

**MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
WORK SESSION  
CITY OF ISANTI  
January 20, 2015**

The meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m.

Members Present: Mayor George Wimmer, Councilors Dan Collison, Steve Lundeen, Adam Johnson and Paul Bergley.

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: City Administrator/City Clerk Don Lorsung and Human Resources/Deputy City Clerk Karissa Henning

**C. Work Session Item**

**1. Discussion on Fire Fighter Concerns**

Mayor Wimmer explained that the City Council work session is being held to give the fire fighters an opportunity to share any thoughts or address any concerns with the City Council that they may have.

Mayor Wimmer noted Lundeen is now the appointed representative for the City of Isanti for the Fire District Board. Lundeen, on behalf of the City, is trying to bring change to the formula for service calls; this is because medical calls are being charged the same as fire calls. Medical calls take significantly less time than fire calls. A majority of Isanti's calls are medical calls.

Randy Polzin, Isanti Fire District Fire Chief, was present and talked to the Council about concerns regarding information being relayed through social media. Polzin noted some information relayed through social media is incorrect and that he would prefer that any issues be addressed face-to-face versus through social media. Polzin mentioned that stories can change over time through social media, and multiple social media posts, and snowball into things that are not true.

Mark Volk, Isanti Fire District Relief Association Treasurer, was present and stated that the State forms that the City needed to sign amounted from a calculation error - but this error was on the States' end, the State has now said everything is okay and nothing further needs to be signed.

Mayor Wimmer mentioned ultimately he would still like to see the Fire District become an independent taxing district.

Volk stated the papers are getting mixed up between the Fire Board and the Fire Department and this is negatively impacting the Fire Fighters. Many Fire Fighters are putting up with a lot of issues and negative comments from citizens because of the issues going on with the Fire Board - the Fire Fighters have no part in these issues and it is not fair to the Fire Fighters.

Mayor Wimmer explained he cannot control what is published in the paper and how things are portrayed, and agreed that some information printed in the paper is not always correct.

Mayor Wimmer explained he would like to get the Fire Board to work in a more functional way and that he would like to change the service call formula.

Polzin and the Council discussed the budget and Polzin noted that the budget has not significantly increased and that as the population goes up, calls go up, and therefore the budget goes up due to more calls per capita. Mayor Wimmer noted the City population has not gone up dramatically. Polzin noted that the Isanti Fire District has a cheaper per capita rate than many other Fire Departments. Polzin also stated that calls have gone up dramatically.

Mayor Wimmer explained he would like the service call formula to reflect the cost of the calls made.

Zach Lundberg, Isanti Fire District Relief Association Secretary, stated the biggest issue the fire fighters are currently facing is a lack of support from the City. Lundberg gave an example of the fire fighters no longer being allowed to use the City's water tower for training. Mayor Wimmer asked why they are no longer able to use the Water tower. Lorsung noted he believed this was a Committee decision; he will look into this and report back.

Lundberg talked about having water meters installed at Station 1 and now having to pay per gallon. Mayor Wimmer explained water meters were put in all City buildings for usage and tracking and that all buildings/ departments have to pay.

Mayor Wimmer stated that he hopes Lundeen is successful with getting changes made to the service call formula and that the City Council will review how they would like to move forward with the Fire District at the next City Council meeting.

Johnson stated the he has always been a supporter of the Fire District. Johnson suggested in terms of inaccurate social media posts, that the fire fighters clarify and bring truth to the misleading comments/posts.

A Fire Fighters wife was present and asked if the level of service would be the same if the City of Isanti has its own Fire Department. Mayor Wimmer stated the level of service would not go down, it would stay the same.

Glenn Farell, 200 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NW, was present and asked about insurance costs to the City if the City were to implement its own Fire Department. Mayor Wimmer noted this insurance cost would be the same.

## **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 6:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karissa Henning  
Human Resources/ Deputy City Clerk