



**QEM Fire Protection District
P O Box 183
Elsah, IL 62028**

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting Thursday, August 14, 2025

The Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Cyrus Bunting

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

Trustees Not Present:

Firefighters Present: Chief Aaron Darr, Captain Damon Eich, Captain Austin Darr, Matt Schulte, Bradley Isringhausen, Breyden Hamilton, and Victoria Westfall

Also Present: Clerk Heather Hanna and Ryan Motley

Public Comments:

Cy's neighbor has called a couple of times to have smoke detectors installed and she has not received any phone calls back. Captain Eich states he is having an issue with getting paperwork from Ray for some smoke detector installs that he performed. Due to this issue the counts are off, and he does not have enough smoke detectors to install any and he can't order more due to not having the paperwork. Cy advised that if we are advertising that we are installing smoke detectors they need to be scheduled and installed in a timely manner.

Reports and Approvals:

Minutes:

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

Bank Statement and Budget Status:

Alan Hauff gave a report on fund balances: \$250,592.65 is available in the Money Market Account and \$4,790.67 is available in the Jersey State Bank Checking Account, and \$515,741.86 is available in CDs at Jerseyville Banking Center as of July 31st. The CDs will fund a future Pumper purchase.

Under Revenue, QEM received \$2,617.53 in July 2025. The revenue received in July included \$286.83 for the hospital rent; \$1,265.83 for the Corporate Personal Property Replacement Tax; \$1,000.00 Donation from Raging Rivers; and \$64.87 for Interest Income. Revenue is budgeted for \$452,352.00 in FY 2025-26, which started in May. To date, \$5,656.17 has been received toward the budgeted amount.

The budgeted expense target for July was 24.99% of the budget. Actual expenses for July were 7.31% of the budget.

Review of Bills:

The July checklist of bills paid totaled \$10,038.94. Notable bills included \$11.05 to Alan Hauff for postage to return bolts to Superior Seawalls, Docks and Dredging; and \$1,400.00 to Stutz Excavating, Inc. for the installation of the third dock.

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

Major Correspondence:

None

Review of Calls:

There were 35 calls in July 2025. 22 Medical assist, assist EMS crew; 3 Motor vehicle accident with injuries; 1 Gas leak (natural gas or LPG); 1 Accident, potential accident, other; and 8 Dispatched & canceled en route.

Old Business:

From the Trustees:

Audit Update—Hughes, Cameron & Company has filed the paperwork with the Illinois State Comptroller. Alan advised that the audit is completed, and he is waiting for the binders.

Lake Update (Dredging, Docks)—Alan advised that the 3rd dock has been installed. Captain Eich asked about taking the big snapping turtle out of the lake. The Board agreed that the snapping turtle needed to be moved. Captain Eich to take care of the snapping turtle.

2025 Calendar & Checklist—Ed advised the checklist review is caught up.

Open Meetings Act—Ed gave the Board copies of the power point from the training he attended. It has instructions on how to register for the portal to take the Open Meetings Act training that Board members are required to take.

Trustee Manuals—Alan would like for all Trustees to read the tab for Annexation, Consolidation, Disconnection and Dissolution.

From the Chief:

Air Conditioner Station 2 update—The Air Conditioner has been installed, and Cy was able to fix the electrical outlet.

Rope and Rigging Update—Captain Eich advises that the Rope and Rigging has been ordered and waiting for the invoice and tracking information.

Air Gas Expenditure Update—Chief Darr advised that all the oxygen bottles have been replaced. Chief Darr needs to get the big bottles back to where they came from but is not sure who they were received from.

Boat Canopy Update—Chief Darr advised that the canopy has been installed. It was used at the Boat Races, and the firefighters were happy to have it.

PR-9/11/25 Stair Climb Update—Chief Darr advised that the patches were ordered to give to the participants of the stair climb. Firefighter Cameron Mank received a \$200.00 donation from Germania Brew Haus and a \$40.00 donation from Ray Clothier for the purchase of the patches. Fritz Meat Market will be onsite to cook food available for purchase. Firefighter Cameron Mank has gotten donations to pay for the stair climb participants food.

New Business

From the Trustees:

Review of Insurance Policy Information—Alan received a questionnaire from Steck-Cooper asking us to review our policy. Alan reviewed our policy with the Board of Trustees. Decision was made to change the coverage for the Dow station from \$7,000.00 to \$28,000.00 and the Fire Tower contents from \$28,000.00 to \$7,000.00.

The Board discussed the files stored at the Dow Station. Heather advised that the mice have been in the files. We need to see about destroying them. Heather will check on the cost of getting a shred truck. To destroy the files, we will need approval from the Illinois Attorney General.

Dennis Blackorby made a motion to change the coverage for the Dow station from \$7,000.00 to \$28,000.00 and the Fire Tower contents from \$28,000.00 to \$7,000.00. Dan Drescher seconded. Motion carried.

Drone—Cy wanted to discuss the possibility of purchasing a cheaper drone as we have only sent one firefighter to school to qualify for flying a drone. Chief Darr agrees that we do not need an expensive drone right now. Cy would like for Ed to reach out to Karl and see what cheaper drone he would recommend.

From the Chief:

Fingerprinting—Heather advised the Jersey County Sheriff's Department is unable to do the fingerprinting for our new hires due to changes from the state. Heather has a subscriber agreement for Firm Systems who will submit fingerprints for us. Firefighters would need to go to the Regional Office of Education across from the Sheriff's Department. Firm Systems will bill us monthly for the fingerprinting service.

Air Conditioner Station 1—Chief Darr advised he had Tiger Plumbing, Heating, Air Conditioning & Electrical Services initially come and fix the air conditioning unit that run the air

for the radio room, hallways, and bathrooms. Chief Darr had Bush Refrigeration come and look at the unit and discovered that it needs to be replaced. The Board reviewed the quote and made the decision to purchase the 3-ton unit for \$6,973.67.

Dennis Blackorby made a motion to approve \$7,000.00 for the purchase of an Air Conditioner. Ed Darabscek seconded. Motion carried.

Air Conditioner Maintenance Agreement—Chief Darr talked to Bush Refrigeration and received a quote for a maintenance agreement. They will come twice a year and inspect the air conditioners in the spring and the furnaces in the fall and replace the filters for \$956.00 a year. Ed Darabscek made a motion to approve \$1,000.00 for the maintenance agreement with Bush Refrigeration. Dan Drescher seconded. Motion carried.

Dirt Mound—Chief Darr would like to get bids to get the dirt mound levels so that it can be mowed. Chief Darr is looking at Aaron Fry, a Godfrey Firefighter, who owns all the equipment to be able to level the dirt, and he lives in the district. Alan agrees with Chief Darr to get a quote.

Helipad Grant—Chief Darr advised that we did not receive the Grant from the Illinois State Fire Marshall's Office for the Helipad.

New Hire—Chief Darr would like to add Ryan Motley to the roster. Ryan is a paramedic with Jersey Community Hospital and lives in district. Ed Darabscek made a motion to add Ryan Motley as a probationary firefighter to the roster. Dan Drescher seconded. Motion carried.

Promotion—Chief Darr would like to promote Michael Chakur from probationary firefighter to firefighter. Dennis Blackorby made a motion to promote Michael Chakur. Dan Drescher seconded. Motion carried.

Victoria IFSI Class—Victoria Westfall would like to attend an IFSI class on October 18th. The class is 8:00am to 5:00pm. Ed Darabscek made a motion to approve \$500.00 for gas, food and one hotel night. Dennis Blackorby seconded. Motion carried.

New Pumper/Tanker—Chief Darr has received some bids for a new pumper/tanker, and he would like to know what his budget is. Midwest Fire built Brighton Fire Departments new pumper/tanker, and they are very happy with it. Chief Darr received a quote for one pumper/tanker with everything for \$511,000.00. It was discussed paying 50% and financing 50%. Alan states that we are debt free and will have no issues getting financing for the purchase. The Board would like Chief Darr to get a pumper/tanker that he wants.

Fish Fry—Victoria asked how the Board wanted to purchase the needed items for the fish fry. The Board stated they would need invoices and receipts. It was also advised to use Cy's or Ed's credit card for the purchases so that Chief Darr's card was available for fire department purchases.

PR Purchase—Victoria needs to order more PR supplies and would like \$1,000.00. Ed Darabscek made a motion to approve \$1,000.00 for the purchase of PR supplies. Dennis Blackorby seconded. Motion carried.

Shirts—Victoria states that the firefighters are wanting to change the back of the QEM t-shirts. They are wanting the American Flag through the word Fire and Rescue under. There would be a set up fee for the new design. Ed Darabscek made a motion to approve the design change of the QEM t-shirts. Dan Drescher seconded. Motion carried.

Backstopper's Basket—Victoria would like \$150.00 to purchase items for a basket for the Backstopper's raffle. The Backstopper's fundraiser is October 4th, \$50.00 a ticket, and Bradley Isringhausen is participating in the Honor Guard. Dennis Blackorby approved \$150.00 for the purchase of basket items. Ed Darabscek seconded. Motion carried.

EMS Activity Reports:

None

Committee Reports:

None

Open Discussion and Preparation for Next Meeting:

Adjournment:

Ed Darabscek made a motion to adjourn. Dennis Blackorby seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.