator Nevinski noted that he had spoken with the consultant, who told him she needed more time to gather information. He explained that the thought was to hold a Closed Session meeting in October. He shared the dates that the consultant would be available.

The Board discussed having Rochelle send out communications about possible meeting dates for a Closed Session meeting for the Fire Chief review, since they were missing two Boardmembers at this meeting.

C. Update on Dual Services

Chair Maddy noted that he did not believe this had been talked about in an open meeting, so he wasn't sure if the Board knew what was going on. He asked Chief Mackey to give an overview of what has been going on.

Chief Mackey explained that dual services was brought up a few meetings ago about exempt employees and hourly employees being in both career status and paid on-call status. He stated that they reached out to their attorney for an opinion, which was distributed to the Board. He noted that this was discussed by the Operating Committee and stated that a dual role is possible, but there were a lot of parameters that would need to be shored up and policies created. He stated that once they work through some of those things and run it by the attorney again, it will be brought back to the Board for consideration.

Chair Maddy clarified that this was more of a pension conversation than anything else.

D. Update on Sale of Rescue 11

Chief Mackey stated that they had two Minnesota departments, along with their teams, come and look at the truck, so there was definitely interest.

Assistant Chief Basinger stated that the last bid was $82,000 and would close in 16 hours.

Chair Maddy asked if there was a contingency on it.

Chief Mackey stated that there was a contingency of $100,000 and noted that, based on the conversations with the two departments, it sounded like they were authorized for more than that. He noted that they will see what happened and explained that, typically, the last 4 hours will really drive the price and stated that he was pleasantly surprised with the current bid price.

Boardmember Caron asked Chief Mackey to send out an email updating the Board once the bid process was completed to let them know how it went.

Boardmember Jewett arrived at the meeting.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Looking Ahead to 2027 Budget

Chief Mackey stated that they usually start soliciting the group in October about things they would like to include in the budget for the next year. He noted that by January, they will have gotten the perspective from the internal people, and then they can work towards basing this one on what they have room for in the budget. He explained that he was not expecting there to be any big purchases over the next few years. He asked Assistant Chief Basinger to update the Board about a Senate hearing related to fire truck monopolies.

Assistant Chief Basinger stated that the senate hearing was on September 10, 2025, and there was discussion about whether they were going to launch an official investigation. He shared some of the information that was shared about wait times and significant pricing increases.

Chair Maddy stated that during the 2026 budget planning they had discussed that as they bring on more Battalion Chiefs, if they wanted to keep the goal at 50 firefighters. He stated that he did not want to try to make a decision tonight, but would like the Board to begin discussing whether they should lower their goal for paid on-call firefighters.

Chief Mackey stated that one of the things they can kind of organically do is take next year off and run at 45. He stated that he thinks the goal of 50 was made by the Board a long time ago and noted that it has taken a lot of stress off of the firefighters, but has created a few more problems for officers. He suggested that they run it this way for a year and bounce between 40-45 firefighters. He discussed the engagement they have had in training and some of the problems they have had with things like parking, because there has been such large participation. He shared examples of struggles he has heard about some of the career departments are having because they no longer have paid on-call firefighters.

Boardmember Jewett asked when the EXFD would get down to 45 firefighters if the EXFD didn't hire anybody.

Chief Mackey stated that he would guess it would happen sometime in 2026 because there were currently 4 or 5 people who could decide to retire, but noted that they usually tend to hold their cards close to their chest on the timing. He stated that one of the risks they run in this approach is losing some of the people who are on the waiting list.

Boardmember Gallagher noted that at a previous meeting, they had discussed putting together a master list of capital items for when they expect equipment would need to be replaced, so it was on everyone's radar. She stated that she believed it would be very helpful as Boardmembers change because there would be a list in place.

Chair Maddy asked about the status of the 20-year Capital Plan report.

Chief Mackey stated that they met with a few vendors and were trying to determine which one they wanted to work with.

Assistant Chief Basinger stated that it had been discussed at the Operating Committee and noted that one of the discussion items was whether this process should be run by the fire side or the police side.

Shorewood City Administrator Nevinski explained that the Operating Committee felt that it was probably best that it be handled by the fire side.

Boardmember Jewett stated that he was looking at the list that goes through 2040 and read aloud some of the times included, such as roof repairs for both stations. He stated that he guessed that the vendors would have different numbers than what they have on this list, and most likely, an earlier time frame.

Assistant Chief Basinger stated that he is assuming that they will move ahead with Kraus Andersen because they had the best price and the most comprehensive options. He explained that they will go through all the buildings, assess the major systems, and put together an anticipated timeline for replacement needs and estimated costs.

Boardmember Gallagher asked if this would also include equipment like the SCBAs.

Assistant Chief Basinger stated that it would not include equipment because that would be in their regular CIP and clarified that it had been revamped and updated for the 2027 budget process and had everything mapped out for when they would expire.

Tonka Bay City Administrator Nolan asked if the Board should take action on which vendor the department should move forward with because it was budgeted, but there wasn't an official recommendation.

Chair Maddy asked the Board if this was something they wanted to vote on or if they trusted Chief Mackey to make the final decision since it was already included in the budget.

Following Board discussion, they directed Chief Mackey to place this item on the Consent Agenda for the next Board meeting.

9. NEXT MEETING

A. EXFD Board Meeting November 19, 2025, 6:00 P.M., Station 1

Chair Maddy asked if there was anything the Board would like to add to the agenda and noted that if they could bring it up, there would be time to research things before the meeting.

Boardmember Caron stated that she was new to the Board and there had been a lot of conversation around the 5-year plan and the budget, and asked if she could get copies of those.

Chair Maddy asked Chief Mackey to get copies of things like the budget and the firefighter handbook. He noted that they should almost have a standard packet of information to be given to new Boardmembers to make sure they have all the needed information.

Chief Mackey listed off some of the things that Rochelle has and usually sends out.

Chair Maddy asked that they send all of this information out to the Board so they all had the same things.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Gallagher moved, Caron seconded, Adjourning the EXFD Governing Board Meeting of July 23, 2025, at 6:51 P.M. Motion passed 4/0.