

**REGULAR MEETING OF
DIRECTORS OF BELMONT FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
Tuesday, January 25, 2011
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, ONE TWIN PINES LANE
and
HAMPTON INN BUFFALO - WILLIAMSVILLE
5455 MAIN STREET, BUSINESS CENTER
WILLIAMSVILLE, NY
(Teleconference location of Director Lieberman)**

CALL TO ORDER 9:10 P.M. (Note: City Council Meeting held prior)

ROLL CALL

Directors Present: Warden, Lieberman (via teleconference), Wozniak, Feierbach, Braunstein

Directors Absent: None

Staff Present: District Manager Scoles, Fire Chief Fry, City Attorney Zafferano, Community Development de Melo, Police Chief Mattei, Human Resources Director Dino, Finance Director Fil, City Treasurer Violet, District Secretary Cook

CONSENT CALENDAR

Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of October 26, 2010

Approval of Waiver of Conflict of Interest to Use the law firm of Liebert Cassidy Whitmore legal services

Acceptance of Belmont-San Carlos Fire Department Quarterly Report

ACTION: On a motion by Director Wozniak, seconded by Director Braunstein, the Consent Agenda was unanimously approved by a roll call vote.

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

Report on Status of Future Fire Services

District Manager Scoles stated that staff and the fire consultant have been working on options for future fire services over the past several months.

Stu Gary, Fire Consultant, stated that three options have been analyzed by staff: 1) standalone department, 2) contract for services, and hybrid of option 1 and 2. He noted that each is not mutually exclusive, as blending of some of the options may be desirable. He provided pros and cons as well as the fiscal impact of each option. He explained that the legacy liability costs could be spread out over time. He also explained that there will be costs for separation of service of the existing employees. He outlined the timeline to implement each of the three options. He stated there is a need to be prudent with the level of reserves. He explained that revenue projections have been based on modest tax growth.

Discussion ensued regarding how to address the gap in funding.

Director Warden requested additional information on how to mitigate the legacy cost. He expressed his preference in hiring the firefighters with their existing leaves rather than paying out vacation.

City Attorney Zafferano stated that the previous debt for PERS will carry forward. He noted that it is unknown which firefighters will work for the newly created department.

Discussion ensued regarding legacy costs, including PERS and vacation buyout.

Finance Director Fil explained that accrued vacation has been disclosed but not funded by the Belmont-San Carlos Fire Department.

Consultant Gary stated that some legacy costs will be dependent on what the City of San Carlos decides to do for its future fire services.

District President Feierbach expressed support for a new and innovative fire department. She supports local control with some contracting out of services where necessary. She would like to maintain the same level of service that currently exists. She suggested forming an ad hoc committee with two members of the Belmont Fire Protection District to further explore options.

Director Braunstein stated that Belmont needs to be able to fund a fire department and maintain the level of service. He noted that people want fire and paramedic service regardless of who provides it. He expressed support for regionalism, as well as creative solutions for savings. He also expressed support for pursuing the hybrid option.

Director Wozniak stated that there is limited time in which to be ready for fire services once the dissolution is finalized in October. She expressed a need for a short and long-term solution. She expressed support for a standalone department for the short term, and noted that regional or shared services could take place in the long term. She also supports creative solutions, and commented that the satisfaction of the firefighters should be of primary consideration. She noted that some services could be contracted out, and equipment could be shared.

Director Lieberman stated that if the desire is to select the lowest cost option, the hybrid option meets that goal. He acknowledged the appeal of a standalone department, but costs for sustaining that option may not be viable in the long term. He expressed support for the hybrid option. He is concerned about the potential need to ask residents for more money for ongoing support of a standalone department.

Brian Randall, San Carlos resident, expressed support for the withdrawal of the letter of dissolution.

Director Warden expressed support for a standalone department.

District President Feierbach expressed concern regarding the implementation of a joint powers authority model, especially with multiple agencies. She supports a standalone department.

ACTION: Director Warden made a motion, seconded by Director Wozniak, to pursue a standalone department with a Chief and two fully-staffed stations, and to explore creative revenue sources, such as a shared ladder truck, and some shared services with other departments for battalion chiefs, a fire marshal, and inspection and disaster preparedness services.

MEETING EXTENSION, at this time, being 10:30 P.M. on a motion by Director Wozniak, seconded by Director Braunstein, the meeting was unanimously extended to 11:00 P.M. by a roll call vote.

Director Warden clarified that he intends for the fire department employees to be employees of and managed by the City of Belmont. He noted that certain functions could be shared with other agencies. He stated that a clear chain of command is important.

ACTION: On the original motion by Director Warden, said motion passed on a roll call vote (4-1, Lieberman no).

Director Lieberman stated that he voted no because he supports an ongoing analysis of the hybrid option.

At this time, Director Lieberman disconnected from the meeting.

ACTION: Director Warden made a motion to create an ad hoc committee. He noted the need for regular status updates, and expressed concern regarding the timeline to be able to form a standalone fire department.

Director Wozniak stated that she did not support this idea.

Consultant Garry explained that a standalone department is the easiest to implement.

District Secretary Cook explained that monthly Belmont Fire Protection District meetings were being scheduled in order to provide more frequent updates.

ADJOURNMENT at this time, being 10:55 P.M.

**Terri Cook
District Secretary**

Meeting audio-recorded and videotaped
Audio Recording 778