

**Powell Township Board**  
**Regular ~~Special~~ Board Meeting**  
**PO Box 319, 101 Bensinger, Big Bay 49808**  
**~~Tuesday~~ **Thursday** October 22nd, 2020 6PM**  
**Draft Minutes**  
**Approved 11/17/2020**

- 1) Call to order at 7:00 PM, by Supervisor, at Powell Township Hall.
- 2) Roll Call: Joe Stanley (Trustee), Darlene Turner (Supervisor), Samantha Morin (Clerk), Denise Hudson via her home phone (Trustee)
  - a) Absent: Arline Erickson (Treasurer)
- 3) Approval of Agenda: Fire Chief, Christopher Sutter, Evaluation; no set agenda to approve but open session for public and board

**Comments**

- D. Turner, stated disappointment for Clerk, Morin, and Fire Chief, Sutter, not informing rest of board of emergency repair to boilers and how it was handled
  - Clerk apologized again and took full responsibility for not informing the rest of the board after Fire Chief informed her and for the error on the Bills to be Paid on October 20th, 2020
- D. Turner, stated her tour of the FireHall has her worried with the number of “unfinished projects”
- B. Roell- COVID created more issues and why things can't get solved during this time
- K. December- feels issues so far stated with eval are picky and not important in the big picture
- J. Gertz- Chief can't replace the Coordinator position without board approval but the board made it unfair to say he should have hired someone to replace coordinator
- B. Roell- unfinished project for desk because board didn't approve the first desk for \$1700
- K. December- feels township had a new office and should have approved first desk; fire (and ambulance) are the most important services that her taxes pay; feels Chris Sutter is trying to fulfill the position
- D. Hudson- doesn't want hostile environment between Fire Department and the Board; Feels a solution would be to hire someone to install and finish projects
- J. Boudreaux - major undertaking getting everything (paperwork) under control first; Fire departments loses credibility if there is messy paperwork
- D. Turner- feels she is being misinterpreted; wants what is started to be finished; wants the best for the fire department; wants to know what is the problem with getting the board on same page with Fire Chief; feels too much paperwork is being turned in to get to the point of issues or for approval by the board
- J. Boudreaux- states a better way to imply what is a federal or state regulations needed purchase
- D. Turner- other townships have issues because of expenses as well
- J. Cram- most things are needs vs. wants
- T. Vargo- has had 10 years on the fire department; Vargo was offered the Fire Chief position but knew it would be a huge project for paperwork alone; agrees projects are not getting finished but most need contractors and those are all busy because of COVID; Sutter is meeting with the Ambulance department; “Sutter” does bring a lot of information for a little thing; “Sutter” is the top choice to have; from budget standpoint he is still in the right for what is being asked; Vargo fully supports C. Sutter for the increase in stipend; believes in working together
- C. Sutter- explains why paperwork got longer to give the board more answers and to then get the purchase orders passed

- S. Morin- stated she was the one person to vote for the increase at the September meeting; suggested a one-time stipend of the \$1800 as a compromise; Sutter is doing the work and has immaculate paperwork; Once the work is caught up Sutter shouldn't need to be there so much; Morin tries to remember if Hudson asked for it before as a one time increase; Morin tries to remember Erickson worry that there is something that states the Chief and the Ambulance Director should be at the same pay level for the responsibilities being similar; Morin feels the board all agrees that we never wanted it to fall on one person to carry the fire department
  - C. Moran- Sutter is detailed orientated guy; feels the amount of information overwhelmed the board; detail overload accountability needs to be focused; regular maintenance is being/been done on the machines; believes the board should have more faith in fire department getting the job done; DNR tools for the Powell Township Fire Department because the fire department are the first to the site; attitude is "to do the best you can do"; Online training was set up by Sutter and training has been able to be done by the Powell Township Fire Department; roster issues were from many retiring; feels it is important to have strong leadership and supports Sutter
  - J. Stanley- remember it is a "volunteer" fire department; thanks the public for helping; wants to start insurance billing and asks sutter if he has done that
  - C. Sutter- no house structure fires to bill in his term
  - J. Stanley- boilers should not be run in summer but because they also are for heating water believes fire department should get a water heater instead
  - C. Sutter- wants to increase to biweekly checks; 2104 vehicle is out of service and not driveable
  - B. Roell- bigger picture for this evaluation; safety of fire department is in jeopardy without a strong fire chief; no fire fighter has been injured yet; putting fire fighters in danger without having a detailed orientated fire chief
  - J. Gertz- agrees with Roell; fire department requires a lot of training and regulations; "guys" are backing him; Sutter is well worth it
  - C. Sutter- No policies before and he has been working on them for the fire department to have a set way to do things
  - T. Vargo- gives example how the ambulance department needed information and Sutter dropped everything to give him the information that Sutter had ready; thinks Sutter is worth it; it's not that he would be quitting but won't continue at that lower rate
  - C. Sutter- Looking to set up Preventative Maintenance Policy to stay ahead of the issues
  - D. Hudson- thanks everyone for speaking out tonight; appreciates everyone backing of C. Sutter
- 4) Motion to approve \$1800 raise for Christopher Sutter, Powell Township Fire Chief (Hudson/Morin). 4 yes, no opposed, 1 absent

Meeting adjourned at 6:48 pm by Supervisor.

Minutes prepared by  
Samantha Morin  
Powell Township Clerk