

**FRANKFORT FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
FRANKFORT FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Minutes of the Special Public Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Frankfort Fire Protection District, Will County, Illinois, held at Fire Station Number One, 333 W. Nebraska Street, Frankfort, Illinois, in said District at 10:00 A.M., on the 28th day of July, 2020.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order and a roll call was taken.

Upon the roll being called, the following Trustees answered present:  
William F. Hoffmeister, Michael Kavanagh, Larry Nice, Sr. and Daniel Rossi.

Chief Bob Wilson, DC Sean Fierce, Attorney Shawn Flaherty (via Zoom), BC Todd Hamm and ENG/EMT Kevin Brow (Pension Board) were also in attendance.

Trustee Robert Jacobs was absent from said meeting.

A **Motion** was made by Trustee Michael Kavanagh, seconded by Trustee William F. Hoffmeister, to appoint Trustee Daniel Rossi President Pro-Tem for this meeting. A voice vote was called. All in favor. Motion carried.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

None.

**PERSONNEL:**

1. Discussion on PSEBA Application – Attorney, Shawn Flaherty

Chief Wilson explained that Catherine Crook-McNicholas is the first “line of duty” PESBA claim made.

Attorney Flaherty stated that the Pension Board made the determination that Catherine’s injury happened in the “line of duty” on October 15, 2013 and that decision was awarded. It is the District’s responsibility to make the determination of the PSEBA benefits.

Attorney Flaherty reviewed the application that was filed on March 12, 2020 with the Trustees. He noted the application was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Attorney Flaherty explained the following criteria for consideration:

1. Is injury deemed catastrophic under the Act? (“Catastrophic” – means a person would receive a “line of duty” disability pension).
2. Was the injury that caused the disability believed to be in response to an emergency?
3. Analysis of what other benefits are available to applicant and dependents.

**PERSONNEL:** [Continued]

At 10:15 A.M., Catherine joined the meeting (virtually) and stated the following: “the District has all the information and medical records”.

In response to Attorney Flaherty’s questions, Catherine explained the nature of her injury as follows: She was working a Mutual Aid structure fire in Matteson and was hit in the left knee with a ladder. The torn ACL injury to the left knee required surgery. A cadaver ligament was used as a replacement, but it did not work.

Attorney Flaherty confirmed with Catherine that she was granted a “line of duty” pension and reviewed the following information:

- Married – two (2) daughters (oldest recently taken off the insurance and other daughter is fourteen years of age);
- DOB: January 24, 1978;
- Married: July 3, 2019; and,
- Husband is on the FFPD’s plan and the City of Chicago plan.

At 10:23 A.M., Catherine left the meeting.

Attorney Flaherty stated that there is no doubt in his mind that the first two (2) criteria have been met and the District should award the PSEBA benefit, which means that she will be on the District’s plan until she is Medicare eligible and her dependent daughter until age 26.

There is language in the PESBA Act that states that benefits payable to applicant are reduced by benefits from another source. The husband has benefits payable from another source and may not be eligible for Frankfort’s benefits. If the husband drops the other source (coverage), then the FFPD must accept him into their plan.

In answer to Chief Wilson’s question, Trustee Rossi explained that coverage for an employee and child is less expensive than family (employee, children and spouse) coverage.

Attorney Flaherty confirmed that if the husband joined the FFPD’s HSA Plan, the FFPD only has to pay the premium, not the deductible (funding). Any additional coverages that are available, i.e. dental, vision, are at Catherine’s costs.

Attorney Flaherty stated that the PSEBA benefit is only for the medical premium.

Attorney Flaherty confirmed for Trustee Rossi that if PSEBA coverage is offered only to Catherine and her daughter (no family coverage), her husband can then join the FFPD’s plan if he loses his coverage from another source.

Trustee Michael Kavanagh requested to go into Closed Session to discuss this matter further.

**POSSIBLE CLOSED SESSION PER STATUTE 5ILCS120/2C FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING LITIGATION, COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, REAL ESTATE AND PERSONNEL:**

At 10:35 A.M., a **Motion** was made by Trustee Michael Kavanagh, seconded by Trustee William F. Hoffmeister, that the Board meet in Closed Session for the purpose of discussing Litigation, Real Estate, Personnel and any other Frankfort Fire Protection business that is allowed to be discussed in Closed Session under the Open Meetings Act. President Pro-Tem Rossi called for a roll call vote: upon the roll being called, the following Trustees voted aye: William F. Hoffmeister, Michael Kavanagh, Larry Nice, Sr. and Daniel Rossi. All in favor. Motion carried.

At 10:45 A.M., a **Motion** was made by Trustee Larry Nice, Sr., seconded by Trustee Michael Kavanagh, to reconvene the Special Board Meeting. President Pro-Tem Rossi called for voice vote. All in favor. Motion carried.

**POSSIBLE ACTION ON ITEMS DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION:**

A **Motion** was made by Trustee Michael Kavanagh, seconded by Trustee Larry Nice, Sr., to award the PSEBA health insurance premium benefits to Catherine Crook-McNicholas and her dependent children, retroactive to the date of application, March 12, 2020. President Pro-Tem Rossi called for a roll call vote: upon the roll being called, the following Trustees voted aye: William F. Hoffmeister, Michael Kavanagh, Larry Nice, Sr. and Daniel Rossi. All in favor. Motion carried.

A **Motion** was made by Trustee William F. Hoffmeister, seconded by Trustee Larry Nice, Sr., to deny Catherine Crook-McNicholas' spouse benefits at this time due to benefits payable from another source. President Pro-Tem Rossi called for a roll call vote: upon the roll being called, the following Trustees voted aye: William F. Hoffmeister, Michael Kavanagh, Larry Nice, Sr. and Daniel Rossi. All in favor. Motion carried.

Attorney Flaherty directed that a letter be sent to Catherine Crook-McNicholas regarding her options.

At 10:47 A.M., Attorney Flaherty left the meeting.

**FINANCE:**

1. Finance Review – James Howard

At 10:50 A.M., James Howard joined the meeting.

James presented a "PowerPoint" Financial review and explained the following:

- CPI Index and Levy Extension;
- Challenges for Fiscal Year 2021 – Increase in debt payments and decline of SAFER Grant;
- Property taxes – new growth, still growing (Note: when property values go down, rates go up);
- Split with Pension – Levy at cap. (Ambulance & General);
- Budget Revenues – increases anticipated and last year took the conservative approach with interest and ambulance fees;
- Vehicle replacement and finance options for possible ladder truck purchase;
- Increase in service revenue due to the addition of a new mechanic;
- Side note: The accounting software is being migrated into Quick Books – more user friendly. The Board held a brief discussion on the advantages;

**FINANCE:** [Continued]

- Expenditures – Staffing needs (more manpower to reduce overtime). AC Kinsella took over staffing and a reduction in overtime has been recognized. Would like to hire another firefighter in an effort to reduce overtime costs. (Board discussed minimum manning, “Acting” staffing and working with the Union);
- Good savings on Health Insurance premiums;
- General Operating was reduced, since all other expenditures are contractual;
- Overall, there was a 1% increase in the new budget versus last year’s budget;
- Discussed Fund Balances for the following – (need to cut overtime and increase revenue, but hard to do with Covid)
  - Corporate
  - Ambulance
  - Foreign Fire
  - Capital
- Five-Year Forecast – structured deficit is “very concerning” – expenditures overrun revenues;
- Discussed comparisons between the FFPD and similar Districts for the following:
  - EAV comps versus population
  - Tax rates
  - Extension versus expenditures
  - Expenditures ratios
  - Fund balance to expenditure ratio
- Rescue Tax Dime Referendum – explained the referendum process and noted that educating the public is the most important way to have the referendum pass in the April 2021 election:
  - Tax rate would increase from .8155 to .9155 (10 cents per \$100 EAV)
  - This is a separate levied fund that can cover anything – personnel, special teams, Covid-19, etc.

Chief Wilson noted that several Districts have already passed the Rescue Tax Dime funding.

In answer to Trustee Hoffmeister’s question, the expenses from Covid-19 are being tracked.

Chief Wilson requested the Board review a draft of the Purchasing Policy whereby the purchasing amount increases from \$5,000 to \$7,000, with all other language remaining the same.

**POSSIBLE CLOSED SESSION PER STATUTE 5ILCS120/2C FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING LITIGATION, COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, REAL ESTATE AND PERSONNEL:**

At 11:50 A.M., a **Motion** was made by Trustee Larry Nice, Sr., seconded by Trustee Michael Kavanagh, that the Board meet in Closed Session for the purpose of discussing Litigation, Real Estate, Personnel and any other Frankfort Fire Protection business that is allowed to be discussed in Closed Session under the Open Meetings Act. President Pro-Tem Rossi called for a roll call vote: upon the roll being called, the following Trustees voted aye: William F. Hoffmeister, Michael Kavanagh, Larry Nice, Sr. and Daniel Rossi. All in favor. Motion carried.

At 12:30 P.M., a **Motion** was made by Trustee Michael Kavanagh, seconded by Trustee William F. Hoffmeister, to reconvene the Special Board Meeting. President Pro-Tem Rossi called for voice vote. All in favor. Motion carried.

**POSSIBLE ACTION ON ITEMS DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION:**

A **Motion** was made by Trustee Michael Kavanagh, seconded by Trustee William F. Hoffmeister, to drop all disciplinary action regarding the current Step 2 Grievance against Nick Sunzere and require that both Nick Sunzere and Sean Fierce go to joint counseling, whereby the counselor must be approved by both the Board of Trustees and the Union, and request the Union to consider dropping the ULP based upon actions taken. President Pro-Tem Rossi called for a roll call vote: upon the roll being called the following Trustees voted aye: William F. Hoffmeister, Michael Kavanagh and Danie Rossi. Trustee Larry Nice, Sr. voted nay. Motion carried.

**ADJOURNMENT/RECESS:**

At 12:35 P.M., a **Motion** was made by Trustee Larry Nice, Sr., seconded by Trustee William F. Hoffmeister, that this meeting be adjourned. President Jacobs called for a voice vote. All in favor. Motion carried.

Michelle Selvaggio, Recording Secretary

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Secretary, Board of Trustees

Transcription by: Carolyn J. Williams, Administrative Receptionist