

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gallagher called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Present: Excelsior Fire District (EXFD) Boardmembers: Gallagher, Maddy, Jewett, Vogel (alternate), and Broas

Also present: Excelsior Fire District Assistant Chief Basinger; Deephaven Administrator Madsen; Shorewood City Administrator Nevinski; Tonka Bay City Administrator Peters; Excelsior City Manager Luger

Absent: None Boardmember Jennings

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Maddy moved, Jewett seconded, approving the EXFD Governing Board meeting agenda, as presented. Motion passed 5/0.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. January 2026, EXFD Board Minutes**
- B. March 2026, EXFD Board Minutes**

Braos moved, Maddy seconded, approving the EXFD Board Work Session Minutes of January and March 2026, as presented. Motion passed 4/0/1 (Vogel).

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Monthly Fire District Administrative Reports – January - March 2026**
- B. Report of the Operating Committee Minutes – January - March 2026**
- C. Third Account Signer**

Braos moved, Jewett seconded, approving the Consent Agenda, items A through C, as presented. Motion passed 5/0.

5. MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR

Boardmember Maddy noted that a lot of dialogue was not picked up on the microphone in the January meetings. He asked if there was something they should be doing differently. Mr. Nevinski stated that it was corrected by LMCC, and a microphone was reprogrammed.

6. REPORT AGENDA

- A. 2025 Abdo Fire District Audit video presentation**

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Chair Gallagher asked if everyone had an opportunity to view the audit presentation and if there were any questions.

Boardmember Maddy stated he could queue up the presentation if anyone wanted to view it again.

Maddy moved, Jewett seconded to accept the 2025 audit. Motion passed 4/0/1 (Vogel).

Mr. Madsen asked if the audit would be available online somewhere. Assistant Chief Basinger stated it should be included in the Board's agenda packet.

Boardmember Maddy added that it was not in the packet but attached to the email that was sent out.

B. Chiller replacement at Station 1 (update)

Assistant Chief Basinger explained that the chiller startup is scheduled for a week from April 22, 2026. Electrical came and removed the old chiller, but the original wiring was damaged when it was installed.

Boardmember Jewett asked where the chiller sits in the building. Assistant Chief Basinger responded that it is up by the PD Garage.

Assistant Chief Basinger stated that the electrician recommended replacing the wiring, as the current wiring could damage the new chiller. The estimated cost to replace the wiring is \$14,500. Staff have been working with the contractor on that change order to find some room to absorb those costs. The hope is that the staff can use liquidated damages to offset the costs.

Chair Gallagher asked if this was something done by the electrician. Assistant Chief Basinger stated this was an existing condition and was only discovered when the old chiller was pulled out. This is a legitimate change order, and the staff is trying to get any extra costs covered.

Assistant Chief Basinger stated that electrical work is being done this week, and startup will be next week, along with testing and balancing of the new chiller.

C. Fire Chief / Fire District Report / Major All Calls / Staffing update

Assistant Chief Basinger stated the Fire Department has received their new air packs and has been using them at a recent training burn. Fire Department staff put the Department's boat in the water, but it has an ongoing issue with the motor steering module. It is functional, but a backup boat will be used until the other boat is fixed.

Assistant Chief Basinger stated that last Thursday, April 16, there was a house fire in Shorewood, and the EXFD was sent an update. No other major all calls have occurred since the EXFD last met.

Boardmember Jewett asked what caused the house fire. Assistant Chief Basinger stated it was still under investigation, but once he got all the information, he would present it to the EXFD.

Chair Gallagher added that Mutual Aid helped with the house fire.

Boardmember Jewett asked how long it took the Fire Department to get to the fire in Shorewood. Assistant Chief Basinger stated that Minnetonka got there first, but arrived a few minutes after Minnetonka at just under six minutes.

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Boardmember Maddy stated that Hennepin County has fire investigators who are offered for free, and this District has turned them away. He stated he wanted the EXFD to be aware of this, since this service is already provided through county taxes, and it should be utilized.

Chair Gallagher stated it would be wise for the District to use the Hennepin County fire investigators, as they have more resources available to them than the District does.

Boardmember Maddy asked if the EXFD Board should give Assistant Chief Basinger direction to utilize Hennepin County fire investigators in the event there is a structure fire. Assistant Chief Basinger stated there is nothing to lose by utilizing the Hennepin County fire investigators, and it would be a benefit to the District, and could act in a supportive role.

Boardmember Jewett asked if it is too late to bring in the Hennepin County fire investigators for the recent Shorewood fire. Assistant Chief Basinger confirmed it was too late. Boardmember Jewett asked if the investigation is happening internally. Assistant Chief Basinger stated that if the Fire Marshall is around, she will take on those investigations, but if she is unavailable, the District will call the Hennepin County fire investigators.

Boardmember Jewett asked if the Hennepin County fire investigators were on the scene of the Shorewood fire. Assistant Chief Basinger confirmed that they were there. Boardmember Jewett asked if the Hennepin County fire investigators did anything that might have helped with the investigation.

Chair Gallagher stated that she thought the fire investigators were turned away. Boardmember Maddy confirmed the fire investigators were turned away, but not by the Incident Commander, and that needs to be looked into.

Assistant Chief Basinger stated that the Incident Commander would be in charge of the whole scene, and decisions should be run through them for safety and accountability.

Assistant Chief Basinger added that he would put together a short presentation about the house fire in Shorewood that will be shared with the different city councils.

Assistant Chief Basinger added that staffing for the Department is at 43 members and is anticipating two retirements at the end of the year. The Third Battalion will be joining the District in 2027, which will be helpful as they lose two retirees. There are currently four to eight employees who may leave at any time for various reasons, which would put staffing closer to the mid-30's. Past experience has shown that it is when firefighters start to get burned out with shift requirements. This has led the District to push to hire four to six firefighters this fall to maintain staffing closer to the low 40's.

Boardmember Jewett asked how many of the employees who are considering leaving are at Station Two. Assistant Chief Basinger stated that probably two or three of the employees, and this is speculative, as he watches performance metrics.

Boardmember Maddy asked if it is policy to let firefighters leave for a while and welcome them back if they come back to the District. Assistant Chief Basinger stated that as long as firefighters can meet the onboarding requirements, they are welcome to come back.

Assistant Chief Basinger noted that there were questions about the part-time inspector role that is vacant. The Second Battalion Chief position is in charge of emergency management and has a primary responsibility to help manage special events. The idea was that the Second Battalion Chief would take

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on the role as part-time inspector as well, because it is now considered a separate role that a firefighter cannot fulfill because of dual service. This could require the District to hire someone from the outside if the Second Battalion Chief cannot pick up special event inspections.

Chair Gallagher asked how many hours per week this position would require. Assistant Chief Basinger stated that it is budgeted at 15 hours per week. Chair Gallagher asked if these inspections would be events like Concerts in the Commons. Assistant Chief Basinger confirmed it would be for those types of events.

Boardmember Jewett asked if it is typical for food trucks to be inspected on a Saturday, or if it can be done prior to an event. He added that residents mention that they are unaware that the Fire Department has to inspect food trucks, and it has held up events before. Assistant Chief Basinger stated that he is not aware of what is required, but typically, as the food truck gets set up for an event, an inspector would come look at it, but some of that is at the discretion of the municipality.

Boardmember Jewett stated there was a misconception that food trucks could be inspected once at the beginning of the year, but that is not really the case. Assistant Chief Basinger added that he was not sure how the inspections work. Boardmember Jewett noted that maybe everyone needs some education on this topic, especially as the District tries to fill this part-time inspector role.

Boardmember Maddy stated that in Excelsior, inspections would happen on Fridays before the events started. Those inspections checked that tents were weighed down and fuel was stored correctly.

Chair Gallagher stated she was wondering about inspections for events like Wednesday night Concerts in the Commons, and food trucks show up.

Ms. Luger noted that it was her understanding that inspections happened the day of the event.

Scott Gerlicher, Rotary Events Chair, added that in Excelsior, the food trucks are inspected twice and have to show up at a facility sometime between now and the first concert for inspection, and every Wednesday prior to the concert, they are inspected again on site.

Assistant Chief Basinger noted that the discussion is really about who will do those on-site inspections.

Assistant Chief Basinger added that there was a live burn in Tonka Bay that went really well, and other departments have requested to burn with the District due to the number of houses that are offered up to the District to burn and train on.

Chair Gallagher stated she was at the live burn and learned a lot.

Assistant Chief Basinger added that the EXFD is welcome to join the Department during a live burn and watch a live fire demonstration.

Boardmember Jewett asked how the city approval went for the live burn. Mr. Broas noted that the event brought up some concerns with the Tonka Bay Council.

Mr. Peters explained that the value of performing these burns and the education that the Fire Department gets from them far outweighs any of the concerns that were voiced, but it was discussed at the Council meeting, and they approved it.

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Chair Gallagher noted that firefighters do inform the neighbors of the live burn and that the fire was under control.

Boardmember Jewett noted that they tried to do a live burn in Deephaven, but neighbors were too concerned, so they opted not to do it.

Mr. Broas added that there were similar concerns in Tonka Bay, but the Council took the position of helping the Fire Department.

Assistant Chief Basinger added that the Department really appreciates getting to do live burns, and Staff made calls back to anyone who called with concerns about smoke management and asbestos.

D. Communications

Assistant Chief Basinger added that it has been requested to upload the entire EXFD Board packet to the website, in addition to the agenda. He noted that the staff is trying to navigate uploading communications because it includes personal information and would not be appropriate to put on the website. While some personal information can be redacted, he asked for the EXFD to give him and the staff direction on how to handle that.

Chair Gallagher noted that it was a good call not to put personal information and account numbers on the website.

Mr. Madsen added that the Operating Committee could come up with some guidelines if that would be helpful.

Assistant Chief Basinger stated that it would be helpful, and he wants to keep up with best practices with government entities.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Engine 21 replacement financing (update)

Assistant Chief Basinger noted that at the last meeting on April 8, the resolution was passed for option three, and after following up with PNC, there was some mixed communication about when the rate would be locked in. This was communicated to the Operating Committee last week as well. The rate will lock in when they close on the truck, which contradicts what they were previously told. He added that the District would have to make an interest-only payment in 2027, with the first payment in 2028 to lock in an interest rate. Discussions with PNC will continue to finalize all the details.

Boardmember Jewett asked why a decision had to be made about this in March. Assistant Chief Basinger stated he was not entirely sure and got conflicting information from PNC.

Assistant Chief Basinger noted that Mr. Peters would be helping spearhead this and provide better insight.

B. Current Engine 21 repairs

Assistant Chief Basinger explained that Engine 21 is back in McQueen's body shop getting mechanical and pump repairs fixed, and should be back in service next week and will be tested by the Department.

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Boardmember Jewett stated Engine 21 is not being totaled. Assistant Chief Basinger confirmed it is not being totaled.

Chair Gallagher asked if the EXFD had received the bill for that repair yet. Assistant Chief Basinger responded that the repair is going through insurance.

C. Mailbox replacement

Assistant Chief Basinger noted that there is a memo in the packet regarding this. The League denied the Homeowner Association (HOA) claim on the mailboxes, but the EXFD discussed reimbursing the HOA for those costs. The League of Minnesota Cities insurance adjuster did not have any issues with reimbursing the HOA, and Attorney Dorothy wrote an opinion, reimbursing the HOA, and Attorney Dorothy wrote an opinion that was included in the packet, settlement agreement, and release that was included in the packet. The damage was listed at \$4,400. He asked if the EXFD would approve a reimbursement not to exceed \$5,000.

Chair Gallagher stated Attorney Dorothy's memo mentioned that it was unclear if the payment was going to individuals or the HOA. Assistant Chief Basinger noted that the payment would go to the HOA.

Boardmember Jewett noted that the League of Minnesota Cities is covering the truck repairs, but not the mailboxes. Boardmember Maddy stated that insurance is covering the truck because it was responding to an emergency.

Chair Gallagher asked to make a motion to reimburse the HOA in an amount not to exceed \$5,000.

Boardmember Maddy stated that when he read the memo, the lawyer stated that the EXFD has to base this on a moral issue, so there is no precedent set that will cover all damages in perpetuity. He asked the Administrators how much their cities spend on snowplow damage to mailboxes.

Mr. Nevinski indicated that he did not know that number. Boardmember Maddy noted that common business is to replace the damage that they do, and the Fire District should follow that same practice.

Mr. Madsen added that his city does not hit mailboxes, but if they did, they would replace them.

Chair Gallagher noted that it is a good neighbor policy. Boardmember Maddy stated he was strongly advocating that the Fire District pay for them.

Ms. Luger noted for the record that Excelsior's mail gets hand-delivered, so mailboxes are not hit there either, but will do sod repair.

Boardmember Maddy moved to reimburse the Homeowners Association not to exceed \$5,000.

Assistant Chief Basinger stated there was one point of clarification in the memo from Attorney Dorothy about the HOA providing a W-9 form. If the HOA is reluctant to provide it, the EXFD should still pursue that.

Boardmember Maddy stated he would modify his motion.

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Maddy moved, Jewett seconded to reimburse the Homeowner's Association not to exceed \$5,000, and the Homeowner's Association will provide a W-9 if requested by the EXFD, before reimbursement. Motion passed 5/0.

D. 2027 Budget

Assistant Chief Basinger noted this will be discussed more in the May Work Session. The big question, though, for the budget will be regarding the building and the deferred maintenance.

Chair Gallagher asked if a spreadsheet had been created for capital improvements for the building. Assistant Chief Basinger responded that he has not seen anything like that.

Boardmember Maddy noted that the building assessment showed that the building is starting to age and will require some large-scale expenses. Typically, there is a 20-year projection estimate of work, which was done by Carl Sanderson.

Chair Gallagher asked if an assessment had ever been done previously. Boardmember Maddy responded that there was not another one that he had ever seen. He noted that he was told by previous members that the District was not allowed to sit on community funds and would have to ask when needed.

Chair Gallagher added that it would have been nice to know when things were going to fall apart, whether the District was setting money aside or not. Boardmember Maddy responded that the SCBAs were the icing on that cake, because the District never got the grant money they were hoping for.

Chair Gallagher asked if there is a realistic capital improvement plan. Boardmember Maddy stated that the beauty of having a 10 to 15-year lookout is that if something does last longer than expected, then the District reduces contributions to the Reserve fund accordingly.

Boardmember Jewett added that the biggest issue in the report was the leaking roof, which was the most immediate need.

Assistant Chief Basinger confirmed that for the flat roofs, that is correct, and is already included in the 2027 budget proposal.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Fourth of July/ Fireworks – Rotary

Zarir Erani, President of the Rotary, and Scott Gerlicher, Events Chair, introduced themselves. Mr. Erani noted that historically, the Excelsior Chamber has operated the Fourth of July fireworks, but the Mayor of Excelsior asked the Rotary to take over. He added that the Rotary is willing to raise the money and do the fireworks show on the water, but does not have the resources to support the fireworks show on land. The issue of Public Safety was recently addressed by the Rotary with the South Lake Minnetonka Police Department, and historically, cities have set aside funds donated to the Chamber, which are used to pay for overtime to accommodate Public Safety on the Fourth of July.

Mr. Erani continued that, given that there is no planned event on land, the question is whether fire support is needed while people watch the fireworks on the water. He noted that Deephaven had shown interest in doing a fireworks show on the Fourth of July as well, and asked if there was enough fire coverage for both events. He asked if the Rotary needs to coordinate an HCMC ambulance at an additional cost, if there is no event on land.

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Chair Gallagher asked what the Rotary's ideal situation is.

Mr. Erani noted that the ideal situation would be to contract with the barge and the firework vendor, pay for those services, and have a firework show in the bay. The vendor would handle all insurance. The Rotary would have nothing to do with anything that happens on land, and the cities would commission their own Public Safety Departments to cover that extra cost.

Mr. Gerlicher added that after receiving budgets from the Police and the Fire Department, and speaking to some of the cities, there is a gap of \$10,000 on the Public Safety aspect. If that is not doable by the cities, the fireworks would not happen. The Rotary has the ability to raise the funds for the fireworks show, but not for the Public Safety effort.

Ms. Vogel asked what Deephaven is doing.

Mr. Madsen responded that Deephaven is not doing a fireworks show, the Minnetonka Yacht Club is doing the fireworks show, and will comply with all special event protocols. The city of Deephaven would donate to the Minnetonka Yacht Club, but that is the extent of the city's support.

Ms. Vogel asked if that show would be visible from the Commons. Mr. Madsen responded that he did not know.

Mr. Erani responded that, according to what he heard last night, it would not be visible. Mr. Madsen asked who presented last night. Mr. Erani noted it was the Coordinating Committee, but it was the Mayor's office that said it would not be visible. Mr. Madsen asked where the Committee suggested the fireworks were going to be launched from.

Mr. Gerlicher noted it was suggested to launch fireworks from the Yacht Club.

Boardmember Jewett noted that the fireworks will be on a barge out on the water. The same pyrotechnic company will do both shows, synchronize the fireworks together, and they should be visible from where the barge is based, based on previous shows done in 2020 and 2021.

Mr. Gerlicher noted there was some serious negative feedback in Excelsior about previous shows. Boardmember Maddy added that there was negative feedback from his city, too.

Ms. Vogel noted that the shows were very disappointing.

Boardmember Maddy stated that the fireworks from Commons Park were tiny.

Chair Gallagher asked Assistant Chief Basinger how the Fire Department is staffed on July 4th. Assistant Chief Basinger noted that there are shifts for people to sign up based on the events and staffing needs. The biggest concern in the evenings is traffic and congestion, and the Fire Department's ability to respond to emergencies throughout the district, as there is a massive influx of people.

Chair Gallagher asked if there is going to be a race this year.

Mr. Erani noted that there is still going to be a race, and daytime activities are still occurring, but there will not be a fireworks show or any events in the park.

Mr. Gerlicher added that another issue that was raised was inspections of the barges and fireworks.

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Assistant Chief Basinger stated he spoke with Chief O'Keefe and the Fire Marshal, and was told they cannot say yes or no without seeing plans for both of those events. If there are two barges, the District only has one boat that is capable of responding to an emergency, so another Department would have to assist in covering the second barge.

Mr. Gerlicher asked if that would affect the cost. Assistant Chief Basinger said it could potentially cost more for coverage from that other Department.

Boardmember Maddy asked if the EXFD makes that choice, or if Water Control dictates where resources are distributed on the water. Assistant Chief Basinger stated that Water Control runs the show, but he was told that if there were multiple barges, there needed to be more fire resources.

Boardmember Jewett asked if the District has two boats, and is using a backup boat right now. Assistant Chief Basinger confirmed they are using the backup boat, and there are two boats, but the second boat is a smaller 12 to 14-foot boat.

Chair Gallagher asked if the Fire Marshal had inspected the barges in the past. Assistant Chief Basinger confirmed that the Fire Marshal has done the inspections in the past.

Mr. Madsen asked to clarify if the Rotary is asking for funding from cities to help support police presence and response, and any Fire Department expenses. Mr. Erani added that they are also asking the cities for ambulatory responsibility, which has historically been provided pro bono by HCMC, but given their budget constraints, they have come back to the Rotary with a \$5,000 cost.

Mr. Madsen stated the city of Deephaven's contribution was around \$1,500 a year. He asked if the Rotary has factored in any other expenses or costs that may happen that would impact Excelsior, the Commons, parking, and crowd control.

Mr. Erani stated that the Rotary has not looked into any of that and assumed that Public Safety would cover all of the crowd control issues.

Mr. Gerlicher noted that because the races would be held by the Chamber of Commerce at the Commons, some of those traffic control devices, such as cones, could be reused.

Chair Gallagher asked if the Rotary had an agreement with the Chamber of Commerce for those items. Mr. Erani noted that they have had conversations with the Chamber of Commerce, but nothing is firmed up yet.

Mr. Madsen asked if the Chamber of Commerce has provided a playbook on what they have typically done, so that there are the same number of portable restrooms and the same number of garbage receptacles. Mr. Erani stated that the Chamber of Commerce has not provided the Rotary with any type of playbook and simply shared their budget.

Mr. Madsen added that he will not speak for the city of Excelsior; he was just trying to run through what this event would look like and will defer to Ms. Luger.

Ms. Luger noted there have not been conversations on the Council yet about how much financial support Excelsior would be providing for this event. There have been conversations with the Rotary about applying for a special event permit, but the event is only on the water, not on land. This does not mean

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that Excelsior would be supportive of an event, but there has not been a conversation about it. An event like this would require substantial Public Works and Public Safety time. The most important aspect of this event is whether the communities are willing to support the Public Safety costs, because those are the most substantial. If the other cities are willing to share the cost, then the Excelsior Council could have a conversation about hosting an event like this.

Mr. Madsen noted that Deephaven would like to see Excelsior have fireworks as well, but is already making a contribution to the Minnetonka Yacht Club, and any other contributions would have to be taken up with the Deephaven Council.

Mr. Erani noted that Deephaven is having fireworks and asked if Deephaven is picking up those Public Safety costs. Mr. Madsen stated that Deephaven does not have fireworks, but the Minnetonka Yacht Club does. Mr. Erani asked if the Minnetonka Yacht Club is covering those Public Safety costs.

Mr. Madsen noted that the impact on the city of Deephaven is drastically different from that of Excelsior. The other concern is that Deephaven only has a firework display on the water and does not have a Commons, large beaches, or parking for any type of event, which is problematic and is why working with the Minnetonka Yacht Club is manageable. If it is the only firework show in the area, that would be a different conversation.

Ms. Lugar added that if the only fireworks happening were in Deephaven, residents would notice that there are no fireworks in Excelsior and would be very upset. The Excelsior Council would not advertise to residents that Excelsior is having a fireworks show, either.

Mr. Madsen stated that if that is the case, Deephaven would circle back with their Council and staff and would have to work out restricting parking and access to roads, and cannot accommodate the people from Excelsior and the area that would normally be at the Commons on their small roadways.

Chair Gallagher asked Ms. Lugar if she is saying that if Deephaven has fireworks, Excelsior will not. Ms. Lugar clarified that if Deephaven were the only fireworks show on the lake, and the Rotary is not having it, she would not advertise to residents that Excelsior is having fireworks. Residents would have a certain expectation of what those fireworks would look like, and it would be drastically different.

Boardmember Maddy added that maybe Deephaven wants the show to happen in Excelsior, because otherwise their city might have a few thousand people that they do not have room for.

Mr. Madsen noted that if Excelsior is not going to have fireworks, there would have to be a serious conversation about limiting and restricting traffic and parking in Deephaven.

Mr. Erani asked if Deephaven had the only firework display and if people would come to the Commons to watch them. Ms. Lugar stated she would anticipate people to come, and Excelsior would have to prep for that, and Public Safety and Public Works would have to be involved. The Excelsior Council would have to discuss what the community sentiment is, because if residents want their own fireworks show, there would have to be dollars contributed to that somehow.

Boardmember Maddy asked what the scope of the fireworks show is, and if there are two barges that need to be inspected, expected costs, and what Department one of those barges is contracted from, if there are two shows. Assistant Chief Basinger noted that a draft was put together based on what was done last year, and staffing was provided at an hourly rate, with the project coming in at \$13,860.

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Mr. Erani asked if that includes the whole day. Assistant Chief Basinger confirmed that it was for the whole day.

Boardmember Maddy noted that the Rotary would split that with the Chamber.

Assistant Chief Basinger added that the projection was broken down by hours provided in the morning and evening, and a standby crew on the boat, but there was only one barge last year. Boardmember Maddy noted the actual number would be bigger than the projection.

Boardmember Maddy stated that the actual number would be closer to \$15,000. Mr. Erani stated that the Rotary came up with a total of \$21,000.

Mr. Gerlicher stated that the Rotary has come up with half of that. Shorewood has budgeted \$7,500, Tonka Bay has budgeted \$2,500, and Greenwood and Excelsior have not budgeted for fireworks, and there is a gap there.

Boardmember Maddy added that the District does not want Deephaven paying for their fire coverage.

Ms. Luger noted that the barge inspection alone takes five hours. Mr. Gerlicher added that it would include both barge inspections.

Chair Gallagher asked if Rotary runs the Burgers and Bingo event by the bay. Mr. Erani noted the Rotary does not do that anymore. Chair Gallagher asked if that was the event that used to raise money for the fireworks. Mr. Erani stated that it provided a portion of their funding, but that event has progressively declined. He added that the Rotary has budgeted \$10,000 for this event and will raise additional funds to cover the entire amount.

Chair Gallagher asked if the Rotary had not taken this event over for the Chamber, if there would not have been any fireworks. Mr. Erani confirmed that it is correct.

Chair Gallagher asked if the Rotary is committed to doing fireworks if the District can get this figured out. Mr. Erani responded that if this can be included in the District's operating budget and the Rotary does not have to worry about the Public Safety side of things, the Rotary would raise funds for fireworks every year.

Mr. Gerlicher noted that there are only 72 days until the Fourth of July, so there is very little time to deal with all the logistical issues that have been raised. Mr. Erani added that the Rotary has never done this event before, and just wanted to step up for the community.

Chair Gallagher stated that at this juncture, the EXFD needs to take this back to their city Council's and come up with what they are willing to make as a contribution towards the fireworks. Mr. Erani added that there is currently \$10,000 budgeted from Tonka Bay and Shorewood.

Mr. Nevinski clarified that Shorewood has money budgeted for fireworks, but has not committed to anything, so this has to go back to the Council.

Chair Gallagher stated this needs to go back to all the Councils, and asked if the Rotary needs answers as soon as possible. Mr. Erani confirmed they do.

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Boardmember Maddy asked where the money used to come from, which is now being asked for from cities to cover.

Mr. Erani explained that cities historically gave money to the Chamber, which was redirected for Public Safety. Boardmember Maddy noted that Shorewood contributes one dollar per head, but adding up all the contributions of similar scope would not cover the \$20,000 to \$30,000 the Rotary needs to spend.

Mr. Erani noted that the HCMC is asking for money for the ambulance. He asked how many Public Safety aspects need to be at the park if there are no fireworks happening in the park.

Mr. Gerlicher added that the nature of Boardmember Maddy's question is the reason the Excelsior Chamber of Commerce does not want to do fireworks anymore, because it costs a lot of money.

Mr. Madsen noted that he had an email from Tiffany King, the last Chamber Director, who shared that the pyrotechnics cost \$25,000, the SLMPD cost was \$10,600, the EFD was \$6,700, with the total event cost of \$42,367. The Rotary used to contribute \$20,000, and all of the municipalities contributed \$15,000 collectively. Other fundraising included a raffle for \$500, and public donations coming in around \$1,600. The revenues were \$37,100, and this event was an expense for the Chamber every year.

Boardmember Maddy added that the total does not include paying for garbage and traffic control. Mr. Madsen confirmed that is correct, that only includes what was listed, and health, safety, and welfare needs to be focused on for large gatherings of people.

Chair Gallagher agreed that safety should be the number one aspect. When there are large gatherings of people, something will happen, and there needs to be an emergency response nearby. Action at this point will be discussing things with their respective Councils and getting back to the Rotary with an amount for a contribution.

Mr. Madsen asked if there is a specific ask the Rotary wants from the cities. Mr. Erani noted that there is a \$10,000 gap as long as Tonka Bay and Shorewood approve what had been allocated in their budget, so that would be the ask from Excelsior, Greenwood, and Deephaven.

Boardmember Maddy stated that Excelsior has expenses in kind. Ms. Luger stated that it should be determined by looking at the funding formula and splitting it between the cities. She added that if she were taking it to the Excelsior Council, the Assistant Chief Basinger, along with the Chief of Police, should get together to discuss costs to ensure that the Rotary does not come up short with funding.

Boardmember Jewett asked if the Water Patrol asked the Fire Department to be out on the water last year, and if the pyrotechnic contractor was involved at all.

Assistant Chief Basinger stated his understanding was that Water Patrol gets the permits for the fireworks barges, and requests perimeter support for those barges from other Fire Departments.

Boardmember Jewett added that it seems like the pyrotechnics contractor should be paying for the Fire and Police to be there to provide support. Boardmember Maddy noted that if the contractor does that, they will pass on the costs to the Rotary, and the District ends up in the same place.

Boardmember Jewett stated that maybe that is already in the fire contract, but he would have to look through it to see.

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Boardmember Maddy asked when Water Patrol asks for help on the lake, if that is a mutual aid agreement, and if there is no money transfer. Assistant Chief Basinger confirmed that is correct, and the District pays its own people to be out there.

Boardmember Maddy added that budgeted event activity is for everything except the fireworks display.

Boardmember Jewett asked if the Wayzata boat is out there, and if there are any other boats. Assistant Chief Basinger confirmed the Wayzata boat would be out there, but other boats will depend on staffing availability.

Mr. Erani asked if those shifts would be considered paid overtime. Assistant Chief Basinger confirmed it would be paid overtime.

Chair Gallagher asked if the EXFD should go with the \$15,000 from last year and divvy up the ambulance cost among each city.

Mr. Madsen said he would need a specific dollar amount and what it is going to cover, because Deephaven already made a contribution to the Minnetonka Yacht Club, and this would be in addition to that.

Chair Gallagher asked if the Rotary needs a total of around \$21,000. Mr. Erani noted that is what he heard for Police, Fire, and the ambulance.

Boardmember Maddy noted that it is a ballpark of about \$2.00 a person community-wide for expected costs, and that could be the ask for the Councils.

Ms. Vogel asked if that was the funding formula. Ms. Luger responded that the funding formula is way more complicated than that.

Ms. Vogel asked if the group is recommending using the funding formula as they did with the chiller. Mr. Nevinski responded that he does not, because this is going to cost more.

Boardmember Maddy stated he thought the EXFD is just trying to find out what each city is willing to contribute to the Rotary's ask.

Mr. Nevinski responded that the cities will have to decide if they want to contribute.

Mr. Madsen noted that at \$2.00 per head, Deephaven's contribution would be \$7,800, and if using the Police and Fire Departments through the JPA, the expense would be \$3,139, which is 29 percent of half of the \$21,000. This would be in addition to the contribution made to another entity, so whatever information he can get to be reviewed at the Council meeting on May 4 would be helpful.

Boardmember Jewett stated he would have to try and sell the Deephaven Council on contributing to other fireworks, when they are already doing their own, along with paying Police overtime to do that, and the Fire Department when the fireworks display is not on land, and dividing things out in terms of who is using what resources.

Mr. Erani asked if Excelsior chooses not to do fireworks, and people show up at the Commons to cover those costs. He noted that Excelsior is going to have to cover that. Ms. Luger confirmed that it would be correct.

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Mr. Erani noted the Rotary's ask then is for the cities to cover it, and the Rotary does not want to be in the middle of the Public Safety aspect and how this works. The Rotary is willing to raise funds to spend on the fireworks, and that is what they are willing to contribute for the community's sake, but if this is going to get really complicated, the Rotary does not have the bandwidth or the talent to make it happen. Ms. Luger suggested that the Operating Committee members come up with what the respective dollar amount should be, because her fear is that they come up short and are back at square one. She noted that the EXFD will go to their respective Councils with the formulas that they think are fair, run the request through their communities, and give an answer to the Rotary by May 7. She asked if that works with the Operating Committee to connect over email tomorrow.

Mr. Madsen stated that it would work, but it may not be a unanimous vote.

Boardmember Maddy stated that they would have to carve Deephaven out of some of the expenses. Ms. Luger stated that they would carve Deephaven out of the Police for sure, but Excelsior is going to have residual costs too because they are the host of the event and have to pick up the permit costs along with Public Works time.

Chair Gallagher added that Excelsior would have a lot of people coming into their city, and 70 percent of Fire calls are medical.

Ms. Luger added that she heard Mr. Madsen say he really wanted Excelsior to have the event, so Deephaven will have to negotiate.

Mr. Madsen noted that the challenge is that Deephaven has a Council that will not be expecting this conversation. The contribution made to the Minnetonka Yacht Club was also a divided conversation, so it may be difficult to approach this conversation, and there will be concern about using tax dollars to provide fireworks for the public.

Ms. Luger added that Excelsior does not even have this event budgeted, so it is in a similar situation, and even the \$2,500 of what used to be budgeted will be exceeded. Ms. Vogel added that the Excelsior Mayor would really support it, though. Ms. Luger agreed, but noted that they would have to see where the rest of the Excelsior Council and community falls. She added that there needs to be a funding formula, which may fall woefully short of what is needed.

Mr. Madsen agreed and stated that a starting point would be to use the contribution formula used for the EFD, which is a factual basis to use, and for Deephaven would be \$3,139.

Mr. Erani asked if there was anything Rotary needed to do to keep this conversation going.

Boardmember Maddy asked if the Rotary has exhausted their fundraising because people are passionate about the fireworks display. Mr. Erani noted the Rotary has not triggered all their fundraising yet, because they wanted to get an answer from the EXFD first and know what responsibility the Rotary is taking on.

Chair Gallagher asked how to get in touch with the Rotary after they met with their respective Council's and come up with their contributions. Mr. Erani stated he would leave his contact information with Ms. Luger.

Ms. Luger responded that her understanding is the Fire and Police Departments would be billing the cities for the costs, and the EXFD is indicating that they are willing to pay for that, so the bill is not going to the Rotary. The EXFD would be assuring the Rotary that the cities have those costs covered, and provided

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all cities are supportive, there would be a discussion of including this event in the 2027 budget moving forward.

Mr. Erani thanked the EXFD for their time.

B. Interim Fire Chief

Chair Gallagher noted that everyone got this information in their packet and asked if there was any discussion needed.

Boardmember Maddy stated he supported the Operating Committees' conclusion for this next step on the Interim Fire Chief.

Chair Gallagher stated that, at the May 27 meeting, the Operating Committee will recommend a third-party search firm to conduct the hiring process for the permanent Fire Chief and organizational consult for the EXFD's consideration. She asked for a motion to appoint Interim Fire Chief Basinger as the Interim Fire Chief until a permanent appointment is in place, and approve a retroactive temporary wage adjustment to be determined by the Operating Committee.

Maddy moved, Jewett seconded to appoint Interim Fire Chief Basinger as the Interim Fire Chief until a permanent appointment is in place, and approve a retroactive temporary wage adjustment to be determined by the Operating Committee. Motion passed 5/0.

C. Curt Mackey Severance

Chair Gallagher asked if there was any discussion regarding Curt Mackey's severance.

Mr. Madsen noted that the final hours would be helpful to know.

Boardmember Maddy stated the EXFD is doing their best to follow the handbook and did not see much grey area except for one aspect.

Mr. Madsen explained that the handbook states that when firefighters leave the District's employment, all vacation time earned as of the date of separation shall be paid upon termination. The policy also states that compensation for sick time will be bought back at one-half the unused sick leave, but that is if an employee leaves or resigns in good standing. The policy also states that the EXFD reserves the right not to pay severance compensation if an employee is terminated. He added that vacation time needs to be paid out hour per hour, and Mr. Mackey should receive his full compensation for the prorated salary to his last day of employment, so the question is whether he should be paid for his sick time. The Operating Committee and the EXFD have not been aligned in this process. There are three avenues they can take: either pay the sick time as provided at the one-half buyback, or do not pay sick time based on the termination clause, or find something agreeable to everyone, which is to ask for a waiver and release of any employment law claims that former Chief Mackey may have against the EXFD Board or the Fire District.

Ms. Vogel asked if they knew what the dollar amount was for the sick leave.

Boardmember Maddy asked if the EXFD should care what the amount is; it is based on policy and should not dictate the choice.

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Ms. Vogel noted that the amount of money needed to be material to come to a mutual agreement.

Chair Gallagher noted that according to the policy, they pay out vacation, but sick time is not required and is at the EXFD's discretion. Mr. Madsen confirmed it is at the discretion of the EXFD.

Ms. Vogel asked if the EXFD was going to pay it out; would they be entering into a situation that would make it clean.

Mr. Madsen asked if Interim Fire Chief Basinger had the number of hours. Interim Fire Chief Basinger stated the total number would be 643.3 hours. Mr. Madsen noted that they would be agreeing to pay for half of that.

Ms. Vogel noted that it is the number of hours, not a dollar amount. Interim Fire Chief Basinger noted the payout for half those hours would be \$21,730.67.

Chair Gallagher asked if they are voting on that and adding in the waiver.

Mr. Madsen explained that there was a termination here, and the policy reserves the right to a payout to the EXFD. While a payout is not warranted, there is another strong position that there were a lot of great years of service and a lot of accomplishments here by former Chief Mackey, and they should pay out the sick time. One way to gain majority from the EXFD to payout the sick time was to request a waiver of future employment litigation claims that the former Chief may have.

Mr. Nevinski stated that, really, Mr. Madsen is proposing a waiver, and then half the hours payout.

Mr. Madsen explained that he wrote up a motion that would be contingent upon the receipt of the waiver, as a condition precedent to issuing that check.

Boardmember Maddy added that he is struggling with the two options because former Chief Mackey was fired, but he earned the hours, so that feels like a good compromise. He added that he wants the District to move forward, and if there is a threat of litigation, he likes the idea that the Operating Committee came up with.

Ms. Vogel noted that the number of hours seems very high, and does not understand how that could be accrued.

Chair Gallagher stated that the hours keep rolling over every year. Ms. Vogel stated that means the former Chief never took any sick time.

Boardmember Maddy asked what the policy is on sick time. Interim Fire Chief noted the policy states sick time can be maxed out at 800 hours.

Ms. Luger asked how many sick days the Fire Department gets per year. Mr. Madsen stated it is possible the former Chief did not use sick time, and did not use all of his vacation time.

Mr. Broas stated the former Chief is getting paid vacation; this is exclusively accrued sick time. Mr. Madsen confirmed that is correct.

Boardmember Maddy stated it is only half the accrued sick time.

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Ms. Vogel noted that half of that would still be \$21,000, which is a lot of money.

Mr. Broas asked if there is no limit on sick time that can be accrued. Ms. Vogel noted the policy states 800 hours in total.

Mr. Madsen stated the cap is 800 hours. Ms. Vogel added that it takes a lot of time to accrue.

Chair Gallagher added that in the corporate world, you do not get that. Boardmember Maddy noted that he got laid off last year, and he got about that amount of time.

Mr. Broas stated he had never seen that amount of accrued hours before. Ms. Vogel agreed and noted she works in HR and has never seen this amount of accrual, which is really generous.

Mr. Broas stated that this would be a very clean way to separate, but \$21,000 is still a lot of money, and he is struggling with the benefit.

Chair Gallagher noted that it is not a lot of money if there is a waiver attached to it. A lawsuit will cost a lot more. She asked about the possibility of the former Chief not accepting the money with the waiver.

Ms. Vogel added that it is the former Chief's choice, and usually, there is a rescission period.

Chair Gallagher stated she feels like it is the right thing to do.

Boardmember Maddy added that he has worked with other organizations for politically appointed positions, the company will write a check for six months' salary, and get rid of an employee for no reason whatsoever.

Boardmember Jewett asked if the former Chief had received his last paycheck. Mr. Madsen noted the former Chief received payment for his hourly wage and for his vacation.

Ms. Vogel asked how much the vacation payment was for. Interim Fire Chief answered that he did not have the vacation hours, but the amount was \$25,608.

Ms. Luger noted that per the policy, the employee gets one day per month of service, so he would be eligible for 12 days per year. She added that quick math would total 96 hours per year, and the former Chief was there for seven years, which means he did not take any sick time at all, and that is why she is questioning it.

Boardmember Jewett added that this is why the former Chief would only get half.

Ms. Luger noted that means the former Chief never took any sick time the whole time he worked for the District.

Mr. Nevinski added that he very rarely takes sick time.

Mr. Madsen stated that as administrators, if they have two to three-night meetings and are in the office at 7:00 a.m., those are 13-hour days, so that could be 36 to 40 hours accrued in just three days.

Ms. Luger added that last week she did take a lot of sick time because she had a kid with a lot of dental issues, and this week she is working a lot of hours, so I guess it is possible, but the amount seemed high.

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Mr. Broas asked if the half per sick day could be reduced to 0.25 per sick day. Mr. Madsen noted that it is at the discretion of the EXFD, but the handbook says to pay it out at half, but because it is discretionary, the EXFD could do something different.

Mr. Broas stated that they could easily go down to \$10,000 plus the waiver. Mr. Madsen noted that half is in the policy, though, and is a known number. Mr. Broas added that it was just a suggestion.

Mr. Madsen added that there could be a counter request too from the former Chief, and this is just a starting point.

Mr. Broas stated that the former Chief did service this community for a long time, too. Mr. Madsen added that the former Chief had a lot of accomplishments, too.

Boardmember Maddy noted that whoever gets hired next will also be looking at how the EXFD treats their employees, too.

Jewett moved, Maddy seconded to approve the final payout of prorated salary and vacation time benefits as presented, with accrued sick time benefits to be paid as presented, subsequent to the receipt of a properly executed waiver of liability and employment released by Mr. Mackey in favor of the Excelsior Fire District. Motion passed 4/1 (Vogel).

Interim Fire Chief Basinger added that the Fire Department has a 2010 Ford Explorer that went in for an oil change and came back with \$4,000 worth of repairs needed. He noted that they would like to put it up on the auction block to see if the Department can get anything for it, but wanted to ensure the EXFD was okay with that. That vehicle was not scheduled to be replaced, so any proceeds from the sale would be rolled back into the Department's vehicle fleet.

Boardmember Maddy asked if there would be a hole in the operation without this vehicle. Interim Fire Chief Basinger stated that the vehicle was only used when people had a class in another town, and was an extra, so the Department still has other vehicles available.

Maddy moved, Jewett seconded to direct staff to sell the aforementioned vehicle. Motion passed 5/0.

9. NEXT MEETING

A. Fire Board Meeting May 27, 2026, at 18:00

Interim Fire Chief Basinger stated he would like to have part of the next meeting be open so relief can come in with their presentation if that is okay with the EXFD.

Kyle Green stated this would be to present the annual raise, and if it is moved to the next scheduled open meeting, it would be too close to August, which could cause an unfunded raise.

Interim Fire Chief Basinger stated they would notice that the meeting is open, and then move it over to the Work Session for the budget. Mr. Madsen stated he liked that idea, because other items may come up during that time, too.

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Chair Gallagher noted that the next Fire Board meeting will be on May 27, at 6:00 p.m., and will be open, and Relief will be there to discuss any items necessary.

10. ADJOURNMENT

(2:06:08) Maddy moved, Jewett seconded to adjourn the EXFD Governing Board Meeting of April 22, 2026, at 8:08 P.M. Motion passed 5/0.