

**SPECIAL VILLAGE OF EAGLE BOARD MEETING
HELD JOINTLY WITH THE TOWN OF EAGLE BOARD
MINUTES - APPROVED**

Call to Order/Open Meeting Law Requirements:

Village President R. Spurrell and Town Chairman B. Kwiatkowski called their respective special meetings to order at 7:00pm Thursday, February 26, 2015.

Roll Call:

Village Board: A. Salmela, G. Scheff, L. Neuburg, M. Schoessow, and R. Spurrell all present; K. Degenhardt excused. Town Board: D. Malek, D. West, J. Davis, A. Rasmussen, and B. Kwiatkowski all present.

Pledge of Allegiance:

R. Spurrell and B. Kwiatkowski led the Pledge of Allegiance

Citizen Comments/Concerns to be heard:

No Public Comments

General discussion of possible fire consolidation with the Village of North Prairie:

Discussion began with R. Spurrell stating that there have been previous concerns brought up in past discussion at fire commission meetings regarding concerns of money matters regarding the Town, equality of funding, how to proceed. He stated that it was brought up at the last fire commission meeting that the matter should be revisited, which is why the meeting was being held. He addressed both boards and asked that they state their concerns.

B. Kwiatkowski summarized some past concerns. He stated that there was a difference of opinion regarding how to proceed – with/without fire chief? Should a consultant be hired to equalize expense among the municipalities? How will the department be financed? Who will the Fire Commission be comprised of? He stated that he would like to wait until a new chief is hired so that person can take charge of consulting with other communities who have dealt with a consolidation. But stated that his number one concern is how this will be financed.

R. Spurrell asked for clarification regarding the financing issue. He outlined some of the different ways the municipalities fund their existing departments. Is the concern the upfront financing or the annual contributions from each municipality?

B. Kwiatkowski stated that his main concern was the annual contributions to the department.

D. West brought up his concerns regarding how these contribution numbers will be calculated. He talked about a meeting at North Prairie where he heard they expected 75 – 80 calls and wanted to know, what about ambulance calls? Does North Prairie have a Fire Department Budget?

B. Kwiatkowski states that the current contributions to the existing Fire Department are \$77,000+ from the Village and \$206,000 from the Town.

R. Spurrell stated the department has other revenues as well. He addressed D. West regarding how ambulance call monies would be divided up and explained his view as the Fire Department being independent with its own budget and with a committee overseeing it. So wherever that ambulance call came from, that money would go back to the collective Fire Department budget, there would be no need to worry about how to divide the money.

D. West expressed his concern over the fact that one municipality may have more calls than another. Also voiced concern over whether funds already set aside by the Town of Eagle will end up being used for North Prairie costs.

R. Spurrell asked if call volume should matter and even be included in figuring how the budget will be split. He express that he doesn't think it should be a factor.

J. Davis stated that this should be treated as one large municipality or call area with two fire houses.

D. West expressed his worry over how things will work, how monies will be split, i.e. splitting building maintenance costs. He also stated he believes that North Prairie may need to increase their fire department.

R. Spurrell requested clarification whether the concern is about the annual contributions or upfront costs.

D. West talked about the fire department budget comparisons between the Town/Village of Eagle and North Prairie and how they are most likely based on valuations, but feels North Prairie's fire department budget should be raised to a higher level, more comparable to the Town and Village of Eagle's budget contributions.

R. Spurrell stated that the upfront contributions will be the hardest decision. Once that decision is made, all will go into one budget and all expenses will come from that budget, no matter which fire house the expense comes from.

D. West stated concerns about when North Prairie needs a new fire station, is the general budget comprised of the Town of Eagle, Village of Eagle, and North Prairie going to pay for that and wondered whether that was fair.

R. Spurrell responded that he thought that it would come from the combined budget.

B. Kwiatkowski stated that although he neither agrees nor disagrees with R. Spurrell's idea of how the budget would be handled, he would like to be sure that it's done in the best way. He thinks more research needs to be done, so he suggested the possibility of creating a new committee dedicated to that cause.

R. Spurrell agreed that there needed to be a formula that all three municipalities could agree on.

B. Kwiatkowski agrees with R. Spurrell and states that there also needs to be a reserve fund set up and would like to see a proposal on how combining will be cost savings.

R. Spurrell introduces D. Hall, North Prairie Village President and D. Samuels, North Prairie Village Trustee.

D. Hall stated that she agreed on basing the contribution on equalized value. She expressed her desire for North Prairie to contribute as an equal and, if set up correctly, this is something that could be cost saving over years. She also stating that she's not opposed to involving a third party to provide input and expertise.

B. Kwiatkowski agrees with D. Hall's comments.

D. Samuels agreed that using equalized value would be fair to all.

R. Spurrell agreed and stated that there can be a lot of ways to change calculations within the formula and that adding too many variables, i.e. ambulance calls, may not be a good idea because those numbers can change year to year.

B. Kwiatkowski agrees that including ambulance calls could be difficult because they can change year to year.

A.Salmela agrees on using equalized value, but would like an outside entity to provide input, however also has faith in the people involved to handle making the decision as well. He suggests contacting another municipality who has gone through a consolidation to get input and feels hiring a consultant may be too costly.

D. Hall stated that the fire chiefs had gathered a lot of information initially and hopefully they can use that information.

D. West referenced an article November 2013 regarding the Summit/Delafield consolidation. The article presented a formula using 50% call volume, 35% equalized value, and 15% population.

R. Spurrell stated that they have consulted Mukwonago in the past, which used a similar formula.

L. Neuburg asks several questions regarding the current fire chief. She asks when there will be a new chief. R. Spurrell responds that they cannot replace the existing chief when he is on duty disability. L. Neuburg asks how long that will take. R. Spurrell states that he isn't certain. L. Neuburg asks if we have Chief Hein's information that he collect on the consolidation matter. R. Spurrell stated that he did not have that information.

L. Neuburg suggested starting an internal committee. A. Salmela agrees and thinks that individuals from the fire departments should be included.

M. Schoessow indicated that he believes a consultant will need to be hired at some point because he feels it will be easier to sell to the community with an experienced individual's input.

R. Spurrell expresses concern over hiring a consultant because it seems all that would be done would be the handing over of information that the municipalities already have. He feels the people involved should be able to do the job on their own.

D. Hall expresses concern over the cost of hiring a consultant. D. Samuels agrees.

General discussion followed between several in attendance regarding where to find information on other municipalities who have consolidated. D. West referred to a proposal titled 'Fire Department Audit and Consolidation Feasibility Study' done by a consulting group regarding a consolidation of the North Prairie, Eagle, and Mukwonago fire departments. Several members of the boards expressed interest in receiving a copy.

B. Kwiatkowski asks if anyone thinks a special committee should be formed to gather information. Show of hands supported the committee. B. Kwiatkowski calls for volunteers.

G. Scheff suggests that the new committee needs to seek input from existing fire department staff.

D. Samuels, J. Davis, and R. Spurrell volunteer for special committee.

General wrap-up discussion between several in attendance regarding what is expected of the committee highlighting several topics discussed during the meeting.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by G. Scheff, seconded by L. Neuburg, carries (5-0)

R. Spurrell adjourns at 7:49pm

Motion to adjourn by D. Malek, seconded by D. West, carries (5-0)

B. Kwiatkowski adjourns at 7:49pm