

FOREIGN FIRE INSURANCE TAX BOARD

Minutes of Meeting
1150 N. Arlington Heights Road
Arlington Heights, IL 60004

March 5, 2025

**Board Members
in Attendance:**

Lance Harris
James Stempien
Scott Miller
Ross Chapman
Rob Losik
Kevin Flynn

Absent:

Marty Moran

Guests:

Les East
Ben Pieper
Catherine Miarnowski

Jim Stempien called the 1st quarter 2025 meeting to order at 9:03 am.

ANNUAL ELECTIONS:

Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary.

Ross Chapman nominated Scott Miller for Foreign Fire Tax Board Secretary. Seconded by Rob Losik. Position accepted by Scott Miller.

Jim Stempien nominated Rob Losik for Foreign Fire Tax Board Treasurer. Seconded by Chief Harris. Position accepted by Rob Losik.

Rob Losik nominated Ross Chapman for Foreign Fire Tax Vice Chairman. Seconded by Kevin Flynn. Ross Chapman accepted position.

Ross Chapman nominated Jim Stempien for Foreign Fire Tax Chairman. Seconded by Chief Harris. Position accepted by Jim Stempien.

All nominees ran unopposed for all positions.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes of the December 2nd, 2024 meeting were reviewed. Chief Harris made a motion to approve the minutes; it was seconded by Rob Losik; no objections; motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: The current fund balance as of 2/28/2025 is \$ 439,263.06. Total amount paid out this year so far is \$102,341.38. Jim Stempien made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report to the record; it was seconded by Kevin Flynn; no objections; motion carried.

To accommodate guests, items of New Business were considered prior to opening Old Business for discussion.

NEW BUSINESS:

Stryker Cots – Division Chief Les East presented a request for 2 Stryker Power Pro-2 cots. During the purchase of the two new ambulances two years ago, 2 cots were requested. The requested cots were the Stryker Power Pro XT, the same one as the Department currently uses in the other ambulance. The quote was priced out at approximately \$50,000. Due to several supply issues, there was a delay in getting the vehicles and during that time, Stryker began phasing out the Stryker Power Pro XT. Given that Stryker planned to stop manufacturing it, we would not be able to get new parts or service in the future for the cots. The replacement model is the Stryker Power-PRO 2 with Power-LOAD power pad system. Based on that information, the decision was made to equip the two new ambulances with the new model. The cost for the new model cots exceeds the original purchase budget. Division Chief East is asking for \$22,507.50 to cover the difference between the new cost and the original budget.

Jim Stempien made a motion to approve an amount not to exceed \$24,000 to help the EMS Division cover the costs of the upgraded cots. Seconded by Kevin Flynn.

Roll was called:

Ayes: S. Miller, R. Chapman L., R. Losik, L. Harris, K. Flynn, J. Stempien

Nays: None

Ayes: 6; Nays 0

Motion carried.

Vehicle Headsets – Ben Pieper presented a request for new wireless headsets. Currently, the Engineers use wired headsets and there are limitations associated with that. With the wireless technology, Engineers are not only able to get out of the cab, but also operate with reduced background noise from traffic and sirens. The operating range is 1200 yards, they can run for about 24 hours on a charge, and the blocking of the ambient noise is adjustable. The wireless technology is also good for backing drills, accident management, special ops, fire rescue, etc. There is also an ability to listen to multiple channels. Ben Pieper is looking for \$8,000.

Ross Chapman made a motion to approve an amount not to exceed \$8,000 to outfit Tower 134 with wireless headsets. Seconded by Chief Harris.

Roll was called:

Ayes: S. Miller, R. Chapman L., R. Losik, L. Harris, K. Flynn, J. Stempien

Nays: None

Ayes: 6; Nays 0

Motion carried.

Equipment Mount Brackets – Ben Pieper presented a request for equipment mount brackets for Engine 3. Currently, the engine mounting equipment consists of Velcro and plastic brackets, which have been wearing off creating safety issues. The mounts are low profile mounts made by Zico. Low Profile Zico Variable Mount Brackets are designed to accommodate various diameter tools and equipment that can be mounted close to the mounting surface. Each tool requires 2 of these brackets. The cost is around \$4,600 for several mounting brackets and pegboard for one engine.

Ross Chapman made a motion to approve an amount not to exceed \$5,000 for tool mounts for Engine 3. Seconded by Rob Losik.

Roll was called:

Ayes: S. Miller, R. Chapman L., R. Losik, L. Harris, K. Flynn, J. Stempien

Nays: None

Ayes: 6; Nays 0

Motion carried.

Station Tools – Ben Pieper on behalf Matt Walters, presented a request for small hand tool and organization purchase for Station 3. He would like to purchase a small tool chest and keep all the small hand tools organized, as it has been difficult to find any of the small tools, whenever they are needed. He has put together a list of the tools in mind, including cordless drills, screwdrivers, wrenches, etc. The total cost for all requested items comes out to approximately \$6,000. It was suggested that each station gets a similar budget to work with Lowe's in Arlington Heights preferably to equip the station with all small tools tailored to their needs. Each station will have to present their own request.

Ross Chapman made a motion to approve an amount not to exceed \$6,000 for Matt Walters to oversee the small tool purchase for Station 3. Seconded by Rob Losik.

Roll was called:

Ayes: S. Miller, R. Chapman L., R. Losik, L. Harris, K. Flynn, J. Stempien

Nays: None

Ayes: 6; Nays 0

Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

Education Reimbursements – David Ruskowski is requesting tuition reimbursement for completing the Residential Wiring Class at the College of DuPage, which has been approved by the Training Division. He would like to use his 2024 preapproved allotment. The total cost of the class is \$632.

All in favor, no objections; motion carried.

House Fund Requests – Jim Stempien on behalf of Station 4 presented a request for a house fund purchase. They would like to purchase a slow cooker, but the price exceeds the preapproved amount of \$100. The cost is \$120 and to be purchased through Amazon.

Jim Stempien made a motion to approve \$120 for the slow cooker purchase for Station 4. Seconded by Chief Harris.

Roll was called:

Ayes: S. Miller, R. Chapman L., R. Losik, L. Harris, K. Flynn, J. Stempien

Nays: None

Ayes: 6; Nays 0

Motion carried.

Jim Stempien on behalf of Station 2 presented a request for reimbursement for the same slow cooker at Station 2. Ryan Loftus has purchased two of them already from Costco and he is are requesting a reimbursement of \$194.83 total. Jim Stempien informed Ryan that in the future he should request the purchase instead of purchasing the item himself.

Chief Harris made a motion to approve a reimbursement of \$194.83 for a Ryan Loftus' purchase of 2 slow cookers. Seconded by Chief Harris.

Roll was called:

Ayes: S. Miller, R. Chapman L., R. Losik, L. Harris, K. Flynn, J. Stempien

Nays: None

Ayes: 6; Nays 0

Motion carried.

Winter Hats – Update on the winter hats purchase – due to miscommunication with the vendor, there was a delay in placing the winter hats order. The order has been placed and hats are being printed and should be completed and delivered soon.

Fitness Shoes – Ross Chapman wanted to give an update regarding the fitness shoes program with the new vendor. There have been only positive reviews. The vendor has been at Station 1 for the past three days with a large variety of shoes and sizes. She has also been helping members place orders if their size was not available.

Hose – Jim Stempien on behalf of Alex Bellusci wanted to give an update on the hose. The order has been placed, but has not arrived yet.

NEW BUSINESS:

Health & Wellness – Jim Stempien on behalf of Matt Sigler, who could not be here today due to training, presented the request. A request is for a sauna rental for 3 days as well as a purchase of cold plunge bath and ice. There has been a lot of research regarding the benefits of sauna and cold plunge therapy and aiding cardiac health. The company has a large-scale sauna on a trailer which would be parked behind Station 2 and the owner would provide training on all sauna benefits as well. The cost of the sauna rental is approximately \$2,300. The sauna company does not offer cold plunge therapy; therefore, a different company would have to be utilized or there is an option of purchasing a portable tub and filling it with ice. The total requested amount is \$3,500. Board members were not in favor of the cold plunge due to potential issues with going back into service after being in freezing water moments prior.

Ross Chapman made a motion to approve \$2,300 for the sauna rental to be coordinated with the Training Division by Matt Sigler. Seconded by Kevin Flynn.

Roll was called:

Ayes: S. Miller, R. Chapman L., R. Losik, L. Harris, K. Flynn, J. Stempien

Nays: None

Ayes: 6; Nays 0

Motion carried.

EMS Coats – Ross Chapman on behalf of Drew Hansen presented a request for new EMS jackets. The previous EMS jackets were Blauer navy blue with gray reflective and ordered through JG Uniforms. Since we have switched over to a new uniform vendor, those jackets are not available anymore. Drew Hansen is looking for a replacement for that jacket that would perform well in rain and to replace a safety vest. He found a Truwerk jacket and the total cost with embroidery comes out to \$150/jacket. He would like to purchase 110 jackets for a total of \$16,500. Chief Harris is in favor of these jackets and believes they would

increase safety given how bright they are and that they can be worn during rain. The board wanted to include new hires in the purchase as well.

Scott Miller made a motion to approve \$18,000 for the purchase of 120 EMS jackets through Henry's Decorated Apparel contingent upon Deputy Benkert's final approval. Seconded by Kevin Flynn.

Roll was called:

Ayes: S. Miller, R. Chapman L., R. Losik, L. Harris, K. Flynn, J. Stempien

Nays: None

Ayes: 6; Nays 0

Motion carried.

Annual Internet Service – Every year the Foreign Fire Tax Board approves funds for the annual cost of internet services for all 4 stations. Last year the board approved amount of \$2,000 per station for distribution to each house manager for bill paying purposes. Same request is being presented today. The house managers for each of the stations, which is who the checks should be made out to, are as follows: Station 1- Scott Limbers, Station 2 - Ryan Loftus, Station 3 - John Volz, Station 4 - Stuart Kuhn.

Jim Stempien made a motion to approve \$8,000, \$2,000 per station, to supplement the internet funds for the 4 fire stations for 2025.

Roll was called:

Ayes: S. Miller, R. Chapman L., R. Losik, L. Harris, K. Flynn, J. Stempien

Nays: None

Ayes: 6; Nays 0

Motion carried.

Tuition Program – Two of the members are planning to attend a local class in the state, but far enough that they would like to stay in a hotel. The class is in Frankfort, IL. Matt Sigler and Adam Hoeflich would like to attend a 5-day Fire class there. They would like to use their preapprove tuition fund to cover the cost of the class as well as the hotel stay.

Jim Stempien made a motion to approve their request to utilize their preapproved tuition amount to cover the cost of the class and the hotel stay contingent up Village approval. Seconded by Rob Losik.

Roll was called:

Ayes: S. Miller, R. Chapman L., R. Losik, L. Harris, K. Flynn, J. Stempien

Nays: None

Ayes: 6; Nays 0

Motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Belt tool – Scott Miller on behalf of Jake Witkowski presented a request for a tool holder belt attachment. He's asking for \$3,105 to purchase 115 of those attachments. He bought his own in 2022 and has been using it since. He is able to free up his hands instead of carrying axes, etc. The cost is \$27/piece.

Ross Chapman made a motion not to exceed \$3,200 for truck belt utility rings for all members that would like to use one to be handled by Jake Witkowski. Seconded by Rob Losik.

Roll was called:

Ayes: S. Miller, R. Chapman L., R. Losik, L. Harris, K. Flynn, J. Stempien

Nays: None

Ayes: 6; Nays 0

Motion carried.

Glove straps – Jim Stempien on behalf of Marc Piscitiello presented a request for glove straps. There has been a change in turnout gloves in recent years. The previous model included grove straps; however, the new model does not include glove straps in the kit. He believes the glove straps are valuable and would like to purchase several for those who need them.

Jim Stempien made a motion to approve \$500 for a one-time purchase of supply of glove straps for turnout gloves to be overseen by Lt. Piscitiello. Seconded by Ross Chapman.

Roll was called:

Ayes: S. Miller, R. Chapman L., R. Losik, L. Harris, K. Flynn, J. Stempien

Nays: None

Ayes: 6; Nays 0

Motion carried

Motion made by Jim Stempien to adjourn 1st quarter meeting; seconded by Kevin Flynn. The meeting was adjourned at 10:58 am.