

January 22, 2018



Fire Chief's Report

Full time hiring process – Our three new full time hires have started their assigned shifts. We are still anticipating a fourth hire to replace a firefighter who is retiring in April. We have a total of five on our hire list at this time. We could potentially have a second retirement in the near future so we would finish out that list.

2017 Annual Reviews are complete – My emphasis this year was to celebrate a very successful 2017 and to see what would my direct reports need from me to ensure that 2018 was just as successful.

New Staffing model – With the addition of the second PT FF and the FT FF on each shift we are now able to staff Station 5 more consistently. I believe we are going to see a dramatic effect on response times on the south end. This month especially we have staffed when the calls have been happening which is fortuitous.

Healthy In – Healthy Out Program – The Fire Service is starting to recognize the tremendous exposure that our firefighters have to carcinogens. Consequently we are looking in to the “Healthy In - Healthy Out” Program. I’ve been working with Michael Bellia on this and I asked him to come present some of his findings to the Board once we get some draft procedures in place. Some of the things we are looking at are having FFs switch out all of their gear after a fire for decontamination procedures and either banning work boots from the station living areas or providing a cleaning solution that FFs walk through when coming into the station.

Mutual Aid with NCRFA – I have been having discussions with Chief Cermak, NCRFA, about our mutual aid responses. It does seem to be more one-sided in their responses to our Island versus us responding to Stanwood. Some of that is due to their dispatch system which doesn’t recognize us as being available to respond. Capt. Allen is working with NCRFA personnel to determine the best way to notify our respective agencies about mutual aid requests. Our new staffing additions allowing us to staff St 3 full time are going to have a tremendous impact but there is one more area I think we can help to reduce those mutual aid requests. We have 42 days in 2018 with only one paramedic on duty. These days are likely to feature high utilization of our neighboring medic unit. I’ve been looking at two possible ways to address this shortage. I am working with our Community Resource Paramedic, Jim Reinhardt, to see if he is available during the day to staff an ambulance. Right now he listens during the day and will respond in an SUV if his assistance is needed. He is not in an ambulance however so if he is the only medic we need to request a transporting unit. Occasionally we will have a BLS unit available that Jim can jump to. My second solution is to offer optional OT to paramedics to increase our minimum staffing to at least two medics. I believe we will be saving money on OT in general with the addition of a FF to each shift so there will not be a huge cost increase, if any, for this optional OT.

SnoPUD – I had the opportunity to briefly chat with a couple of SnoPUD representatives at the Chamber of Commerce luncheon last week. They told me to expect some construction this year to make power distribution on the south end more reliable. I told them I would rather they buried all of the transmission lines but anything would be an improvement.

Volunteer Program –

2018 Recruit class – We are swearing in six new recruits tonight.

Volunteer Policy Manual – New manual went into effect January 1st. My objective this year is to provide much more hands on leadership to help ensure the success of the program. I am working on a much more realistic rookie book which should be ready in the next month.

FF1 Academy starts January 31st – Our new recruits will be starting their fire academy on Jan 31st. We may have some outside students as well which will help lower our costs.

Finishing up EMT testing – Just about everyone has finished up their NR testing from our EMT class in the fall. Per the new policy manual they have three months after the class ended to pass the national exam. This has been an issue in the past with recruits just being continued along in the training process without passing required exams at the end of each academy.

Officer's Meeting January 15th

AAR on Christmas Eve. We did great but I think we should have activated the EOC. Normally we are anticipating an activation, predicted wind storm, 4th of July, or it's a slow moving event. This was very fast and a little unexpected. We were expecting a little snow but not icy conditions that we had.

We will be focusing on getting our Incident Reports done in a timely fashion. You may have noticed a slight change in previous call data month to month because we have had a significant number of reports which are simply not finished.

Everyone feels that Crew Sense, our new scheduling software, is working well.

We decided to go for new extrication equipment for the current AFG process. We are looking at battery operated equipment which is much easier to deploy and use than our current equipment.

Our drone project is moving forward. We are getting people certified, the equipment registered with the FAA, and developing SOPs for use.

GEMT – We have submitted our application to the State stating that it is our intent to submit our reimbursement data. It is staff's opinion that we contract with System Design to facilitate the application process. There is a cost associated with that however.

Island County CHIP – Island County has published their Community Health Improvement Plan. CIFR has been an active partner in developing this plan and I believe without our participation a CRP program would not have been included.

Annual Report – The draft 2017 Annual Report is ready for review. The bottom line is that we showed improvement in all areas. I did add an explanation about the standards which we have set since you will remember we had a couple of citizens publically misrepresent those. I also added a description of our successes in 2017 which I believe is quite impressive.