Excelsior Fire District Board **24100 Smithtown Road**
EXFD Governing Board Meeting **Shorewood, Minnesota**
Wednesday, September 23, 2026 **6:00 P.M.**

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gallagher called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Present: Excelsior Fire District (EXFD) Boardmembers: Chair Gallagher, Maddy, Jewett, and Broas.

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

Absent: Boardmember Caron.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Jewett moved, Broas seconded, approving the EXFD Governing Board meeting agenda, as presented. Motion passed 4/0.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. July 2026, EXFD Board Minutes

Jewett moved, Broas seconded, approving the EXFD Board Work Session Minutes of June 2026, with the corrections. Motion passed 4/0.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Disposal, Recycling, and Auction of Out-of-Service Equipment Memos
B. Monthly Fire District Administrative Reports – July/August 2026
C. Report of the Operating Committee Minutes – July/August 2026

Jewett moved, Broas seconded, approving the Consent Agenda, items A through C, as presented. Motion passed 4/0.

5. MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR

No one wished to address the EXFD Board.

6. REPORT AGENDA

A. Fire Chief: Fire District Report/ Major All calls/Staffing update

Interim Fire Chief Basinger noted in the packet that there were July and August calls per city listed, and previously discussed those numbers with the Operating Committee. Duty Officer time is not included in

that report; these numbers are true firefighter call response times. The numbers will be compared in six and 12 months to recognize trends and possibly make improvements.

Boardmember Jewett asked for an explanation on the Duty Officer times being taken out of the report.

Interim Fire Chief Basinger confirmed it was just the Duty Crew times that were shown in the report.

Boardmember Jewett asked if the time should be under two minutes for Duty Crew response time. Interim Fire Chief Basinger confirmed that is correct.

Interim Fire Chief Basinger noted that the administrative report with the dispatch in-route and on-scene numbers does capture the Duty Officer, which shows how long it takes from a 911 call to an officer showing up on scene, which is under six minutes.

Interim Fire Chief Basinger added there was one major all-call with a garage fire in Deephaven this week; no injuries were reported.

Boardmember Jewett asked what the on-scene time was for Station Two to get to that fire. Interim Fire Chief Basinger stated that response time was six minutes from dispatch time; the Duty Officer was there in two minutes.

Chair Gallagher asked if the Hennepin County Fire Investigation Team was requested to investigate.

Interim Fire Chief Basinger stated that the investigation of the fire started quickly and was straightforward.

Interim Fire Chief Basinger added that the staffing update includes losing one firefighter who moved, bringing the total to 43, with five who have conditional offers and are going through the background process, and two for upcoming interviews.

Boardmember Jewett asked if staffing will reach 50. Interim Fire Chief Basinger stated the Department will be at 50 for a short amount of time.

B. ADMINISTRATIVE CONSULTANT

Interim Fire Chief Basinger stated an offer was made to Kevin Walsh for the Administrative Consultant position, and a contract is being drafted.

Chair Gallagher asked if the contract is still being negotiated. Interim Fire Chief Basinger confirmed that is correct.

C. ASSISTANT CHIEF/FIRE MARSHAL

Interim Fire Chief Basinger stated that three applicants have been interviewed for the Assistant Chief and Fire Marshall position and two emerged strongly. A conditional offer was sent to one of them recently. He added that an Open House is scheduled for next Thursday, October 1, and welcomed the Board to come down and visit.

Boardmember Jewett asked if any of the applicants came because of the signage for firefighters wanted outside of Station 2.

Interim Fire Chief Basinger stated he was unsure, but applicants were vetted based on how close they live to Station 2.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. BUDGET UPDATE/UPS

Interim Fire Chief Basinger noted that the budget was passed, the capital budget was passed, and two cities voted to exclude the Fire Department's portion of anticipated UPS costs. The revised budget has been sent to all Board members. The UPS was approved on the Police Department's side, including their portion of the UPS system. The Fire Department will have to be mindful of the system if they lose power, and discussions are ongoing with the Police Chief on the Police Department's needs and the EOC common space.

Boardmember Jewett asked what the next step is. Interim Fire Chief Basinger stated it would come down to having a conversation with Police Chief Ballsrud on whether or not a building-wide backup system is needed, because the Fire Department can rely on battery backups.

Boardmember Maddy asked if each city needs to speak to their Mayors and ask Police Chief Ballsrud to keep the UPS system only in the Police Department.

Interim Fire Chief Basinger stated that conversations need to happen with Fire Chief Ballsrud to understand the implications of the UPS system, and that the Fire Department does not need it.

Mr. Madsen noted that conversations are happening with the Operating Committee about the UPS system, and that Police Chief Ballsrud could submit a memo outlining the need for the UPS system.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. SELF-ASSESSMENT PRESENTATION

Interim Fire Chief Basinger noted that providing hard data to justify budgets, equipment purchases, and Board decisions will replace guesswork and help the Department uphold national standards with the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE). Shift deployment and staffing decisions should be based on response times, shift demands, and the true number of firefighters needed on-scene. He suggested using community risk assessments to also guide upcoming budgeting, capital expenditures, and long-term planning.

Chair Gallagher asked if Interim Chief Basinger would go through the process with the Battalion Chiefs. Interim Chief Basinger stated Chief Spinks would help with the training portion and training improvements, while Chief Walsh would help with Emergency Management. Chair Gallagher asked if it is typically $700 a year, and if that is paid every year. Interim Fire Chief Basinger stated that it is a one-time fee.

Chair Gallagher asked if that fee allows the Department to register to have access to that toolbox for training, if it is required, and if it has ever been utilized before. Interim Fire Chief Basinger responded that, to his knowledge, it has not, and there is no requirement; it is just access to the tools and assessment manual with no expiration. Chair Gallagher stated she liked the idea because it provides a standard and a framework because Boards are going to come and go.

Interim Fire Chief Basinger stated that was the plan, since there was no plan or trajectory for the Chief and the Board previously.

Boardmember Jewett asked if this came out of a training seminar in July. Interim Fire Chief Basinger stated he did learn about the CPSE accreditation process while he was there, and spoke with other fire departments that implemented it and recommended it. Boardmember Jewett asked if any departments in Minnesota have been accredited. Interim Fire Chief Basinger confirmed that all of the fire departments he spoke with that were accredited were out of state.

Boardmember Jewett asked if peer reviews had to be done by someone from somewhere else. Interim Fire Chief Basinger stated it would be internal peer reviews, and if the Department wants to get accredited, those peer reviews would be done by other similar-sized fire departments across the country.

Boardmember Jewett asked if getting accredited with the CPSE helps the Fire Department's insurance rating. Interim Fire Chief Basinger noted he had the same question, but accreditation has nothing to do with insurance premiums; it is about self-assessment, but accreditation for the Department is not necessary and would be a big undertaking.

Chair Gallagher asked if the next steps are broken down quarterly or monthly. Interim Fire Chief Basinger stated that the CPSE would provide that guidance, but staffing will be the first priority.

Chair Gallagher asked if the Board needs to vote on this. Interim Fire Chief Basinger stated that the Board does not need to vote on it; this is how the Fire Department will move forward and look ahead.

Mr. Broas thanked Interim Fire Chief Basinger for the information.

Boardmember Maddy stated it sounds like a good plan for improvement, and accreditation might be part of the marketing budget, but the Board three years from now can make that decision.

Chair Gallagher noted this seems like a good framework and road map for the Department, especially as new people come on to the Board to maintain consistency.

Boardmember Jewett added that as the Department has evolved, this framework makes sense for financial and budget decisions. Interim Fire Chief Basinger agreed that it will help, because the Department will be provided with crossover spreadsheets to gather data about finances to determine what will be applicable for the Department.

9. NEXT MEETING

A. Fire Board Meeting November 18, 2026, at 18:00

Chair Gallagher confirmed the next meeting will be on November 18, 2026, at 6:00 PM.

10. ADJOURNMENT

(1:06:22) Maddy moved, Jewett seconded, to adjourn the EXFD Governing Board Meeting of June 24, 2026, at 7:06 P.M. Motion passed 4/0.