



Solon Township Hall
15185 Algoma Avenue NE
Cedar Springs, MI 49319
616-696-1718

**Minutes of the Solon Township Fire Committee
February 2, 2016 meeting 7:00pm**

Meeting called to order by Chairman Jeff Mather at 7:01 PM

Members Present: Fire Chief Jeff Drake, Vice Chairman Curt Steinebach*, Chairman Jeff Mather*, Township Trustee Fred Gunnell*, Community Representative Don Hamblin*, Fire Department Representative Dan Spangenberg. (* = voting member)

Members Absent: Community Representative Burt Dent*

Approval of Agenda: Motion by Curt Steinebach to approve agenda. 2nd by Don Hamblin, Motion carried 4-0.

Approval of November 2, 2015 minutes: Motion by Fred Gunnell to approve agenda. 2nd by Curt Steinbach. Motion carried 4-0.

Business:

- 1) Discussion on the development, distribution, and training related to Fire Department SOP's and other guidelines. SOP's are required by the Michigan Township Association and Township Insurance carrier(s). The Chief develops policies with review and support from the officers. Fire fighters are required to read SOP's. They are available for reference on TexCom.
 - a. Recommendations:
 - i. When new SOP's are developed, solicit assistance from officers to help craft language and to optimize the method of delivery to all fire fighters (i.e., to ensure learning occurs).
- 2) Discussion on "leadership". Reviewed opportunities for improving communications, camaraderie, retention, and assimilation of new fire fighters with senior fire fighters to better benefit from their experiences. Leadership is a challenge due to limited face-to-face interaction and part-time status of Chief's position.
 - a. Recommendations:
 - i. Shift (some) administrative responsibilities to the TBD Deputy Chief's position so that the Chief can focus more time on leadership and team building.

- ii. Implement a more formal performance evaluation system for all fire fighters. Currently, this is done on an informal basis and using “After-Action” reviews at accident scenes or at the fire house.
 - iii. Chairman Mather and Committee member Steinebach agreed to meet and discuss opportunities for improvements in this area.
- 3) Discussion on recommendations from fire fighters: Fire fighters expressed that they do not always know the reason why a recommendation they make is or isn’t implemented.
 - a. Recommendation: Need better follow-up communication. Develop a method for communicating the reasoning for why a policy/recommendation/idea is or isn’t being implemented. Suggest posting on TexCom and on the Firehouse bulletin board.
- 4) Discussion and review of STFD alarm response. The last turfed call was June of 2015. It was picked up by the mutual aid system as planned by our contingency system. The call box / mutual aid system is working. New firefighters will be available to respond in May 2016.
- 5) Committee member Spangenberg reported that there is a need for improved lighting by the steps leading to the fire house. This area is dark and creates a trip hazard especially when there is snow and ice.
- 6) Review of fulltime fire fighter Paige’s work schedule to identify if additional hours are needed or if the schedule should be changed to allow for greater coverage during peak hours. There was agreement that his current schedule works best – based on availability of other fire fighters.

Additional public comments: none

Adjourn: Motion to adjourn and accepted: Time 9:05pm

Submitted by: Jeff Mather