



QEM Fire Protection District

P O Box 183

Elsah, IL 62028

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting Thursday, May 8, 2025

The Meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by Vice President Ed Darabcsek

Trustees Present: Vice President Ed Darabcsek, Secretary-Treasurer Alan Hauff, and Trustee Dennis Blackorby

Trustees Not Present: President Cyrus Bunting and Trustee Dan Drescher

Firefighters Present: Chief Aaron Darr, Ray Clothier, and Matt Schulte

Present: Clerk-Auxiliary Heather Hanna

Public Comments:

Heather Hanna, Auxiliary President, reported that the Auxiliary is purchasing 3 thermal imagers, a custom-made table for the radio room, helmet clips for the Guardian Angel Lights, paying their half of the website and their half of the monthly maintenance fee.

Ray Clothier asked if he could purchase the old generator for \$200.00. The Board agreed to accept \$200.00 for the sale. Heather is to make a receipt.

Reports and Approvals:

Minutes:

April 10, 2025, Minutes were reviewed. Dennis Blackorby made a motion to approve the minutes for April 10, 2025, with no noted corrections. Alan Hauff seconded. Motion carried.

Bank Statement and Budget Status:

Alan Hauff gave a report on fund balances: \$321,152.41 is available in the Money Market Account and \$2,849.20 is available in the Jersey State Bank Checking Account, and \$515,741.86 is available in CDs at Jerseyville Banking Center as of April 30th. The CDs will fund a future Pumper purchase.

Under Revenue, QEM received \$30,314.02 in April 2025. The revenue received in April included \$24,774.51 for Property Tax; \$459.06 for Corporate Personal Property Tax; \$286.83 for the hospital rent; \$2,200.00 for farm rent; \$26.87 for Illinois Sales Tax Refund; \$460.00 for an accident in 2019 for Paula McNally; \$70.10 from soda machine; \$1,280.00 from Lewis and Clark Community College for a refund of Cameron Mank's EMT class; and \$756.65 for Interest

Income. Revenue is budgeted for \$422,824.40 in FY 2024-25, which started in May. To date, \$455,878.30 has been received toward the budgeted amount.

The budgeted expense target for the last twelve (12) months was 100% of the budget. Actual expenses for these last twelve (12) months were 34.30% of the budget. The major reason for this difference is \$400,000.00 was appropriated for a fire truck but not spent.

Alan advised that the average monthly expenses are \$26,742.00 and we have the equivalent of twenty (20) months remaining, and only need four (4) months before new tax dollars arrive.

Review of Bills:

The April checklist of bills paid totaled \$8,128.95. Notable bills included \$929.81 to ESO Solutions, Inc; \$975.00 to James Kelly Law Firm, P.C.; and \$941.00 to DH Pace Company Inc. DBA Overhead Door. Alan noted that we received a bill for \$417.25 from Jersey County Rural Water. Chief Darr stated that they used the hydrant by the burn tower for training and we are charged when using it. Chief Darr advised Alan to put the regular amount in the budget and the extra should come out of the training budget.

Dennis Blackorby made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report, and the payment of the bills as presented. Alan Hauff seconded. Motion carried.

Major Correspondence:

Alan advised that he received a letter from Jersey County that a resident has filed an appeal for their property taxes and this will affect the assessment for the district overall if the appeal is allowed.

Alan received a letter from Attorney Jim Sinclair regarding the Public Notice for the public hearing on the budget for 6/12/2025 at 6:00 p.m. The public is invited.

Review of Calls:

There were 47 calls in April 2025. 1 Fire, other; 1 Natural vegetation fire, other; 1 Brush or brush-and-grass mixture fire; 16 Medical assist, assist EMS crew; 1 Motor vehicle accident with injuries; 1 Motor vehicle accident with no injuries; 1 Person in distress, other; 19 Dispatched & canceled enroute; 1 HazMat release investigation w/no HazMat; 4 False alarm or false call, other; and 1 Smoke detector activation, no fire-unintentional.

Chief Darr advised the fire, other was an electrical fire on Croxford Rd; natural vegetation fire, other was an electric line down on Graham Hollow Rd.; brush fire was across from the visitor's center in Grafton, no sure what started it. Grafton PD had advised that they had been running squatters off from the area; false alarm on Palm St., they were working on the alarms; false alarm on Riehl Lane, they were having alarm issues; Smoke detector activation on Maybeck, they were BBQ outside and the smoke blew inside and activated the alarm.

Old Business:

From the Trustees:

Realignment of Board Following Appointments of Dan Drescher and Alan Hauff—Alan is to call Jersey County regarding the reappointment letter stating Fieldon Fire Protection Board instead of QEM Fire Protection Board. Realignment results are as follows:

Cyrus Bunting—President
Ed Darabcsek—Vice President
Alan Hauff—Secretary/Treasurer
Dennis Blackorby—Trustee
Dan Drescher—Trustee

Bid Opening for Lake Improvements-Docks/Dredging—Alan received two (2) bids for dredging of the lake and installment of the docks.

Superior Seawalls, Docks, and Dredging—\$62,000.00
Stutz Excavating Inc.—\$44,600.00

Alan Hauff made a motion to approve the bid from Stutz Excavating, Inc. for \$44,600.00. Dennis Blackorby seconded. Motion carried.

Placement of Dredged Material at Future Helipad Landing Zone—Alan advised he is going to have them put the dredged material where the helipad is going to help level the ground. He is looking at an area of 50 foot wide by 100 foot long.

Lake Fish—Alan advised that he and Dennis put 125 catfish and 10 lbs. of Shinners in the lake.

2025 Calendar & Checklist—Ed reviewed the following items on the checklist:

16. File statements of Economic Interest with County Clerk—Completed
17. Newly appointed and reappointed trustees take office—Completed
18. Newly elected trustees take office—N/A
19. Newly appointed and elected trustees must complete Open Meetings Act training within 90 days of taking office—N/A
20. Reorganize Board of Trustees following appointment or election of trustee(s) by electing officers—Completed

From the Chief:

Update on FDIC Conference—Chief Darr advised that Jonathan Prosser and Austin Darr went to the FDIC Conference and had a great time and wanted to thank the Board for sending them.

Hot Water Heater Station 2—Heather advised that Dan informed her the heating element was bad in the hot water heater and Desherlia Mechanical was to replace it. She is unsure if that had been completed yet. Dennis Blackorby stated he would fix the ceiling that is falling and replace the faucet in the kitchen.

Electric Eyes on Overhead Doors at Station 2—Chief Darr advised that Alan has the bid and Overhead Doors is waiting for the parts to complete the work.

Vector Solutions—Chief Darr advised that Vector Solutions located the check for the payment that they stated we owed. Chief Darr also has the invoice for the renewal of Vector Solutions for \$2,458.60. Chief Darr would like for this expense to come out of the Training/Education Budget.

Dennis Blackorby made a motion to pay the Vector Solutions invoice for \$2,458.60. Ed Darabcsek seconded. Motion carried.

New Business

From the Trustees:

Establish FY 2025-2026 Budget—Alan distributed a budget worksheet containing the last three (3) years of revenue and expenditures for the Board's consideration in preparing the FY 2025-26 Annual Budget. The Board set budgets for 108 items. The public hearing on the budget is scheduled for June 12th at 6:00 p.m.

Line item 6480-Repair & Maint. of Vehicles had a expenditure of \$159.96, Alan advised this was an old invoice from Banner that was entered on the incorrect line item, and he will get fixed. Line item 6759-Fire Alarm Inspections-Heather asked about no expenditures and Alan is to check where the expenditure was put.

Approve Engagement Letter for FY 24-25 Audit with Hughes, Cameron & Co.—Alan advised that Hughes, Cameron & Co. require a signed engagement letter for our next audit. Ed Darabcsek signed the engagement letter for FY 24-25. Motion carried.

June 12th Public Hearing on Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance—The public hearing is scheduled for the next meeting on June 12th at 6:00 p.m.

From the Chief:

Godfrey Fire Protection District Donation—Chief Darr advised that Godfrey Fire Protection District is donating 13 sections of 50 foot 1 ¾ hose. We will need to have it tested.

Emergency Phone—Chief Darr advised that he purchased an emergency phone for the breezeway by the bay doors. The phone will only call 911. Chief Darr must call GTI to have them reinstall the phone line that was out there.

Blackstone Grill—Chief Darr would like to purchase a 36-inch Blackstone griddle with accessories for \$726.99.

Dennis Blackorby made a motion to purchase a Blackstone griddle with accessories. Alan Hauff seconded. Motion carried.

EMS Activity Reports:

None

Committee Reports:

None

Open Discussion and Preparation for Next Meeting:

Adjournment:

Alan Hauff made a motion to adjourn. Dennis Blackorby seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.