

**Breitung Township Board  
Special Board Meeting  
Joint Meeting with Fire Department Chiefs  
August 20, 2018**

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Olson at 7:00 p.m.

**Roll Call: Present:** Trustees Johnson, Rochon, Soderbloom, Wales and Supervisor Olson.

**Absent:** Clerk Neuens and Treasurer Taylor – both excused.

Also present: Chief Jeff Iverson and Assistant Chief Rick Lindow. Assistant Chief Scott Marshall arrived at 7:34 p.m.

Public Comment: No comments.

Approval of Agenda: **Motion** by Trustee Wales, **second** by Trustee Rochon to approve the August 20, 2018 Special Meeting Agenda as presented. **Vote: Unanimous, motion carried.**

Old Business:

Standard Operation Guidelines (SOG's) & Chain of Command: Per Chief Iverson, the officers have had three meetings since the last joint meeting. SOG's are being discussed.

Chief Iverson explained the Chain of Command as required by the SOG's:

*In short, all firefighters receive Chain of Command training during Fire Fighter I. If anyone has a problem either in a training meeting or on the fire scene, the firefighter should discuss the problem with their immediate supervisor (officer). The officer will either correct the problem or contact the assistant chief. If required, the assistant chief will contact the fire chief.*

Chain of Command is essentially the same as in the military.

Incident Command: The Incident Command System is part of training during Firefighter I. If there is a disagreement on the fire scene, the debriefing after the fire is an avenue for firefighters to discuss.

Debriefing is usually conducted as soon as possible after the firefighters return to the station but can be difficult at times due to the fact that each station may leave the scene at different times. In addition, firefighters sometimes need to leave immediately after the fire to go to work.

SCBA Use and Enforcement: Supervisor Olson referenced the discussion from the last meeting regarding facial hair (beards) for firefighters.

After a long discussion Chief Iverson confirmed that his personal preference is that firefighters do not have beards. By MIOSHA guidelines, firefighters are prohibited from donning a SCBA (Self Contained Breathing Apparatus) if their facial hair could cause a poor seal on the SCBA mask. Fire Departments are required to abide by MIOSHA rules and regulations.

Chief Iverson explained that this is a hard situation to deal with because if the fire department prohibited facial hair (beards) many firefighters would likely quit the department.

Staffing – Direct Mail Campaign:

Chief Iverson updated the Township Board on the following:

- 1) Currently we can be “a little light” on fire responses during certain parts of the day, however this is not unique to our department.
- 2) Our department, as do most in the area, depends upon mutual aid from other departments.
- 3) Most firefighters are not firefighting for the money.

Staffing – Direct Mail Campaign-continued:

- 4) Firefighting for Breitung Township Fire Department requires a large commitment especially during the first couple years.
- 5) Currently thirty-two (32) firefighters are on the roster.
- 6) Compensation is not an issue.

Suggestions during the discussion:

- 1) Utilizing social media to post firefighter jobs.
- 2) Direct mailings to all township residents to hopefully draw applicants.

Actions Taken:

**Motion** by Trustee Soderbloom, **second** by Trustee Wales to approve the cost for a direct mailing to recruit applicants for our firefighter job openings. **Vote: Unanimous, motion carried.**

**Motion** by Trustee Johnson, **second** by Trustee Rochon to approve use of social media and the township website to post firefighter job openings. **Vote: Unanimous, motion carried.**

Training for Firefighters at Lake Antoine Park To Be Utilized as a Recruitment and Retention Event:

Chief Iverson reported that Rob Blazier has contacted Lake Antoine Park to reserve a pavilion for the training. The date of the training will be confirmed later.

**Motion** by Trustee Soderbloom, **second** by Trustee Wales to approve up to \$600.00 for the purchase of food for the firefighters during the training at Lake Antoine Park. **Vote: Unanimous, motion carried.**

Other business:

Informational report from Chief Iverson that the Baroda, MI Fire Department has a tanker-type truck that might be available for purchase. Information on the truck was sent to Superintendent Gaudette and DPW Superintendent Forstrom.

Set Date of Next Joint Meeting: Date to be determined.

Public Comment: Joe Hruska, Breitung Township, stated that direct mailing was a good idea, but also suggested that we, as community leaders, need to instill a culture in our youth to serve their communities. Joe also suggested having the Township revive events such as the community picnic in which the firefighters would also participate.

Adjournment: **Motion** by Trustee Rochon, **second** by Trustee Johnson to adjourn.

**Vote: Unanimous, motion carried.**

The meeting was declared adjourned by Supervisor Olson at 8:29 p.m.

Hand-notes taken by Trustee Soderbloom in Clerk Neuens' absence.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Reviewed and Approved by,

Samantha Neuens  
Breitung Township Clerk

Denny Olson  
Breitung Township Supervisor