

BERRIEN COUNTY FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

Serving Berrien County Firefighters Since 1950

Berrien County Firefighters Information Website: mi-bcfa.org

January 4th, 2023

Benton Charter Township Fire Department

Meeting called to order at 19:08 hours by President Gerry Kabelman.

Officers present: President Gerry Kabelman, 2nd Vice President Donnie Johnson, and Secretary/Treasurer Dennis Graham. 1st Vice President Craig Brent was absent.

Donations collected at the meal totaled \$129.

Roll call of departments indicate 14 departments represented with 36 members present.

Minutes for the month of December was presented. A motion made by Frank DeLaTorre with support from Matthew Johnson to approve the minutes. The motion carried.

The treasurer's report for the month of December was presented. The balance in checking is \$968.03, \$21.05 in car show account to keep it open, and the money market balance is \$23,604.01. Combined total of \$24,593.09. A motion was made by Austin Carlson with support from Jeff Krolzick to approve the treasurer's report. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

911/Dispatch:

- Ambulance and medical first responders will be using their own channel as E-911.
- 11 BC Page was created as an open simulcast monitor channel. This channel lets you hear what your neighboring departments are doing and does not affect how you are paged out if your department is requested.
- Delay on tower site in Buchanan and seeking alternate locations for placement.

Emergency Management:

- The recent blizzard related events that took place on I-94 and power outage in Benton Harbor.
- Asking for related notes you may have on what went well and not so well on the calls out on the interstate with traffic control and communications. Include your ideas and explanations so there is a better prospective to help us get the big picture in writing.
- Warming centers for displaced residents during the outage in Benton Harbor were set up. Thank-you to all the volunteers who braved the frigid weather to set them up.

Chief's Association:

- Next meeting on January 18th. 2023 Nominations and Elections will be held.

Training Committee:

- The High School class and FF I&II have resumed from break and going well.
- Check Smoke for new listed and updated trainings coming up.
- The Ice Rescue II training is a continuing education for those that have Ice Rescue I. The fee is \$25.

MI-TRIS;

- Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety has invested in tools and equipment available to help in structural collapsed incidents when needed

Resource Directory/Web:

- Need those updates and trainings have been posted to the web site.

Landing Zones:

- Turned down flights due to weather, calendars, and LZ trainings available.

Hazmat:

- A Operations Level trained firefighter may become a member of the BC Hazmat/WMD Team by meeting the Operations Level Team Membership criteria sent out to each fire department.

Sheriff:

- 6 new officers have completed the academy and after more training should be road ready by April. Will be sending 3 more to the same academy soon.
- Niles Twp. to get 3 deputy's after a funding millage being passed.
- Due to the Retirements taking place many position changes are taking place at the throughout the Sherriff Department.
- Mobile Command Unit building in progress.

Announcements:

The New Buffalo Twp. Fire / Berrien County Sheriff's Office are hosting a Polar Plunge Pancake Breakfast on Saturday January 14th, 2023, 8:00 – 11:00.

NBT Public Safety Building

18959 US-12 New Buffalo, MI

All proceeds benefit Special Olympics of Michigan.

Old Business:

- Review of the BCFA by-laws and amendments were read to attending members. See below:

New Business:

- 2022 Audit Committee members are Austin Carlson and Denny Sexton

Host Chief Rob Harper thanked everyone for attending the meeting and to his crew for their dedication in helping setup the station and meal preparation, Chief Harper also thanked the local police and fire departments, with special mention to their families also, for all the help during the most recent snowstorm event which took place on the highway. He announced the February Retirement of Lt. Jim Fogarty with 35 combined years of service. Jim's last shift is Feb. 10th. We thank you and Happy Retirement Lt. Fogarty. Evening program on Vehicle Maintenance was presented by Jon VanLente who serves on Watervliet and Grand Rapids Fire Departments.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Doug Wise and supported by Cory Burks. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 19:54.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis Graham

Sec / Treas

**The next meeting on February 1st, 2023
Benton Harbor Public Safety
6:30 meeting
No Meal**

Proposed Additions and Changes, as discussed at August Meeting:

Committee Formed May 4th, 2022 (Doug deBest, Denny Sexton & Dennis Graham)
Discussions: August 3rd, 2022
First Reading: October 5th, 2020
Second Reading: January 4th, 2023

Constitution

Article V

Section # 2

Change to two (2) year terms, from one (1) year terms.

Article VII

Section # 2

Change to August, from elections occurring in December.

ADD – Section # 8

Split Terms for the Officers, with two Officers being elected / voted on each year.

- President & 2nd Vice President (Even Years)

- 1st Vice President & Secretary / Treasurer (Odd Years)

{NOTE: This is being proposed, to prevent all four (4) Officers being changed out during one Election cycle; we ensure consistency and mentoring time for newly elected Officers.}

By-Laws

ADD – Section # 6 – Virtual Meetings

Meetings may be held “Virtually” as needed; due to severe weather, major on-going emergency, health concerns, or any other reason deemed appropriate by the President and Officers