



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

**Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting Thursday, January 8, 2026--
CORRECTED**

The Meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by President Cyrus Bunting. He asked Vice-President Ed Darabscek to conduct the meeting.

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

Trustees Not Present: None

Firefighters Present: Chief Aaron Darr, Matt Schulte, and Ryan Motley

Also Present: Clerk Heather Hanna

Public Comments:

Reports and Approvals:

Minutes:

December 11, 2025, Minutes were reviewed. Dennis Blackorby made a motion to approve the minutes for December 11, 2025, with no noted corrections. Dan Drescher seconded. Motion carried.

Closed Session Minutes for November 9, 2023, January 11, 2024, May 15, 2024, March 13, 2025, June 12, 2025, October 9, 2025, November 13, 2025, and December 11, 2025, were reviewed. All closed session minutes pertaining to the Attorney will be tabled until lawsuit is finalized. Dennis Blackorby made a motion to open June 12, 2025, minutes and keep November 9, 2023, January 11, 2024, May 15, 2024, March 13, 2025, October 9, 2025, November 13, 2025, and December 11, 2025, minutes closed. Dan Drescher seconded. Motion carried.

Bank Statement and Budget Status:

Alan Hauff gave a report on fund balances: \$406,688.21 is available in the Money Market Account and \$1,525.62 is available in the Jersey State Bank Checking Account, and \$631,729.82 is available in CDs at Jerseyville Banking Center as of December 31st. The CDs will fund a future Pumper purchase.

Under Revenue, QEM received \$11,483.47 in December 2025. The revenue received in December included \$1,038.24 for Corporate Personal Property Replacement Taxes; \$600.00 for Fire Tower Rental; \$75.00 for fire report requests; and \$9,770.23 for Interest Income. Revenue is budgeted for \$452,352.00 in FY 2025-26, which started in May. To date, \$475,713.79 has been received toward the budgeted amount.

The budgeted expense target for December was 66.64% of the budget. Actual expenses for December were 27.11% of the budget.

Review of Bills:

The December checklist of bills paid totaled \$119,839.24. Notable bills included \$100,000.00 to Jerseyville Banking Center for the third (3rd) CD; \$2,564.95 to Froggy's Fog, LLC for the smoke machine; and \$99.99 to Edward Darabcsek for the Ring Camera Subscription.

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

Major Correspondence:

Review of Calls:

There were 24 calls in December 2025. 2 Building; 10 Medical assist, assist EMS crew; 1 Emergency medical service incident, other; 1 Motor vehicle accident with injuries; 2 Motor vehicle accident with no injuries; 1 Carbon monoxide incident; 1 Public service; 1 Assist invalid; 1 Dispatched & canceled en route; 1 Authorized controlled burning; 1 False alarm or false call, other; and 1 Smoke detector activation, no fire-unintentional.

Chief Darr advised that reports are no longer sent to NIFRS, it is now called NERIS.

Old Business:

From the Trustees:

Girls Fire Camp-Insurance—Alan advised that he has not heard from the insurance company. Victoria did notify him that the Girls Fire Camp is being moved from April to September.

Renewal of CDs Update—Alan advised that the CDs have been renewed and the bank is waiting for two (2) signatures from Board members.

Transfer of Funds to CD—Alan advised that \$100,000.00 has been transferred to a CD at Jerseyville Banking Center.

Housekeeping—Alan advised that the W-9 was turned in and he took it to Droege and Associates. The check for housekeeping will be mailed.

Drone-Ed—Tabled.

2026 Calendar & Checklist—Ed has not printed the 2026 Calendar & Checklist.

From the Chief:

Smoke Machine Update—Chief Darr advised that the check has been sent and they will ship the smoke machine once they receive the check.

Box Blade and Front Blade—Chief Darr advised that he received a quote from John Deere for the front blade and the box blade for \$3,320.03. The front blade is manual. To get a hydraulic blade it would require modification to the tractor.

Dan Drescher made a motion to approve \$3,320.03 for the purchase of the box blade and front blade for the tractor. Cy Bunting seconded. Motion carried.

New Business

From the Trustees:

None

From the Chief:

New Hire-Cameron Cluver—Chief Darr would like to add Cameron Cluver to the roster. Dennis Blackorby made a motion to add Cameron Cluver to the roster. Dan Drescher seconded. Motion carried.

Radio—Chief Darr advised that the base station in the radio room is bad and needs to be replaced.

Dan Drescher made a motion to approve \$1,500.00 for the purchase of a new base station. Ed Darabscek seconded. Motion carried.

EMT Refresher Course—Chief Darr advised that Shanna Brooks is willing to teach a refresher EMT course at QEM Fire Protection District for 6 weeks on Saturday night. Shanna is charging us \$100.00 but Chief Darr would like to pay her more. He feels she should be adequately compensated for the time spent in the classroom over 6 weeks and travel.

Ed Darabscek made a motion to approve \$600.00 for Shanna Brooks. Dennis Blackorby seconded. Motion carried.

Annual Maintenance on Trucks—Chief Darr advised that Banner performed the pump testing and it is time to get the oil changed. Banner had to repack one valve on #4115. Chief Darr advised that in January the brush trucks will be going to Ford to get the oil changed. Two (2) of the brush trucks need extra maintenance while they are at the shop. #4111 will need to go to Banner to have the AC fixed before summer. Cy asked Chief Darr to find out if #4172 can be changed to a dually.

Electrical Issue with outside lights—The lights on the outside of the building have not been coming on and when checked the breaker has been kicked off. Chief Darr would like to have Pointer Electric come look at them and find the issue.

Charging System for #4115—Chief Darr advised that Banner stated the charging system in #4115 is bad and needs replaced. Chief Darr found a new one for \$300.00 that is 30-amp 12 volt.

Dennis Blackorby made a motion to approve \$300.00 for the purchase of a new charging system for #4115. Cy Bunting seconded. Motion carried.

Battery Jump Box for Station—Chief Darr would like to purchase a new battery jump box for the station. The Harbor Freight one is not holding up.

Dennis Blackorby made a motion to approve \$300.00 for the purchase of a new battery jump box. Ed Darabscek seconded. Motion carried.

Flow Testing—Chief Darr advised that Sentinel was out and did the flow testing on the SCBA. They all passed but had to take parts from old ones to fix them since replacement parts are no longer available.

2026 FDIC—Chief Darr advised that he has two (2) firefighters and possibly two (2) more that want to go to FDIC in April. They will need two (2) hotel rooms and one (1) rental car.

Dan Drescher made a motion to approve booking the hotel and car rental for FDIC. Ed Darabscek seconded. Motion carried.

Christmas Dinner 2026—Tabled.

EMS Activity Reports:

None

Committee Reports:

None

Open Discussion and Preparation for Next Meeting:

Adjournment:

Cy Bunting made a motion to adjourn. Dennis Blackorby seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.