

SOUTH OLDHAM FIRE DEPARTMENT, INC.
MINUTES JANUARY 27, 2025

The regular monthly meeting of the South Oldham Fire Department, Inc. Board was held on Monday, January 27, 2025 at the Firehouse.

The meeting was called to order by Board President, David Thompson, at 7:30 p.m. with the following Board Members present: Patrick Stoess, Gardner, Beard, Wakefield, Davis, Thompson, Nelson, Johnson, Holder, Marshall, Esposito, Miller, K. King, M. Stoess, German, Chapman, S. Jones, Bobby Deibel, and Turner. Also present were Chief Blakely, Merryll Loy, Firefighter A. Parker, Firefighter M. Folz, Firefighter C. Brown, and Laura Stoess.

OFFICER REPORTS:

SECRETARY: The Minutes of the November meeting were read and approved with corrections.

TREASURER: The Treasurer's Report was given by Treasurer, Matt Nelson. Major Nelson reported the following bank balances for December:

Capital Improvement account	\$1,444,788.33
Checking account	\$ 36,021.51
Money Market account	\$2,171,686.57
Auxiliary account	\$ 3,891.51
Bill.com Money Out Clearing	\$ 637.06
Chief's account	\$ 950.74
Total cash on hand	\$3,657,975.72

Motion to accept the December Treasurer's report was made by Mark Gardner. Wes Chapman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Major Nelson reported the following bank balances for January:

Capital Improvement account	\$ 1,449,316.13
Checking account	\$ 33,475.94
Money Market account	\$ 2,234,673.85
Auxiliary account	\$ 3,891.51
Bill.com Money Out Clearing	\$ 637.06
Chief's account	\$ 950.74
Total cash on hand	\$ 3,722,945.23

Motion to accept the January Treasurer's report was made by Travis German. Tim Wakefield seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Major Nelson advised that he had consulted with accountant, Troy King, regarding the truck sold for surplus and the \$80,000 (minus the \$5600 commission) was transferred into the capital improvement account.

Major Nelson gave a recap of the expenses for 2024. He advised that, on average, the Department spends \$215,780 per month. This is right on target with the budget.

CHIEF'S REPORT:

Chief Blakely reported 76 responses for December, 628 medical responses for 2024, and a total of 1,060 responses for 2024. He reported 84 responses to date for January.

Chief Blakely gave an update on training, fire schools and conferences and staff certifications.

School fire drills were performed at Camden Station and Crestwood Elementary Schools.

Apparatus/Equipment Repairs/Updates: A new Para Tech Deployable Shoring System (Hydrافusion Strut Kits/Longshore Struts) was installed on Unit 5438 and Unit 5435 underwent repairs to the Hydraulic Cylinder Repairs Squirt.

Facilities. Chief reported that the community room and stairwell has been updated with the replacement of flooring/painting/lighting. We have also updated the security pads on the lobby door and bay area rear entrance.

Public Relations/Community: Members of the Department attended Light Up Crestwood and partnered with the Barry Stoess Food Drive to conduct the South Oldham Fire Toy Drive to provide toys to underprivileged children in the area.

Department Incidents included a structure fire with rescue at 1208 Nightingale Lane and a structure fire 5407 Highpoint Drive.

Operations- We received a Fire Commission Grant for thermal imaging cameras in the amount of \$3,600.00. The Department will be purchasing four (4) Seek FirePro TIC. We are exploring the possibility of using Fire Recovery USA to recover costs from incident runs. Presentation will be given. Additional funds are needed to outfit the new F-250 command vehicles.

Chapter 75 update- Updates to KRS Chapter 75 have been drafted and are being reviewed by State Representative Mark Hart. Representative Hart will sponsor the bill along with co-sponsor Jennifer Decker from Shelby County. Chief Blakely and Chief Fante will be attending meetings in Frankfort in February related to Chapter 75.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Update on F-250s: Captain German reported that the first F-250 has been received and the second one is on it's way. He explained that the bids he had previously received regarding the outfitting of the F-250s, unfortunately, did not include everything that was needed. It costs approximately \$13,000 per truck to outfit it for what they need. Therefore, additional funds are needed.

Captain German has reached out to two (2) additional companies and his recommendation is that we use Fast Lane Emergency Vehicles out of Virginia. They will outfit the trucks to be set up with a computer in the back for incident command. Captain German advised that taking into account the money received from the sale of the surplus truck plus the additional amount that was previously approved by the Board, there is still a need for \$10,000 more per truck.

Captain German made a motion for the Board to approve an additional \$25,000 to be taken from the capital improvement account to finish outfitting the two F-250s. Wes Chapman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Update on KRS Chapter 75 Tax Cap: Chief Blakely advised that there are legislators currently working to increase the tax cap from .10 cents per \$100 to .20 cents per \$100 for fire only. If a district has an ambulance service, the amount could go up to .30 cents per \$100 total. The change would be effected by a .02 cent increase each year for the next five (5) years; however, the District would have to justify the increase. Chief advised that there are 127 Fire Districts that operate under KRS Chapter 75 and most of those Districts are capped at .10 per \$100. He explained that the .10 cent cap went into effect in 1944 for volunteer departments and has not been increased since that time. He will report back with any legislative action.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Cost recovery: Merryll Loy made a presentation regarding cost recovery on behalf of Fire Recovery USA, LLC. Fire Recovery USA, LLC is a company that would bill insurance companies for recovery of Fire Department costs associated with incidents regarding motor vehicles, hazardous materials, water incidents, and various others. This would just be for fire runs—not emergency runs. Chief Blakely advised that he only wants to bill insurance companies for non-residents.

Ms. Loy reported that they would track which party was at fault for an incident and then bill that party's insurance company. The recovery check would be sent to Fire Recovery first, then they would withdraw their fee, before sending the remaining balance to us. Their fee is 22%. We would receive a break-down of incidents and payments made. She stated that it usually takes an average of thirty (30) to ninety (90) days to get a check in the mail. Ms. Lloyd advised that they have a 95% recovery rate.

Ms. Loy explained that Fire Recovery has "suggested rates" of what to charge for various incidents. We can use their "suggested rates" or we can adopt our own. She advised that they have increased their rates each of the last three (3) years; however, we can choose to use the same rate each year if we adopt a generic rate sheet.

The Board asked questions and gave positive feedback. The consensus was that this service is needed, but more inquiry should be made. Counsel will review the proposed contract and further discussion will be held at the next meeting. No action was taken. If the Board decides to move forward, we will need to pass a Resolution and adopt a rate sheet for use of their services.

2. Thermal imaging cameras: Chief Blakely reported that we received a grant for the purchase of thermal imaging cameras in the amount of \$3600. This will be put on the truck. The difference in the cost of the equipment and the grant is \$2200, which was accounted for in the budget. Chief will make the purchase and the State will reimburse the Department.

3. Fire inspector position: Chief advised that he had created a job description for the new fire inspector position and that the description has been reviewed by the Personnel Committee and by counsel. He would like to move forward with posting the job. He would like to fill it internally, if possible. A question was raised regarding whether or not the person chosen to fill the position would fall into the current pay scale. Patrick Stoess expressed that the person hired should not lose their current rank and requested that the Chief and the Personnel Committee clarify that detail. Patrick Stoess made a motion to approve the creation of the position of Fire Inspector subject to clarification by the Personnel Committee regarding rank and pay scale. Richard Beard seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

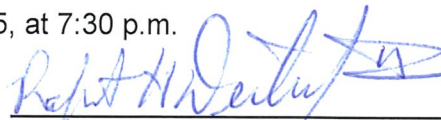
OTHER BUSINESS:

The Awards banquet was a complete success. Thank you to those who attended.

There was no other business to come before the Board.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on February 24, 2025, at 7:30 p.m.



ROBERT DEIBEL III, SECRETARY