

**ROCKVILLE/SPRINGDALE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

**P.O. Box 159**

**Springdale, UT 84767**

**Tuesday January 26, 2016**

**Springdale Council Chambers**

**Special Meeting**

**1. ROLL CALL AND CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman Francis called the meeting to order at 9:00AM. The following members of the Rockville/Springdale Fire Protection District Board were present: John Callahan, Chuck Passek, Adrian Player, Michael Young and Luci Francis recording. Additionally present, Chief Ryan Ballard and the Emergency Service Consulting International Team consisting of Lane Wintermute, Stuart McHaney and Rob Strong.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA** – Adrian Player moved the agenda be approved. John Callahan seconded the motion and a roll call vote indicated all those present voted in favor of the motion.

**3. MEETING WITH EMERGENCY SERVICES CONSULTING INTERNATIONAL TEAM TO DISCUSS AND ESTABLISH PROJECT GOALS FOR THE RSFPD FEASIBILITY STUDY AND MASTER PLAN-** The Board met with the Emergency Service Consulting International Team to discuss and establish goals in the work plan that was presented. Chairman Francis started out by stating that the initial proposal and the recently updated version of the work plan match. The only question she had was that she didn't see the "cost projections" portion of the study included in the work plan, but that was included in the proposal contract.

Mr. Wintermute responded by stating that the way that the proposal was written, the cost projections were supposed to be identified as an optional section and their office priced it separately. Those projections depend on what source of things they would identify in the future strategies and whether they would have a financial impact. The consulting firm would do an apparatus replacement schedule and would be funded with numbers if there was a financial impact.

Chairman Francis stated that Chief Ballard had been with the District a long time (over 20 years) and could help and give some recommendations to ESCI for the apparatus replacement schedule.

Mr. Passek felt that the capital assets were an important thing that ESCI would need to look at. He felt that one of the issues that the Board was facing is the long term financial issues. He said he would be interested to see what it would cost to replace things and what things the District should have.

Mr. Wintermute stated that typically, that was always a concern for other departments as well. Long term financial issues are something most Fire Departments do not plan for. He stated that ESCI would give the Board a replacement schedule and cost projections that would be important for long term financial planning. ESCI would not be able to give architectural designs for the facilities or the cost estimates for those facilities.

Chairman stated that the fire house was over 20 years old, is in need of repair and the Board would like to get the District Office into a public place or at the firehouse instead at the personal residence of the Clerk. Whether the District builds a stand-alone, finds room within the firehouse or builds out, they would need to work that out with the Town of Springdale and were not expecting ESCI to do that.

Mr. McElhaney stated that they have architects that they work with, who could look at systems and expansion vs construction and give recommendations to the Board, if that were the direction that they wanted to take.

Chairman then turned the time over to Lane Wintermute from the ESCI Team who stated that they had a clear understanding of why they were there and wanted to introduce themselves and talk about what the Boards expectations for the study were.

Lane Wintermute is a retired Fire Chief out of Oregon; he also worked in Washington and most recently Idaho. He has been working with ESCI for 8-9 years doing project masterplans. ESCI has been around since 1976, has done consulting projects all over the country. The type of study that is being done for the District is typical of the projects that they do for many fire departments, but noted each circumstance is different.

Stuart McElhaney started working in the fire service in the mid-80's as an Assistant Fire Chief just outside Huston, Texas then moved to Florida in 1994 and was a Fire Chief at the County Fire Department for 21 years. The last 8 years of his career were working as an Assistant County Administrator. He has been doing consulting the last 4 years and really enjoys it. One of the things that used to bother him as the county administrator was having consultants come in and tell them how they need to fit into the model. Mr. McElhaney wanted the Board to know that they would work with them to find what was unique about their situation and do what was best for the District.

Rob Strong is from Oregon, who started in a volunteer fire department in the fire service in 1975. He also worked as Paramedic in the Portland area, and retired from there in 2006. While working there he got involved with data analysis and enjoyed that, and saw how GIS fit into the fire service and acquired a lot of information. He has worked for ESCI for 5 ½ years now. He works with service delivery, population numbers and projections. He felt that this study would be an interesting project to work on. He stated that no two fire departments are alike, but, they may face the same issues and what he found interesting about this work is coming up with the solutions for those issues.

Mr. Wintermute stated that when ESCI conducts a master plan they ask 3 basic questions:

1. Where is your fire department today?
2. Where is it going to be in the future?
3. How are you going to get there?

He said that in general terms of the work plan, the first question, "where is your Fire Department today" is what would be called the evaluation of current conditions where ESCI would spend time with the Fire Chief and gather information. They will also send data requests, do evaluations, conduct data collection, do stake holder interviews and learn everything they can about the organization. They cannot give good advice moving forward unless they learn where the Department is today. Within the first report, Mr. Strong would do an analysis and a detailed breakdown of where resources are, where they are distributed, what the response times are looking like, and what kind of service the District is providing. The next question of "where the District is going to be in the future" will take information from the interviews, comprehensive plans, look at the historic population and be able to project forward what ESCI sees the population may do in the future and project or map out what the Districts expected calls could be. There are a whole lot of variables involved, especially in the Districts situation due to the transient population. Once ESCI has an idea of what they think the community would look like, it will translate into the work load for the fire department. Then they can identify the third question and ask "how they are going to get there." They would then identify strategies of what can be done with the current conditions and be able to give the District a breakdown of things they see that may be important to accomplish. Over the next 10- 15 years would be the time window ESCI would look at. They look at what they are trying to accomplish 10 years from now and would be somewhat accurate of the findings, 15 years would be fairly accurate but anytime beyond that would be more difficult. Mr. Wintermute said that was kind of the nuts and bolts or Overview of the master plan. He want to know what the Board sees coming out of the master plan and wanted to know if it was what the Board was looking for.

Chief Ballard stated that he liked what he heard and seems like they have an idea and that they recognize issues that the District faces.

Michael Young stated that he was particularly interested in the current financial situation and that the EMS service was his particular area of concern. He was also concerned about the relationship with the National Park.

Mr. Player stated that the citizens in the Town are unhappy with the stand by fee increases, whether we are staffing the Department correctly, running the District correctly and whether it was fair. He felt that it was good to have outside approval to make sure we are doing things correctly and understand what we were doing right and wrong.

Mr. Passek stated his concerns were twofold. First was that we evaluate how the Department was operating and make sure we have a department that fits our needs. The second was to take that information and be able to present that information to the public regarding what we should have. This comes out to dollars and cents. The District would want some sort of credible information to use for the stand by fee subscribers and be able to make an informative decision based on the professional metrics and what it would cost. He felt it was important that we have professional expertise to provide the information to the public.

The Consultant stated that there is a multitude of standards and best practices when it comes to the fire service on how they should staff or how to plan, but there is no rule. It is a matter of establishing response times or standards, and those standards are established by the community. ESCI will be talking to the Board about developing standards and what they want to achieve that are based on what the community would like to have, what the expense would be, and what they pay for. They said that it was a process of determining what the District was trying to achieve and questioning whether they need to adjust their target times.

Mr. Passek stated that he was concerned with the staffing levels, looking at RSFPD, because we are limited with staffing. He asked the consultants if, on a professional plot, those numbers were standard and wondered what other departments were doing. He also asked what risks were taken with those staffing levels because he was unaware of any metrics.

Mr. McElhaney's response was that there are studies out there with guidelines that we can benchmark against for these questions. They can tell the District what it takes to do certain things in a certain period of time, tell you where you stand and the risks of that compared to the national standards. They said that what it comes down to is that ESCI needs to translate this to public so they understand. The public has this expectation but no cost of what it takes to get there and ESCI could help with that.

Mr. Wintermute responded by stating that they would cite the national standard, and would tell the District what those standards are and will tell you where you stand within those standards. There is no fire department in the world that meets all the standards at 100%, that is not realistic to do, but ESCI could give the District the framework and guidance.

Mr. Passek said that in the end it is our opinion of what our risk tolerance is for us, we put it out there for the public and if they disagree, they tell us.

The consultants stated that they could identify any shortcomings that need to be addressed then said that they would try and work with the Board to find some other opportunities that are out there that the Board has not taken advantage of and maybe do things a little differently to find alternatives to fund their projects.

John Callahan was concerned about the perception within the community. He has lived within this community for over 20 years. He is a common Joe that knows nothing about fighting fires. However, being involved as a community member he could see that the perception, in our case was not good. He said that we have a volunteer fire department, a Board that is fairly new and inexperienced in setting up fire programs. We want to know how best to staff, how best to respond to situations or incidents that we may have and as far as the future goes, he feels that a set of plans that we can realistically be able to live with was his expectation and what he is looking for from the study.

Chairman Francis wanted to add that she believed that the District, for as old as it is, has enjoyed a robust financial position. She said that the District rarely sought grant money or took loans, were able to run the District with what we had at the time, and were very frugal with our financial decisions. What changed all that was the lack of volunteers; we knew we needed to pay the staff to keep them and that is what precipitated the increase in our wages which brought the increase in standby fees in 2014. She said that we have had a hard time educating the public and the public has a hard time understanding the costs it takes to run the District because most of the public still believes that we are part of the municipality or other governmental entity with endless funding. We are not, and when we need more funds, we have to raise stand by fees since our other revenue sources have been fixed. Chairman stated that this study will be interesting and helpful for the Board. The District is relying on ESCI to help improve the public perception.

Mr. Wintermute stated the Board could contact ESCI if there were any questions or concerns that come to mind at a later date. He said that this is a process, and District involvement is important because the more information that we have the better.

**4. ADJOURN** – Chairman Francis moved the meeting be adjourned. Adrian Player seconded the motion and a roll call vote indicated all those present voted in favor of the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 9:48AM.

Minutes typed by:  
Jennifer Thompson

APPROVED:

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Luci Francis, Chair